HCI Theory – Applying Situated Action

Online Ethnography

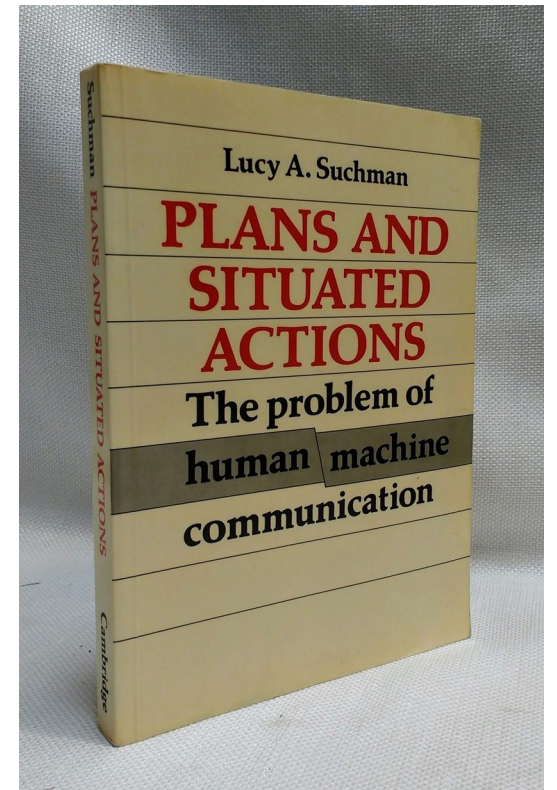# What is Situated Action

Lucy Suchman

An approach developed by Lucy Suchman

Situated Action is **not** a theory or a framework
- though sits within the tradition of Situated Cognition
- Seminal work: *Plans and Situated Actions: The Problem of Human-machine Communication* (1987)

A broad insight into the importance of the specifics of **context to interaction**

Actions are "situated" not planned… Meanings of actions stem from **the situation in which they occur**

Methods for Situated Action

You can only study action by observation in the real world
- **Rich descriptions** are preferred over generalisable theories
- Lab studies are seen as abstracted **non-ecological** (removed from the ecology which gives rise to actions)

Behavioural **Observation**:
- Record behaviours and conversations
- Follow user to study their actions
- Trace artefacts
- Capture interactions
- Study the same tasks in different contexts

- Roots in anthropology
- Original aim to document "primitive cultures"
- E.g., **Bronisław Malinowski** and the Trobriand Islanders
- Ethnography as a "way of seeing"

Ethnography

Digital/Online Ethnography

"Digital Ethno is the modern, **digital equivalent of traditional, Malinowskian ethnographic forms**. The critical distinction is that while traditional ethnographers physically immerse themselves in distinct places and their cultures, digital ethnographers capitalize on wired and wireless technologies **to extend classic ethnographic methods, like participant observation, beyond geographic, as well as temporal, boundaries**."
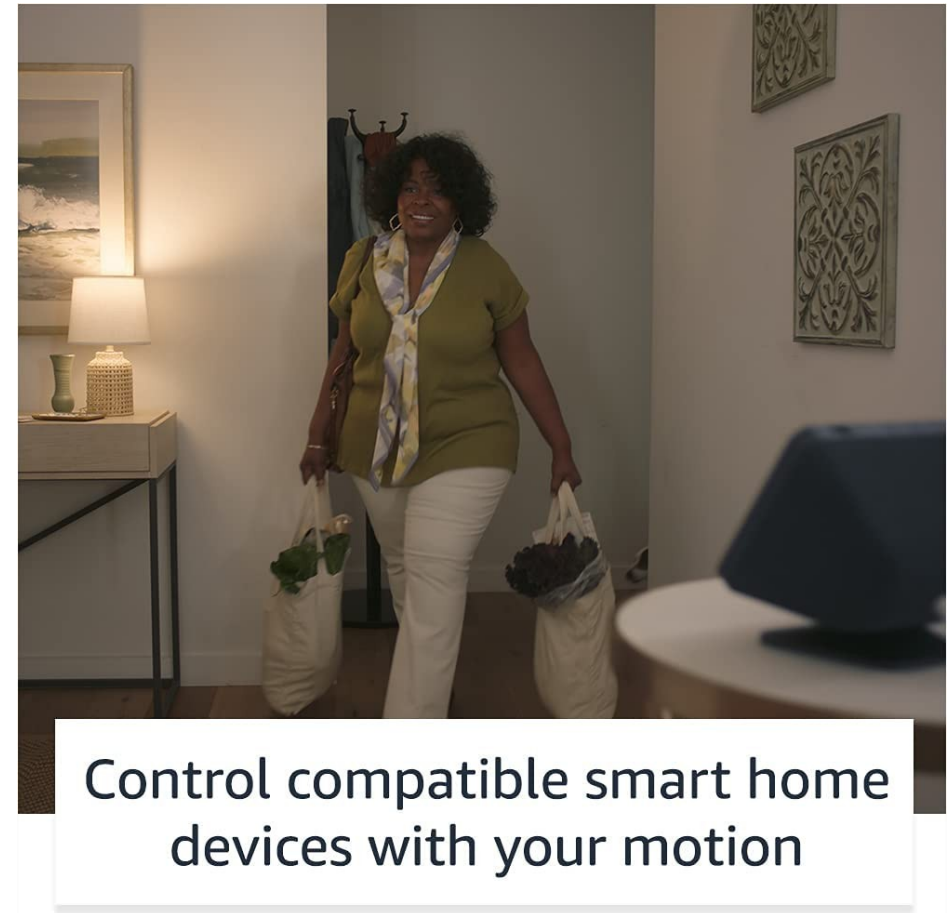
- Masten, D. L., & Plowman, T. M. (2003). Digital ethnography: The next wave in understanding the consumer experience. *Design Management Journal (Former Series), 14*(2), 75-81.

Group Work – Online Ethnography (Light)

Case Studies

- Amazon Alexa
  - https://www.reddit.com/r/alexa/
- Google Home
  - https://www.reddit.com/r/googlehome/
- Smart Home
  - https://www.reddit.com/r/smarthome/
- Home Automation
  - https://www.reddit.com/r/homeautomation/

Amazon Alexa

Control compatible smart home devices with your motion

r/alexa – "frustrating experience"

Please help, I'm about to throw this thing through the wall...

I just got my echo dot, 3rd gen, and I was under the impression that since I have a prime subscription that setup would be a breeze.

I have been trying for hours to get this thing connected to wifi, but every solution I've seen talks about giving network permission to the app, but the app has not asked for netowrk permission, nor does it show up as an option in my network settings. I've seen a few people mention this issue but nobody seems to have goten it fixed from what I've seen.

Does anyone have a fix for this? I've never had such a frustrating experience trying to set up a device.

Update: I tried switching my phone to airplane mode, as I heard that can help, and the Amazon-XXX network has appeared in the wi-fi list, however when I try to connect it just says it's unable to join the network.
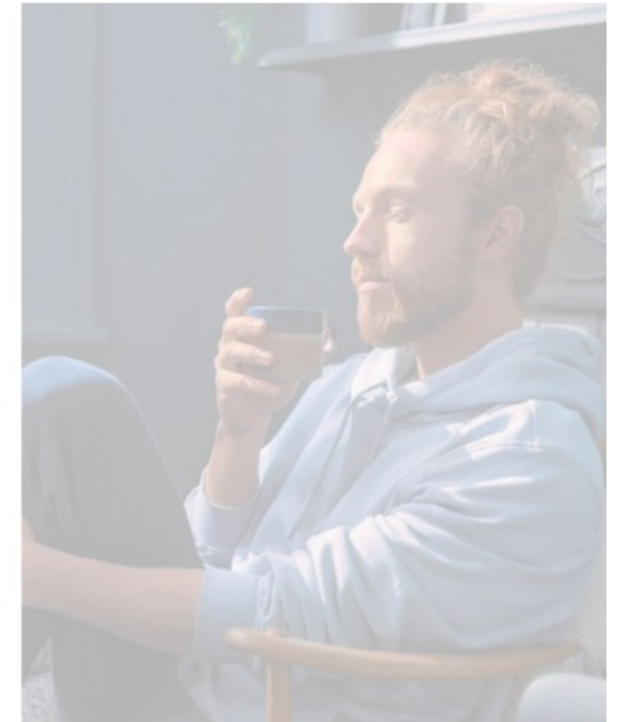
Google Home

The helpful display to start and end your day.

Ease into your morning.

The Sunrise Alarm on Nest Hub wakes you up gently. It gradually brightens the display and increases the alarm volume.

r/googlehome – "she"

r/googlehome · Posted by u/one-small-plant 22 hours ago

5

Google says she can't reach device, but she can

I have several Merkury smart bulbs, and I started noticing that when I ask Google to turn them on or off, she will say "okay, turning it off," and she does, but then she will immediately say "I'm sorry, it looks like that bulb can't be reached right now". But it worked!

It's really annoying to have to listen to her explain, falsely, that she can't reach devices that she clearly reached successfully. Anyone else running into this?

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r/googlehome

A User community for smart speakers and displays from Google Home/Nest and their related products that use Google Assistant. Share information, tips, bugs, new features, requests.

549k   **374**
Members   Online

Created May 18, 2016

🏷 r/googlehome topics

Google Home   Google

Business, Economics, and Finance

SmartHome

r/smarthome –"dummies" & "65+" devices

r/smarthome · Posted by u/LilBabyGroot01 7 hours ago

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Wifi for Dummies? I need advice (65+ devices)

We recently moved and now I'm on the stock router supplied by the installer. I have ~65+ smart devices (locks, bulbs, plugs etc) and other WiFi enabled devices. I'd rather upgrade my internet setup than switch over to Zigbee. Can anyone tell me what I need? Budget is no more than $500, and range is not an issue (stock router hits every area of the 2300sqft house). I've been looking through previous threads but there are so many conflicting views. I really don't know where to go but Eero Pro 6 seems like a good option? Not sure how the smart bulbs and what not would deal with 5ghz signal but, here we are. Thoughts? I know networking is a huge can of worms but that's why I'm here, I don't know much and you do!

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Home Automation

r/homeautomation
--not a new machine
but a hacked
mechanical machine
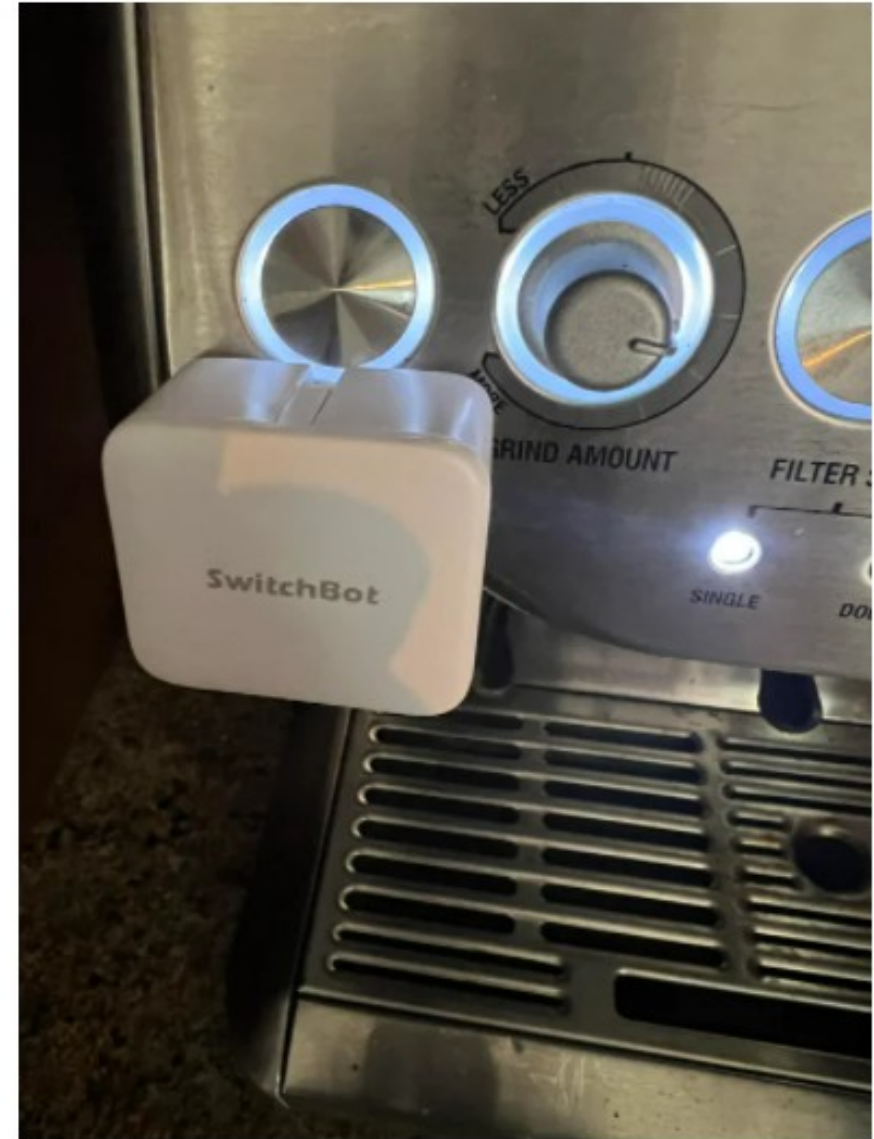
Group Work Activity

1) Learn more about a domestic technology or a domestic technology community by conducting a focused online ethnography on Reddit

2) Choose either r/alexa, r/googlehome, r/smarthome, r/homeautomation to analyse

3) Use three slides (e.g. pptx) to document interesting findings

4) Nominate a group member to report (< 3 mins)

5) Upload your slidedeck to Teams>General>Files>Class Activities>Week 7

6) Get ready to present!