

Location based moblogging as method: New Views into the Use and Practices of Personal, Social and Mobile Technologies

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The rapidly emerging fabric of mobile and wireless technologies offer the potential to influence, disrupt, expand, and be integrated into our social patterns and personal networks. There is little doubt that laptops, PDAs, MP3 players, and mobile phones have enabled personal technologies and networks to become a truly mobile experience. As researchers, however, we often approach these mobile uses and environments from the point of view of one technology, typically the mobile phone. This paper reports on a comparative qualitative research project in London, Los Angeles and Tokyo that examined the everyday uses of all technologies that people carry and use to interact with their daily environment. In the paper we outline our four fold methodological approach (photo elicitation, contextual interviews, diary studies, and shadowing) in this project, particularly focusing on a new methodology of using GPS enabled camera phones to have participants "moblog" their daily interactions with people and objects they carried. The location specific moblogs provided robust data about how participants see and understand interactions in everyday life, compared to the alternative diary methods of textual journals and voice recorders. The resulting findings indicate that participants had similar practices of using personal mobile technologies for identity management, boundary maintenance, group affiliation and personal history. The GPS moblogs provide a powerful new tool in researching new mobile lifestyles.

BIOS:

Ken Anderson is a manager of People and Practices Research at Intel. Ken oversees the development of innovative research of cultures and social practices to inform technology strategy. His current foci are on mobile technologies, identity, and urban environments. In work and play, groups small and large are using technologies for weaving representations of their identities, connections and interactions. Ken is a symbolic anthropologist by training, his dissertation topic was on intertextuality and Azorean identity, which explored the space of media, identity and culture. Prior to coming to Intel Ken was at AT&T | Broadband, MediaOne, and US West where he worked to bring a better understanding of people's everyday lives into corporate product and strategy development. He has also played the role of itinerate academic at University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Bethel College and Seminary, University of Minnesota and Brown University.

Daisuke Okabe is a research faculty at University of Keio. Daisuke has studied and written widely about mobile phone technologies in Japan.

Scott Mainwaring has worked with Intel's People and Practices Research Lab since 2000. Prior to joining Intel, he was a researcher at Interval Research Corp. in Palo Alto, CA for six years, conducting ethnographic fieldwork and prototyping studies in order to better understand the real and potential roles of technology in everyday life. In earlier lives, he could be found developing Unix applications, administering an undergraduate cognitive science program, or studying the formation of spatial mental models in college sophomores. Scott holds an A.B. in computer science from Harvard University and a Ph.D. in cognitive psychology from Stanford University.

Mizuko Ito is a cultural anthropologist studying media technology use, particularly how digital media are changing relationships, identities, and communities. She is interested in the

everyday details of how people use the Internet, mobile phones, computer games, and other digital media, and have conducted fieldwork among mobile phone users in Tokyo, in an after school computer clubs, an online community of senior citizens, an Internet gaming site, and a number of corporate contexts. She currently holds a joint appointment at USC with the anthropology department and Annenberg School of Communication. She also has a research group at Keio University studying mobile phone use, and am conducting fieldwork on children's media in Tokyo and Los Angeles, focusing on how children's media consumption is managed in the home. She has just finished editing a book for MIT Press with Daisuke Okabe and Misa Matsuda entitled, *Personal, Portable, Pedestrian: Mobile Phones in Japanese Life*. It will be out in early 2005. She received a doctorate in Anthropology and a doctorate in Education, both from Stanford. In the past she has worked at the Institute for Research on Learning, Xerox PARC, Tokyo University, the National Institute for Educational Research in Japan, and Apple Computer.