

Method 1: Linguistic Categorisation

Information will be categorised according to the nature of its linguistic properties

Academic Terminology

- symbolic functions
- informational and social infrastructures intersect within a physical infrastructure that (ideally) supports that program
- provisioning of resources to the foment
- ...economic disparity and the continuing privatization of public space and services
- understand how our libraries function as, and as part of, infrastructural ecologies

Historical Descriptive Language

- For millennia libraries have acquired resources, organized them, preserved them and made them accessible (or not) to patrons.
- The ancient Library of Alexandria was a prototypical think tank, and the early Carnegie buildings of the 1880s were community centers with swimming pools and public baths, bowling alleys, billiard rooms, even rifle ranges, as well as book stacks.

Technological Vocabulary

- scrolls and codices; to LPs and LaserDiscs; to e-books, electronic databases and open data sets
- medieval scriptoria where manuscripts were produced
- the rise of information technology and its webs of wires, protocols and regulations
- creation of software, but also for the development of knowledge and community.
- ...obfuscate all the wires, pulleys, lights and scaffolding that you inevitably find underneath and above that stage
- In this age of e-books, smartphones, firewalls, proprietary media platforms and digital rights management

Philosophical Discourse

- ...it smacks of Silicon Valley entrepreneurial epistemology, which prioritizes “monetizable” “knowledge solutions.”
- Knowledge is never solely a product of technology and the information it delivers.
- ...structuring structures

- And we must consider how those infrastructures can embody the epistemological, political, economic and cultural values that we want to define our communities.

Metaphorical Expressions

- ...the library as “platform”
- ...think of the library not as a portal we go through on occasion but as infrastructure that is as ubiquitous and persistent as the streets and sidewalks of a town. It’s like a “canopy,” he says — or like a “cloud.”
- ...libraries play a critical role as mediators, at the hub of all the hubbub.

Method 2: Conceptual Inventory

Information will be categorised according to its key concepts

Historical Evolution of Libraries

- For millennia libraries have acquired resources, organized them, preserved them and made them accessible (or not) to patrons...Libraries have had at least to comprehend, if not become a key node within, evolving systems of media production and distribution.
- Consider the medieval scriptoria where manuscripts were produced; the evolution of the publishing industry and book trade after Gutenberg; the rise of information technology and its webs of wires, protocols and regulations.

Social Functions

- They have been expected to symbolize the eminence of a ruler or state, to integrally link “knowledge” and “power” — and, more recently, to serve as “community centers,” “public squares” or “think tanks.”
- The ancient Library of Alexandria was a prototypical think tank, and the early Carnegie buildings of the 1880s were community centers with swimming pools and public baths, bowling alleys, billiard rooms, even rifle ranges, as well as book stacks.
- Thus the ancient Library of Alexandria, part of a larger museum with botanical gardens, laboratories, living quarters and dining halls, was a platform not only for the translation and copying of myriad texts and the compilation of a magnificent collection, but also for the launch of works by Euclid, Archimedes, Eratosthenes and their peers.

Technological Transformation

- But the forms of those resources have changed — from scrolls and codices; to LPs and LaserDiscs; to e-books, electronic databases and open data sets. Libraries have had at least to comprehend, if not become a key node within, evolving systems of media production and distribution.
- In this age of e-books, smartphones, firewalls, proprietary media platforms and digital rights management; of atrophying mega-bookstores and resurgent independent bookshops and a metastasizing Amazon; of Google Books and Google Search and Google Glass;

Infrastructure Metaphors

- Now we are seeing the rise of a new metaphor: the library as “platform” — a buzzy word that refers to a base upon which developers create new applications, technologies and processes.
- Weinberger encourages us to “think of the library not as a portal we go through on occasion but as infrastructure that is as ubiquitous and persistent as the streets and sidewalks of a town.”
- But these metaphors are more poetic than critical; they obfuscate all the wires, pulleys, lights and scaffolding that you inevitably find underneath and above that stage — and the casting, staging and direction that determine what happens on the stage, and that allow it to function as a stage.
- as sites where spatial, technological, intellectual and social infrastructures shape and inform one another.

Knowledge Production Models

- One key misperception of those who proclaim the library’s obsolescence is that its function as a knowledge institution can be reduced to its technical services and information offerings. Knowledge is never solely a product of technology and the information it delivers.
- ...libraries play a critical role as mediators, at the hub of all the hubbub.
- ...we must consider how those infrastructures can embody the epistemological, political, economic and cultural values that we want to define our communities.