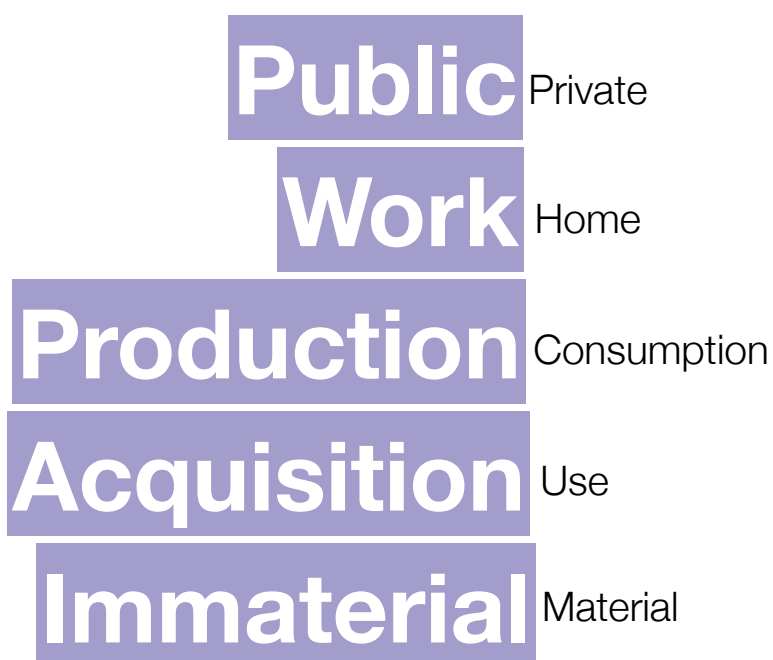


DESIGN IN ACTION

Why material culture is good to have around

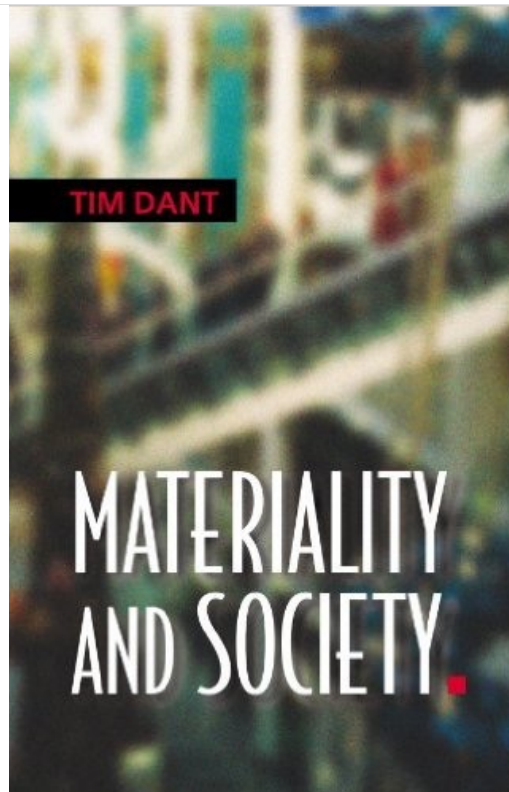


Miller, Daniel (1992). *Material culture and mass consumption*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Highmore, Ben (2002) *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory – An Introduction*. London: Routledge.
Silverstone, Roger (1999). *Television and everyday life*. London: Routledge.
Sparke, Penny (1995) *As Long As It's Pink. The Sexual Politics of Taste*. London: Pandora.

INTERACTION WITH MATERIAL

"In the past it was religious beliefs, a sense of shared pride in nationality or a common ideology that gave a society its identity. In the late modern world it is as likely to be the shared difficulties we have in moving about our society or in getting the mundane things of life to work properly, that give us a sense that we share the world. What all humans have in common is our sense of embodiment, which means that *whatever our many differences, we know that we have at least similar practical experiences of the material world we live in.*"

Dant, T. (2005). *Materiality and society*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

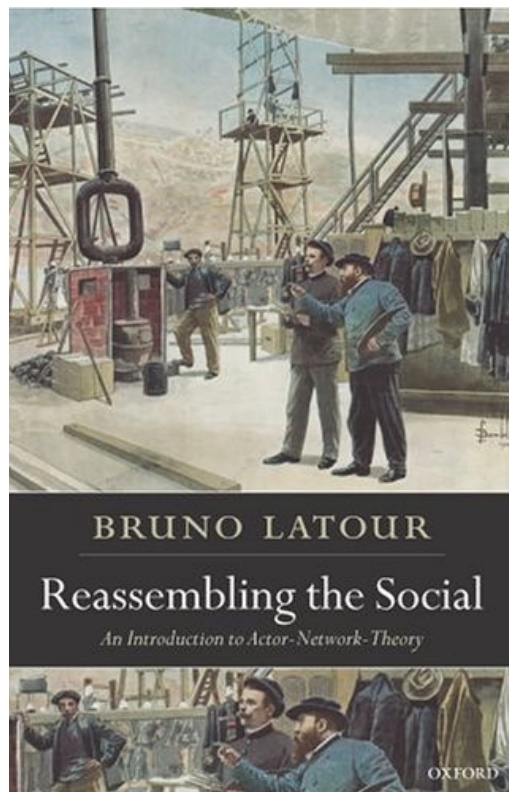


NETWORKS OF PEOPLE AND THINGS

"Tangibles, things and technologies are not neutral but neither are they anything independently active. Their character depends crucially on their contexts of use, that differ from each other. A pillow is a different thing whether it's decorative, functional or securing. A car is not just a vehicle to move from point A to B but an instrument to maintain and modify human relationships. **The nature of our togetherness depends crucially on the materials and things that mediate it. Mediation, immediacy and indifference are, on the other hand, the core topics of social sciences. Thematising them equals thematising the very concept of community.**"

Lehtonen, Turo-Kimmo (2008) *Aineellinen yhteisö*. Helsinki: Tutkijaliitto. pp. 29.

Also: Latour, Bruno (2005) *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



DESIGN BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

- Two points of views dominate discussion about meanings of things:
- **Things as expressive**
 - So called “material culture”-line of inquiry, f.e. Daniel Miller, Alison J. Clarke. UK.
- **Things as participatory**
 - So called “domestication”- line of inquiry, f.e. Roger Silverstone, David Morley. UK and Nordic countries.



Domestication

Main idea: people domesticate products in a similar manner than wild animals and plants



Motivation

Increasing global and technological
everyday since 1980s



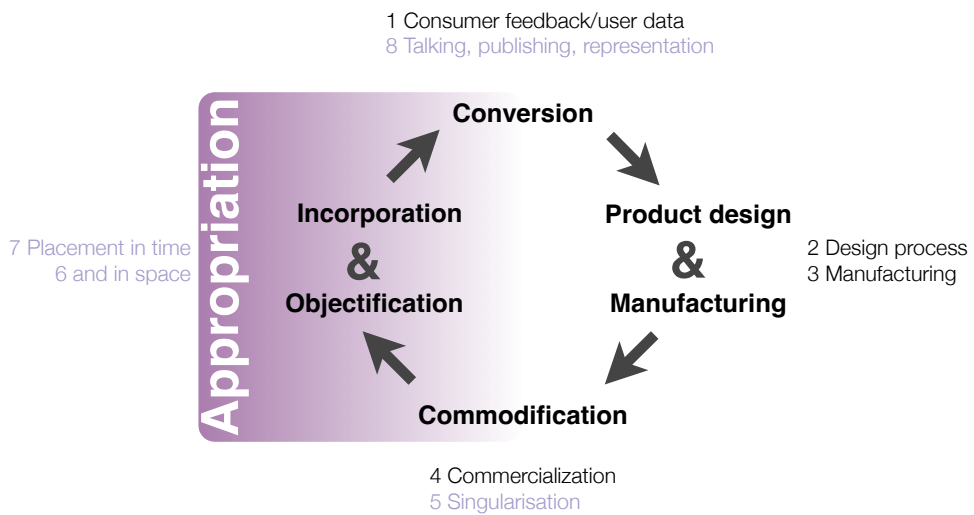
Focus

Emphasis in studying ICTs in
everyday use



Key idea

Reciprocal taming, constant negotiation



Theory

Domestication of an object



Framework

Silverstone, R., Hirsch, E., & Morley, D. (1992). Information and communication technologies and the moral economy of the household. In R. Silverstone & E. Hirsch (Eds.), *Consuming Technologies. Media and information in domestic spaces* pp. 15–31. London: Routledge.



Changing meanings

Kopytoff, I. (1986). The cultural biography of things. Commoditization as a process. In A. Appadurai (Ed.), *The social life of things. Commodities in cultural perspective* pp. 64–91. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



Research questions

How does it feel to live with design? Do the meanings change?

Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

FUNCTIONAL PROPERTIES. Ease of use, reliability, performance...
AESTHETIC PROPERTIES. Colour, shape, smell, feel, sound...
INSTITUTIONAL PROPERTIES. Manufacturer, designer, product, store name, brand...
NOT DESIGNED PROPERTIES. Connections and associations with history, family, friends, sense of humour...

PROPERTIES OF DESIGN

Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

THINKING. Ideals, ideas, conceptions, principles and beliefs linked with design and furnishing
DOING. Efforts, investments and activities linked with design and furnishing
FEELINGS. Interviewees' descriptions of their situation vis-a-vis design and furnishing

TALKING ABOUT DESIGN



Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

IT'S TOUGH. Domestication of design and living with designs is hard work and takes time.
IT'S UC. Quality of design's domestication depends on how well it fits with people's everyday living.
PEDIGREE DOESN'T HELP. Design rarely fits with all practices. If it fits with none, it becomes clutter.

MAIN FINDINGS



Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

PRACTICES?

PRACTICES = everyday miniprojects that we do: Cooking, washing dishes, hoovering, showering, exercising...
Often routine, established chains of actions that each individual does in their own style.
CONSUMPTION. Practices "explain" all consumption: design is appropriated to the practices.
>> If design fits with practices, great. If not, it becomes clutter met with mixed feelings.
When practices change, also consumption changes.

Shove, Elizabeth, Matthew Watson, Martin Hand, and Jack Ingram. 2007. *The design of everyday life*. Oxford: Berg.

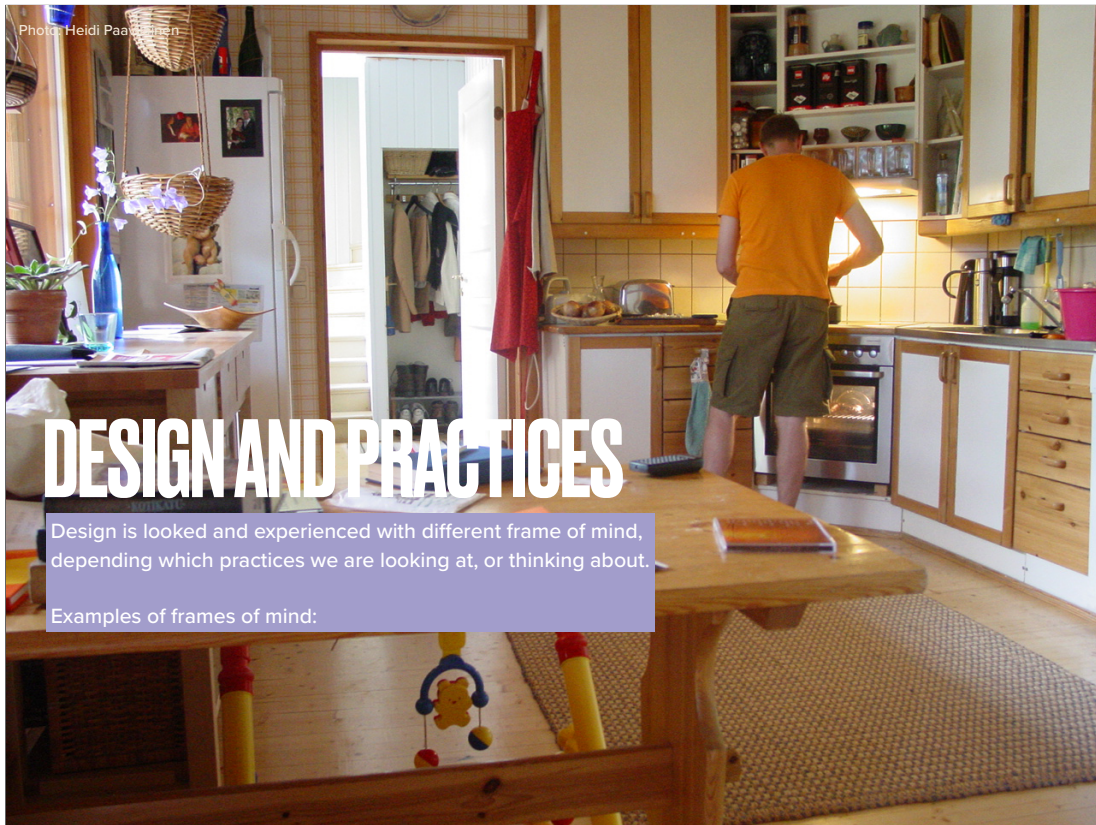


Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

DESIGN AND PRACTICES

Design is looked and experienced with different frame of mind, depending which practices we are looking at, or thinking about.

Examples of frames of mind:

“Home as a hotel”

Home as a place for physical recreation and maintenance.

Sleeping, eating, exercising, cleaning, washing of clothes, vacuuming, personal hygiene etc.

Huge amount of designs facilitate these practices and also require constant, even daily appropriation of products.

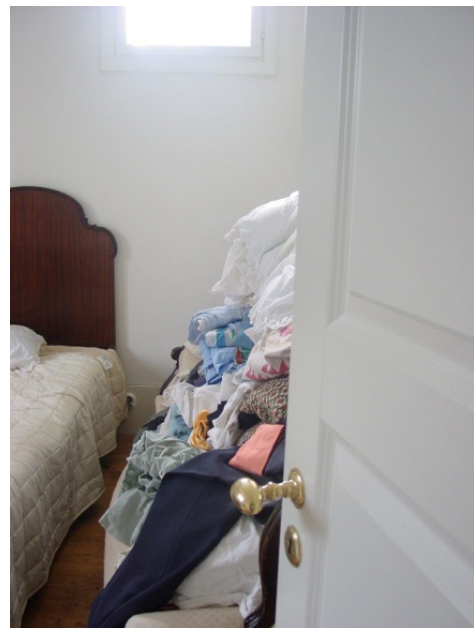


Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

“Home as a museum”

Home as a place for creating and maintaining social relationships.

This is about storing in home products for others: “someday someone may like this”. Not gift economy because exchange is not required (quite the opposite).

The products are valueless from the point of current dwelling but are not recycled because significant others may need it.



Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

“Home as a gallery”

Home as a place for spiritual recreation and maintenance.

All sorts of designs which delight because they are found interesting, fun, relaxing or intellectually rewarding.

Robust performance, aesthetic humour and ingenious design solutions are examples of product properties in the “gallery”. Amusing arrangement of brands, finally found perfect product and past great choices are examples of design intensive actions.



Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

DESIGNED PRODUCTS

Although people have lots of designs, they appear to relate to designs
In only three different ways:



“Distant designs”

These are the products that have “nothing to do with me” - hideous stuff left by the previous tenants, horrible gifts and heirlooms from relatives and unfortunate past decisions turned sour.

Some are hidden in the cupboards but some are in heavy daily use because no-one cares enough to get rid of the thing.



Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

“To-do designs”

These products are in the home’s to-do list, sometimes years or decades.

These products are about to be moved somewhere or waiting for fixing, restoration, right conditions or new owner.

The products have no current value to the household but they have potential and are waiting for future in an optimistic manner.



Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

“Great designs”

These are the products the people tell happy stories about.

The great, the nice, the comfortable, the reliable and the fun - a robust bed, reliable cigaret lighter, comfortable chair and a television with lots of “vibes value” (fiilisarvo) - even though the television is broken and the lighter horrible to use.

To these things people feel attachment and talk fondly about them.



Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

4 domestication styles	Little time is used	Lots of time is used
Straightforward experience	"Supervised ease"	"Autonomous ease"
Complicated experience	"Confused care"	"Involved care"

How domestication is done



Photo: Heidi Paavilainen



“Autonomous ease”

Photo: Heidi Paavilainen



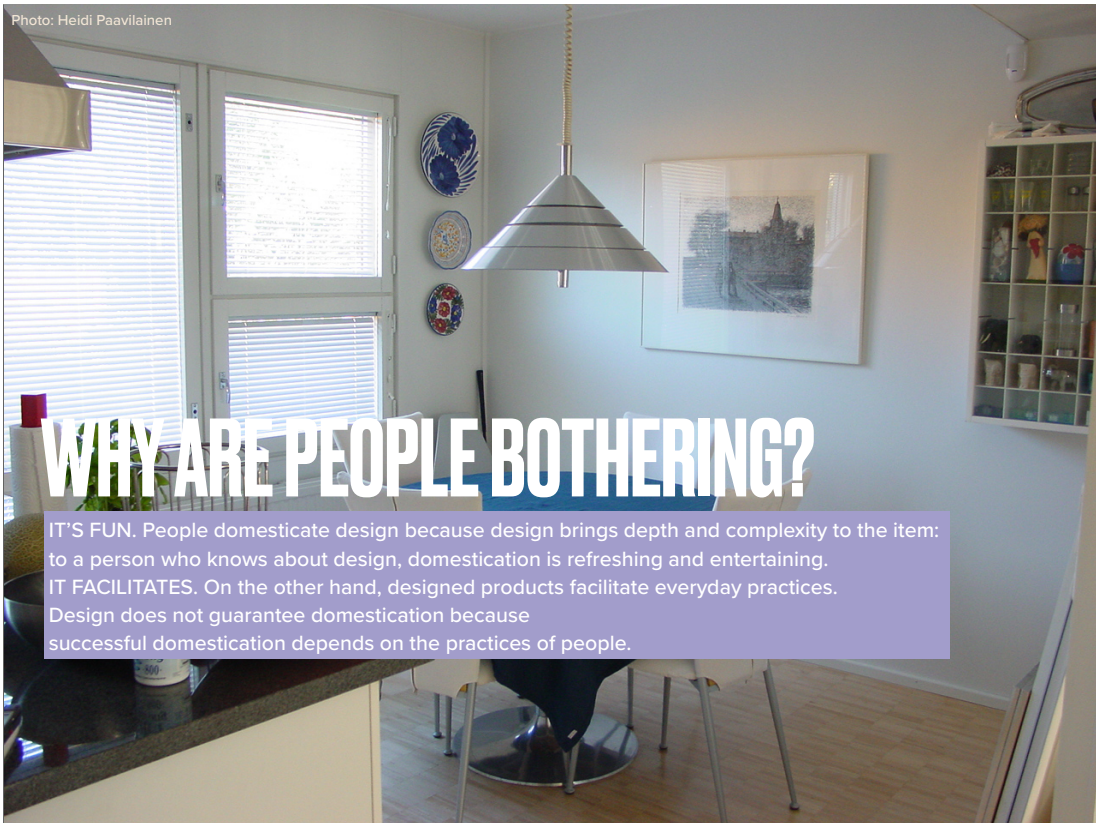
“Confused care”

Photo: Heidi Paavilainen



“Involved care”

Photo: Heidi Paavilainen



WHY ARE PEOPLE BOTHERING?

IT'S FUN. People domesticate design because design brings depth and complexity to the item: to a person who knows about design, domestication is refreshing and entertaining.
IT FACILITATES. On the other hand, designed products facilitate everyday practices.
Design does not guarantee domestication because successful domestication depends on the practices of people.

Photo: Heidi Paavilainen

DESIGNING GOOD DESIGN

“Good design” = well domesticating

EMPATHY. Design grounded on understanding the practices in which design should fit.

KNOW-HOW. Design grounded on knowledge about methods and means of production.

PERSONALITY. Design reflecting someone, something or some point of time.

...

BIRLETTI

Moka Express
MADE IN ITALY