FIELDS NOT OBJECTS



This post is in a series of commentaries on a class running at Stanford, Winter Quarter 2010 – "Transformative Design" ENGR 231 – [Link]

Pragmatology [Link] – the (non-existent) discipline of things – doesn't deal in objects. Things are not discrete, but nodes, gatherings of otherwise distributed flows, relations – fields of connection, not objects with attributes.

This point is made so well in a movie I have just been watching.

"Objectified", directed by Gary Hustwit, is a documentary about our relationships with manufactured objects and the people who design them.



Jonathan Ive, of Apple, describes how the aluminium pressing at the heart of the Macbook Air is not so much an artifact as a process – articulating different key stages and components of manufacture as well as the other components of the laptop.



Bill Moggridge designed what has been called the first laptop. He describes how his encounters with it, taking it out of a briefcase, opening up the screen, typing on the keyboard, transported him from the physical manipulation of an object into that space *behind* the screen – an indeterminate world of intangibles, of interactions

and experiences. The object, the laptop, dispersed.