

Selected Abstracts from *JASIST*

Authors who choose to do so prepare and submit these summaries to the editor of the *Bulletin*.

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Ekbia, H. R. (2009). Digital artifacts as quasi-objects: Qualification, mediation, and materiality. (2567-2576).

Study and Results: This study aims to understand the unique character of digital artifacts (e.g., blogs, wikis, personal profiles) from a *processual* perspective – that is, by studying the processes that mediate their creation. A key contribution of the study is in elucidating the activities that comprise these mediations. A case study of “bugs” is analyzed to illustrate exemplary activities of justification, qualification and binding in the process of bug fixing in Free/Open Source Software development.

What's New? The concept of “quasi-object” is introduced to characterize these artifacts as active, immanent, unstable and loosely bounded entities that meaningfully constitute, and are constituted by, their environment. It emphasizes the inherent materiality of digital artifacts that is often made invisible by their phenomenology. In this respect, the study approaches its topic from a direction opposite to that of the documentalist tradition:

Rather than emphasizing the semiotic character of material objects, it seeks to expose the socio-material character of semiotic objects.

Limitations: Bugs are probably too simple and minimally representative of artifacts intended here. The concepts and the method need to be applied to other digital artifacts in future work.