

Zoteronomics as folksonomy

In order to carry out this assignment 3, we've chosen to utilize Zotero as our tool of choice. The original assignment had designated Calibre as the main platform, but we felt that Calibre was standing in our way in different regards. The main argument for leaving Calibre was the lack of centralisation, in that if we were not prepared to utilize a third party server-based version then we would be limited to working together in a way where we would all need to synchronize our tagging-efforts in a structured manner in order to avoid doubles and conflicting tagging. This builds on a general ambition to create an approach towards this assignment, of not designating a single member of the group as gatekeeper of the project as it progresses. By opting for a cloud-based centralised tool, which is situated elsewhere, we weren't bound to be physically present in the same room - which is highly impractical during a pandemic. This decision also supported a liberal and social approach to the tagging-procedure, as each tag did not need to be critically examined collectively before being put in action - a point which is interesting in itself. This has allowed each member of the group to contribute with texts and tags, which were then discussed in plenum when inaccuracies occurred.

There are extensive differences in the act of maintaining or creating a "library" when working with Zotero instead of Calibre. First and foremost, Zotero is not fixed on having the material or object, itself - be it a book, an article or the like - although it is possible to a certain extent. A Zotero library is rather made up of arbitrary relational data-structures which is built purely *by* metadata *on* metadata, meaning that it does not necessarily function as a library in the classical way of being able to sort-to-find objects, but instead as a system for maintaining references. It has been built upon invariable and fixed standards making up the type of an object, which in turn then has the final say in the relevant metadata or taxonomies applying to that specific type. Books afford and require a different type of metadata than a film. We consider this approach to metadata attached to a prototypical and fixated taxonomy as "disembodied metadata", as the object represented by the metadata can be interdicted from what is stored in Zotero.

We found out that when exporting libraries directly from Zotero our sorting through "collections" (folders within folders within our dataset) would not carry through to any final

standardized file-format. Instead we instinctively chose to implement a dichotomic tagging-taxonomy, by tagging the individual disembodied meta-data-objects with a tag representing the folder in which each object came. This way of tagging as a means of implementing our own taxonomies, which could be considered a form of folksonomy, does set up standards of use which must be adhered to in order to remain effective. The entire implications of this early choice remain to be fully explored, and is considered outside the scope of this assignment.

The Collection-function remains the only way to express hierarchy in Zotero, which we have used to differentiate between syllabus and non-syllabus material as child-objects to the parent folder entitled “Curating Data Stud. Grup.”. Further down in the hierarchy, we discussed the most practical solution to further organise the material would be either according to the week that it was obligatory reading, or according to the general theme of the week. The latter allows for greater legibility both for us, in case we can not remember which week we learned about what topic, but also for an outsider who has no knowledge about the texts' relation to the course. Sorting according to week is, however, more practical as our shared experience of attending the course allows us to locate texts quickly from our memory of when it was taught. We ended up opting for sorting by week, with additional tagging of objects according to the theme of the week.

Creating a folksonomy expresses the politics and shared values of the tagging-process..When labelling alien-related texts as ‘alternative history’, we indirectly deny its value in mainstream knowledge production. The reality of assessing whether sources are credible is, of course, much more complex and subjective, but the affordances of tagging require a binary differentiation; it is either tagged or it is not. Thereby, our tagging supports a paradigm of what qualifies as scientific research, illustrating how knowledge is constructed and not objective, but instead subject to politics. Our tagging then enforces the viewpoint of the scientific community, and the fact that we have a shared understanding of what we consider the alien texts to be.

This paper, and the accompanying collection, including the social process of tagging, has been contributed to equally between the three members of the group.