Proposal for Making Visible the Library's Role in the Technology Industry's Predation

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Research Problem: Even as we understand the labour, health, and environmental hazards of the technology industry, it increasingly roots itself in our ways of being. Our dependence is caused by the "megatechnic blackmail" (Loeb, 2018), an adaptation of the Lewis Mumford's (1970) "megatechnic bribe," which describes technology's enchanting qualities. Blackmail, however, accounts for our **inability to turn away** despite known ethical issues. To do so would severely limit our social, work, and political lives. The library has shifted its services in order to meet our growing technological needs, incorporating makerspaces, digital centres, e-books, and equipment lending, among others. At the same time, the library holds "social responsibility" and "sustainability" as core values meant to guide the profession. My proposed research investigates the conflict that emerges when we consider these aspects together.

Methodology: Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (1987) **assemblage theory** helps us think differently about how things come to exist. Everything is in flux with moments of stabilization in its constitutive parts. Natasha Gerolami (2015) conceptualizes the institutional library as an assemblage to show how resources can be mobilized to different, socially active, ends. Deleuze and Guattari advocate for **creating new**, being generative; however, there is also a Dark Deleuze that advocates for the death of this world, of our habits of mind, in order to create something truly different (Culp, 2016). Is the library ready and able to move beyond comforting platitudes to disruptive reflection and action?

RQ1: How does the library discuss its values of sustainability and social responsibility?

This section examines these values through the official policies of ALA and IFLA, and a purposive sample of professional discourse in journals, conferences, periodicals, etc.

Analysis: Critical Discourse Analysis (van Dijk, 2015) will be used to understand and compare the respective positions.

Contribution: A clearer understanding of how the library understands these held values, through the perspective of its governing body (ALA) and its global scope (IFLA), and the practical perspective of its professionals.

RQ2: What is the library's responsibility to communities; what are these communities?

A continued examination of the official and professional discourse will hopefully reveal perceptions of responsibility in community meeting needs. A literature search will be conducted to supplement data.

Analysis: While "megatechnic blackmail" (Loeb, 2018) accounts for a deterministic perspective of our relationship with tech, assemblage theory helps us think fluidly about the ways tech integrates with and changes our lives, and by extension, the library.

Contribution: A contextualized understanding of how technology is a growing need and mediating presence in our daily lives, and the library's perceived responsibility in meeting that need.

RQ3: How do libraries produce and reproduce the hazards associated with the tech industry?

This section builds on the previous sections by adding the context of harms currently inherent in the tech industry. Two case studies will be developed to show the reader the situations experienced in the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** (Sovacool, 2019) and **rural China** (Lora-Wainwright & Chen, 2016).

Analysis: Assemblage theory will be applied to explore how these aspects of the industry are inherited by the library, implicating it in the violences experienced elsewhere.

Contribution: Brings the library into a larger discussion of humanistic criticism of technology and environmental concern (read: panic). While this research focuses on the library, abstraction of the findings can substitute any institution or actor for the library.

RQ4: How might the library act with resistance?

The library exists in a space of potential and constraint. It is our hyperbolic bastion of democracy, skirting capitalism, yet always already part of that system and inheritor of the same inequalities and injustices (Popowich, 2019). Likewise, we can criticize it for lackluster advocacy and inaction in regard to social responsibility and diversity (Roberts & Noble, 2016) and environmentalism (Civallero & Plaza, 2017).

Analysis: Using assemblage theory, we can think of the library anew, and imagine different mobilization of resources (Gerolami, 2015).

Contributions:
a) A critical examination of the library's constraints and potential within the context of technology.
b) Practical resources developed in consideration and extension of previous proposals on responsible tech acquisition (Poggiali, 2016) and e-waste information literacy (Zazzau, 2006).

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