Taming the Mob: The Early Public Library and the Creation of Good Citizens

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Abstract

This article examines the sociopolitical principles upon which the public library operated in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Gilles Deleuze's philosophic work on the disciplinary and control societies is used as a theoretical framework to highlight the forms of governance that have been used in the last two centuries. A discourse analysis is conducted of sample articles from the first 40 years of the *Library Journal*. This article documents the role librarians played in normalizing patron behaviour by associating the concept of the good citizen with a series of practices including reading, abstention from alcohol, order, acceptance of class status, and self-reliance.

Keywords

philosophy of libraries, Gilles Deleuze, discourse analysis, history of public libraries, disciplinary society

Introduction

> Free corn in old Rome bribed a mob and kept it passive. By free books and what goes with them in modern America we mean to erase the mob from existence. There lies the cardinal difference between a civilization which perished and a civilization that will endure. (Larned, 1902a, p. 16)

Information access and intellectual freedom are foundational concepts of the public library, and services to ensure free access to information in support of democratic participation emerged to maintain these principles. Scholars have debated the extent to

which librarians have and do live up to democratic ideals. There is value, though, in shifting the focus away from failed ideals to examine instead the many disciplinary functions implemented to encourage democratic participation. Drawing on Gilles Deleuze's theoretical work on the society of discipline can help us understand the mechanisms that have historically operated on the public library. An examination of the ways in which the North American library's origin in the 1800s and early 1900s is articulated in the library literature reveals the library's disciplinary role in society. The library acted in concert with other institutions striving to produce a "normal and civilized" population.

The early public library's stated purpose in North America was to support democratic institutions. Library advocates in the late 19th century encouraged the development of non-partisan public libraries that would help promote democracy and universal suffrage (Bruce, 1996; Ditzion, 1947; Sanders, 1887). In 1902, Larned stated: "Free education and free books in a free democracy,—that is the system of an enduring social structure" (p. 17). The public library, advocates argued, would remain neutral because it would not serve the interests of a specific class or group of people. Rather, the library would be dedicated to providing knowledge to the community as a whole: "There is little in [the public library] to tempt the befouling hand of the politician, and it offers no gain to the mercantile adventurer. For those who serve it on behalf of the public there are few allurements for money or fame" (Larned,1902b, p. 4).

The democratic principles at the heart of public librarianship have not gone unexamined or unchallenged. Brenda Dervin (1994) made considerable efforts to outline the ontological and epistemological assumptions of that "near mythical" narrative tying information to democracy. Michael Harris (1973) questioned the democratic and egalitarian nature of the early public library, and argued that it was run by an elitist upper class intending to preserve order, the status quo, and conservative and religious organizations. He argued that the ideology of the democratic library masked the oppression of the masses. Although Dain (1975) criticized Harris for providing insufficient evidence, she acknowledged that librarians do need to liberate themselves from their "dependence on an idealised history" (p. 261). Phyllis Dain's response to Harris' article, that authoritarian models of organization were common in the 19th century, is not sufficient.

The debate between Dain and Harris on the purpose of the public library led Richard Rubin (1998) to ask: "Are public libraries the cauldrons of democracy or the tools of social control?" and to suggest that "[p]erhaps these missions coexist in a dynamic tension that remains unresolved" (p. 289). More recently, with reference to Harris' work, Rubin (2016) described the history of the public library as having "multiple philosophic underpinnings, some of them countervailing and incompatible" (p. 62). In response to Harris' hegemonic thesis, Dain (1975) argued that the early public library was egalitarian in some measure because librarians attempted to reach a wide spectrum of people. The programs and initiatives Dain (1975) saw as egalitarian, such as Sunday openings, open stacks, reference services, branch systems, meeting rooms for community groups, programs for the blind, and cooperation with other community

groups (pp. 264-5) can also be read as ways to produce the concept of a "normal" library patron.

Dee Garrison also challenged the mythical view of the public library. She argued that library history did not recognize the complexities of the social and political milieu into which the library was born. Responding to the progressive enlightenment theories of the library, such as those offered by Jesse Shera and Sidney Ditzion, Garrison (1979) argued that the "orthodox progressive" (p. xii) view of the library ignored the ideology of library leaders and the social control that institutions were established to promote.

As rereading public library history with Deleuze's theoretical framework will demonstrate, whether or how well librarians have fulfilled the democratic values of public librarianship is not the only issue: democratic and egalitarian measures themselves can play a disciplinary role because of the manner in which librarian discourses and practices reinforce ideas of "good" library users. Wayne Wiegand (1999) suggested that "theoretically rich perspectives on the past" (p. 3) could help librarians overcome some of their blind spots and tunnel vision. Deleuze's work offers a potential answer to Wiegand's (1999) recommendation that we examine the exercise of power in the public library. Since Wiegand published this paper, strides have been made to do this work. Brendan Luyt (2001) and Siobhan Stevenson (2010), for example, have examined the library's role in supporting the capitalist system. John Buschman (2003), similarly concerned about the economic forces operating on the library, encouraged librarians to protect the autonomy of the public sphere so the library may operate independently of economic and political forces.

The following study of library history follows the trajectory of scholars who have examined the controlling, disciplining, and normalizing functions of the early public library (Frohmann, 1997; Luyt, 2001; Wiegand, 1996). As a theoretical framework, Deleuze's work offers another lens on the early public library movement and can be used to assess political and economic forces operating on institutions like the library. His theories encourage us to examine the forces that confine and the forces that liberate. His theories suggest that the library will never be independent of all social forces, yet the institution can always be detached and joined with other forces (see Gerolami, 2015). By employing Deleuze's theories, this study can consider how the social forces operate on the library while avoiding the problem of economic determinism whereby the library is determined by economic forces.

The following study includes a discourse analysis of articles in the *Library Journal*. A sample of articles was chosen from the journal every five years from 1877 through to 1917. A small sample of other documents related to the development of the public library was also chosen. A purposive sampling method was used for the study: all the articles focus on the purpose and sociopolitical significance of the public library. The *Library Journal* was chosen because it was the first library journal established in North America to serve librarians in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. It was launched as the official journal of the newly established American Library Association in 1876 (Wiegand, 1996). The study covers the early years of the public library until the First World War, a timeline consistent with other historical studies that

suggest the First World War brought significant changes to the public library system in North America (Wiegand, 1999). The analysis focuses on how concepts of the normal subject were reproduced in the library literature. As this study demonstrates, the library played a "civilizing role" in some instances, reinforcing norms of "good" citizenship that helped to maintain the status quo, while in other cases it has been used to challenge norms, supporting new and creative ideas of living.

The Society of Discipline

The early public library played a disciplining role by continually producing and reproducing categories to define people. Building upon the work of Michel Foucault (1979), Gilles Deleuze (1995) suggested that the society of discipline was at its height in the 18th and 19th centuries, and showed a marked decline by the Second World War when the society of control started to rise in prominence.

In a disciplinary society, categories are used to regulate behaviour by delineating the appropriate behaviour required to belong to that category. Categories work through mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. The category of "woman," for example, is associated with a host of feminine traits: demur, self-sacrificing, delicate, weak, emotional. To be a "normal" woman, one must act accordingly. The constant reproduction of these categories in discourse creates the impression that they are eternal and necessary. A disciplinary society functions by producing a series of rules that define normal behaviour in any given institution. For discipline to function, individuals must internalize these concepts of the normal, make them part of their identity, and act them out. The disciplinary society is organized and supported by institutions—the prison, the school, the hospital—where these norms are reproduced. The public library has been one such institution.

History is complex, and simply superimposing the theory of the disciplinary society onto library history will not explain all phenomena. Rather, the theory raises the question about how institutions and categories function to normalize behaviour. The theory is supported by a set of ontological presuppositions: life, according to Deleuze, is characterized by the movement of desire, flow, transformation, and deterritorialization. The social, and thereby the human subject, is assembled by connections and associations. As Deleuze (1987) and his collaborator Felix Guattari explain, our social structures are assembled into different segments including the myriad of institutions and cultural formations that constitute us: class, gender, race, etc.   These are codes that organize, regulate, and give meaning to movement. The state and its institutions tend to overcode, attempting to organize all desire, movement, and existence into segments. Analyzing public library discourse can therefore illuminate how the library has produced these segments to reinforce norms of behaviour. Deterritorialization is a movement away from these strict social codes. This study will focus therefore on how discourse reinforced norms of behaviour, but will also consider attempts by the public library to flee from confining social codes.

Using the theories of Deleuze and his occasional collaborator Felix Guattari is not without its problems. Slavoj Zizek (2004) in his criticism of his work calls Deleuze an

"ideologist of late capitalism" (p. 184). Zizek notes the great similarities between Deleuze's emphasis on flows of desire and flows of capital. Critics are also concerned that Deleuze's ontology of desire leaves no foothold for ethics or foundation for human rights (see, for example, Hallward, 2006). However, as scholars such as Todd May (2005) illustrate, Deleuze's ethics can be employed to critique capitalism while leaving open a multiplicity of possibilities for the future. In order to avoid creating rigid segments, Deleuze does not attempt to offer a set of principles to guide us or our institutions. Rather, his theories emphasize freedom and the creation of new possibilities. Deleuze's work is valuable for this project because it asks librarians to question the mechanisms of control without imposing new ones. The work of Deleuze is used in this study to inspire questions about early public library discourse. How were library patrons described during the early public library movement? How did this discourse reinforce a set of norms of behaviour (i.e., segmentarity)? What library discourse in the early public library resisted these norms (i.e., deterritorialization)?

The Library of Discipline

During the early public library movement, writers in the *Library Journal* regularly argued for the expenditure of resources on public library services; however, their discourse also normalized specific behaviours. Library history scholars have documented policies regulating behaviour in the library. For example, librarians controlled patrons' reading habits by limiting the circulation of fiction material and limiting the availability of newspapers because they might "foster political agitation" (Lerner, 1998, p. 148). Debates about whether patrons should be permitted in the book stacks demonstrate how the actions of patrons and the use of resources were circumscribed ("Open shelves questioned,"1907). Attention should also be given to the discourse around normal and abnormal behaviour repeated in library literature. The point is not whether librarians had good intentions or egalitarian sentiments, but to demonstrate that the library played a role in producing and reproducing categories that define normal and proper behaviour. In the library literature, as we will come to see, the concept of the good citizen is coupled with a series of practices including reading, abstention from alcohol, order, acceptance of class status, and self-reliance.

Library Users as Honourable Citizens

The early public library's purpose was explicitly articulated in terms of its capacity to normalize behaviour. "It keeps boys at home in the evening by giving them well written stories of adventure… It furnishes… hints on correct speech and good manners" ("What a Free Library Does," 1902, p. 1). The library "civilizes the conduct of men and suffers them not to remain barbarians" (Sanders, 1887, p. 395). The possibility that the library could offer alternatives to the natural tendencies of humans toward base and immoral behaviour was a major justification for the public library.

The early public library was championed as an institution that could aid in the development of model citizens. The library "makes better citizens of [teachers and pupils] by enlarging their knowledge of their country and its growth" ("What a Free Library Does," 1902, p. 1). Kite (1877) argued that the librarian's duty was to "make the

coming man a good citizen in the community" (p. 278). The role of the library in making strong citizens was repeated by Hallman (1882): "Reading improves the inborn faculties, makes man a better citizen, and helps him to form correct opinions of what is transpiring around him" (p. 28). The discourse suggests that the public library functioned at "making better and more intelligent citizens, of raising the average of citizenship" (Brown, 1917, p. 589). Reproducing the category of "citizen" required a common moral framework, which we will see below, and a common culture. The library's role in defining and reproducing subjects included the concept of the immigrant as "other" who needed to be brought into the common culture. For example, new immigrants were to be guided to use the library to ensure their assimilation ("Editorial," 1907).

The "fiction problem," which inspired considerable debate about the place of fiction in libraries in the late 1800s through to the next century (Kimball, 2006), also involved the normalization of behaviour. Much has been written on the elitist position librarians took toward fiction titles in the library (see, for example, Carrier, 1965; Kimball, 2006). The librarian's role of improving citizens through "good reading" has been critiqued as unproductive, if not elitist, and hierarchical. The point here is not to reiterate existing debates but to note that the discourse around reading reinforces a specific notion of normalcy. Charles Cutter (1876) used the example of French fiction, which "is not generally of the kind which is well for anybody to read. The writers prefer to analyse abnormal characters, to depict objectionable morals and the manners of the *demi-monde*" (p. 3). Although fiction stirs the imagination, crowds out serious reading, and drives readers to waste their sympathy on unreal people, Cutter (1876) argued that librarians could lure patrons with fiction and later intervene to improve their reading habits. The major goal of the librarian, according to Justin Winsor in 1876, was to elevate the masses by "inducing an improvement in the kind of reading" done by what he terms "sinewy-minded" people (p. 66). Some librarians saw fiction as acceptable so long as it created moral and upstanding individuals. W. Stevenson, for example, associated the public library with honourable citizens whom he contrasted with barbarians, cowboys, and Indian killers:

> There is a good deal of barbarian in the average boy, and the novel of blood and destruction is just what he takes to naturally. It is this barbarian element in the young which is the basis of strength of character, and which when properly trained develops some of the most admirable traits. Is it not the duty of the public library to supply boys with books which will make them wish to be honourable citizens rather than cowboys or Indian killers? (Stevenson, 1897, pp. 134-5)

Many librarians were convinced that fiction collecting should be wholly avoided because fiction reading sent many readers to insane asylums (Kite, 1877), which confirms further the normalizing goals of the public library. W. Stevenson (1897) compared fiction reading to an opium habit, thereby reinforcing its relation to abnormal behaviour.

"Appropriate" reading, on the other hand, was linked to good behaviour. Reading was juxtaposed with other inferior pass-times and criminality. Cutter (1876), for example, noted that fiction was better than billiards (p. 4). Librarians also suggested that more libraries would result in fewer prisons (Cutter & Bowker, 1876). In defending the

importance of the library, Hallman juxtaposes the intelligent, enlightened, self-respecting individual from criminals and workers who drink:

> [Libraries] develop a taste for reading; they keep people out of bad company; they direct the rising generation into paths of study; they divert working-men from the street corner and the low, corrupting dram-shop; they secure for the people an acquaintance with the productions of the best and greatest minds; they tend to promote public virtue; their influence is on the side of order, self-respect, intelligence, and general enlightenment; and by developing these virtues amongst the multitude, they must necessarily diminish the ranks of those two great armies which are constantly marching to gaols and penitentiaries, and in the same ratio they must decrease the sums of money which ratepayers have to provide for the maintenance of those places. (Hallman. 1882, p. 31)

As in the above quote, library discourse often focused on the economic utility of the library as a means to reduce government expenditure on law enforcement and prisons. Bruce (1996) acknowledged this in his history of the library. Notably, this discourse reinforces a concept of an ideal citizen or subject.

Early library champions argued that the library could also subdue the undisciplined and the uncivilized:

> Free corn in old Rome bribed a mob and kept it passive. By free books and what goes with them in modern America we mean to erase the mob from existence. There lies the cardinal difference between a civilization which perished and a civilization that will endure. (Larned, 1902a, p. 16)

Larned created an imagined mob that threatens society; he implied that a section of society needed to be subdued and that the public library would play the civilizing role.

Library Users as Good Workers

The public library discourse focused not only on citizens but also on reproducing class categories to maintain class divisions. The vocal opponents of fiction in the early public library movement, for example, were quite concerned about providing books that would maintain stability. Fiction, opponents feared, had the potential to inspire unrealistic fantasies in the lower classes. William Kite (1877), a librarian at the Friends Free Library, was interested in how the working class in the late 19th century ought to live within their station:

> Do novels teach [the working class] contentment with their lowly but honest occupations? The factory girl, as she tends her loom or her spinning-jenny, turns over in her thought the fortunes of the heroine of the last novel she has read, raised by impossible supposititious incidents from humble life to princely fortune, and she pines for a lover to so lift her into notoriety. Her mind is filled with false ideas of life, and she is prepared easily to be beguiled into an improper marriage, or to become the victim of some pretentious scoundrel. The boy reads of equally false deeds of daring—fortunes made by unjust dealings, glossed over so as to

half conceal their iniquity—and his bewildered mind is unfitted for the hard duties of life. (p. 278)

The purpose of literature in the early public library, according to Kite, was to ensure that the working class did not get any ideas about changing social relations. Kite's argument suggests that good behaviour includes subjects' internalization of class relations.

Library philanthropist and capitalist Andrew Carnegie promoted most rigorously the project of disciplining members of society through libraries. Carnegie believed that library expenditures could be justified because they helped ensure a stable government ("Public library movement," 1897). An analysis of Andrew Carnegie's discourse demonstrates that participatory democracy was not the only reason he advocated for library expansion: creating a civilized nation was essential not only for government stability but to support capitalist relations. The public library, according to Carnegie, is a form of philanthropy that attacks poverty at the root level. However, the paternalism, concern for stability, and respect for property relations reveal Carnegie's hope that the library would instill discipline and create the type of subject he characterized as self-reliant and entrepreneurial (Carnegie, as cited in "Public library movement," 1897, p. 2).

Public library advocates played a similar role in reproducing categories that reinforced the capitalist relations. For example, they reproduced class categories by characterizing workers as ignorant non-readers, despite evidence to the contrary (Stevenson, 2005). The story of Reverend de Putron Glidden of the Public Library of Butte was recounted in the *Library Journal*:

He was going up Broadway at night and met a miner whom he knew, and asked him whether there was to be a strike, and whether the men were likely to be led astray by bad leadership. His sidewalk companion spoke about the matter for awhile, and then they came in sight of the northeast corner of the public library, and the miner said to him: 'No, I don't think the boys will be badly led away. They have learned to think a bit, and they learned lots of it there' (pointing to the library). ("Why There was no Strike," 1897, p. 439)

The above quote characterizes workers as "the boys" who are in need of leadership and union organizers as individuals who could lead workers astray. The library, on the other hand, was directly connected to capitalist interests, suppression of worker strife, and therefore the maintenance of the status quo.

The link between libraries and capitalist expansion was emphasized when the first special business edition of the *Library Journal* was published in April of 1917. The editors noted the importance of librarians in the conduct and development of business. The library discourse continued to refer to citizens but shifted in focus to the businessman and productivity. In this edition, Arthur Bostwick (1917), the St. Louis librarian, noted that

[l]ibraries have changed… The old library was first and foremost a collection of material for scholars; the new is for the busy citizen, to help him in what he is busy about, to make it possible for him to do more work in less time. (p. 259)

Bostwick (1917) lamented the frequent lack of business sources in the library but argued that, in their effort to be up-to-date and to "brush off the dust and sweep away the cobwebs of medievalism" (p. 260), librarians were increasingly discovering and serving the "business man." Hasse (1917) noted that the "Library Revolution" was underway because librarians were beginning to understand that their role in society was to provide services to business: "library executives are going to be captains of industry, line up shoulder to shoulder with the only salvation of our country—sound business" (p. 271). Good business was characterized as salvation and librarians assumed their saviour role when, for example, they prided themselves on making the "inferior mechanic of today" a skilled worker for tomorrow (Foster, 1897, p. 737).

"Information society" discourse and payment for service appeared early in the history of the public library. In 1917, Adelaide Hasse, a New York public librarian, noted that businessmen wanted information rather than books and were willing to pay for it. The current use of "customer" to describe library users is an example of the creeping spread of market models into our institutions (Buschman, 2003), but the idea that the library should operate as a business is not new. Hasse (1917) asks: "Does any library executive on his job in the year of grace 1917 imagine that his plant differs in any essential from any other business dependent on a market?" (p. 270). Library discourse further normalized capitalist and entrepreneurial forces by casting unproductive individuals as unworthy of library services. Hasse (1917), for example, recommended that librarians stop serving "the immature, the leisure and the handicapped classes" (p. 270) and start operating according to market principles:

[u]ntil libraries consistently carry out well-considered campaigns for the making of markets we are not going to qualify as efficient plants… we must drill our workers to the same efficiency for holding clients that our successful business friends do. (p. 272)

This discourse reinforced market principles by championing efficient workers as good subjects and degrading behaviour that is "leisurely" and "handicapped."

Library Resistance

In a disciplinary society, resistance remains on the margins because the system is based on inclusion and exclusion. Deleuze (1995) notes that the prison was the model par excellence for the disciplinary mechanism and confinement that characterizes all institutions: "thus the heroine in *Europa 51*, on seeing the workers, cries out: 'I thought they were convicts…'" (p. 176). However, in a disciplinary society, there are always spaces between institutions where resistance can take root; it is always possible to break out of the enclosures. We need a better understanding of how the public library as an institution is an enclosure but also of how it has permitted freedom.

The *Library Journal* articles sampled showed no evidence of librarians favouring labour unions. There were, nonetheless, union members in the United States who were very suspicious of Andrew Carnegie's library philanthropy since philanthropy was only possible if money was generated through the exploitation of workers (Ditzion, 1947). At the same time, Union members said that collaboration with librarians to improve education and literacy and thereby strengthen the labour movement was possible (Sparanese, 2002).

Despite the clear impetus to produce passive workers and operate according to economic efficiency, the *Library Journal* articles also indicate that librarians actively opposed the economic imperative. In 1876, the ALA began what would be a long and sustained war with the Bookseller's Association. During the meeting in Philadelphia that established the American Library Association, a resolution was passed opposing the Bookseller's attempt to regulate trade by forbidding its members to sell books to libraries at more than a 20% discount (American Library Association, 1876). In 1897, the ALA petitioned for a modification of a new tariff bill. Almost all the requested exemptions from duties were accepted ("Editorial," 1897). At the beginning of the 1900s, the Library Copyright League was established to advance the interest of libraries in the face of copyright expansion. The League's constitution stated that its "purpose shall be to prevent copyright legislation abridging the existing rights of libraries to import authorized editions of books" ("Library Copyright League," 1907, p. 14). Its primary concern was that copyright might be a "detriment to the educational interests of the country… [and] impair the freedom of public libraries to supply the public with good literature" ("Library Copyright League," 1907, p. 14). In 1907, the League started a major campaign to change provisions in American legislation that limited the importation, hence the supply, of books. Hoping to protect the American book publishing industry, publishers advocated for this new legislation. The literature shows librarians lobbied against it to ensure library practices took precedence over booksellers' interests.

Some evidence also shows that librarians wanted to produce a radically new society. For example, Frederick Crunden (1897) perceived a link between the library and freedom. He doubted that political freedom existed in the United States, noting that social ostracism, imprisonment, and even death have been punishments for advocates of new political ideas. He wrote:

> On the solution of social problems, Ibsen says: 'There is only one thing that avails—to revolutionize people's minds'… The wisdom needed for this task is not to be obtained from schools or colleges, but from the higher education of mature minds—the masses of people—which the public library alone can give. (p. 9-10)

Crunden here advocated a new form of freedom that challenges the status quo. We should not confine "our reading to the accepted standards of a generation of a century ago" (Crunden, 1897, p. 10). Crunden (1897) emphasized the cultivation of the imagination; he demanded that we "elevate our national ideals" (p.11) and move beyond the pursuit for power through the accumulation of wealth, rather than ensure children become creatures of the state.

The Libraries of Discipline and Control

According to Deleuze (1995), the society of control began to replace the disciplinary society in the mid 20th century. The control society is characterized by the dissolving of institutions and institutional boundaries. Information and communication technology facilitate international connections; institutions become less influential as mediators. In a control society, power is less frequently exercised through the reproduction of norms and codes by institutions; rather, power is achieved through surveillance and control of the network. Changes in libraries can provide some examples (see Gerolami, 2009). Patrons do not need to enter the library to access large numbers of electronic books and journal subscriptions. Reference transactions take place by email or online chat services. Increasingly, reference services, cataloguing, and collection development are outsourced to private corporations with the aid of telecommunications technology. Librarians, in these circumstances, are therefore less likely to have direct access to their patrons and control of resources and services. The library as a bricks and mortar institution continues to exist nonetheless. Librarians continue to enact discipline within the library institution. Patrons continue to walk through the library's doors and librarians continue to develop policies, practices, standards, and lists of competencies that govern library work and impact patron behaviour. The history of librarianship contains important lessons that might help us examine the disciplinary practices of librarians.

Librarians might ask how they characterize library patrons, library space, and library practices. This review of the history of librarianship shows how easily certain ideologies and the status quo were supported by well-intentioned library practices. Many taken-for-granted values and ideologies persist in current library practice; while they are intended to protect library users they may also contribute to the normalization and discipline of library users. Further studies might analyze contemporary discourse around the patron as an autonomous individual or the importance of "healthy lifestyles" or "life long learning" to understand how these concepts are deployed to normalize and prioritize certain behaviour.

Conclusion

The early public library was portrayed in the library literature as a cornerstone of democratic society: it was free, open to all, and use was voluntary. It was one institution amongst many involved in cultivating good, moral, upstanding citizens. The study examined how library practices and discourses operated to normalize behaviour to meet moral, political, and economic imperatives. The study demonstrated that champions of the public library did not shy away from their duty to transform plebeians into creatures of the state. The form of discipline that operated on the library can be understood by examining the discourse around library users who were characterized as good citizens who abstained from alcohol, accepted their class status, and were self-reliant and entrepreneurial. This analysis shows how practices and discourses were also used to challenge the status quo, to usher in resistance to economic imperatives, and to encourage creativity.

The ultimate purpose of examining both disciplinary and control mechanisms is to understand and then develop strategies to resist them. According to Deleuze (1995), "[i]t's not a question of asking whether the old or new system is harsher or more bearable, because there's a conflict in each between the ways they free and enslave us… It's not a question of worrying or of hoping for the best, but of finding new weapons" (p. 178).

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