BEFORE METHOD: Analytic Tactics

The *making* of histories

- An analysis that seeks to recover how a condition, a system, a subject, were made.
- The diverse elements that got assembled to make that condition or that subject.

Analytic Tactics

Destabilizing stable meanings

In the shadows of powerful explanations

When territory exits conventional framings:
  it becomes institutionally mobile, nomadic and can alter the meaning of nation-state membership.

Two Framing Propositions

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Larger ecologies of meaning: in cities it becomes extreme

- The specific technical capabilities of interactive technologies deliver their utilities through complex ecologies.
- These ecologies include more than just the technical:
- They also include the logics of users
- And these can diverge significantly from the engineer's logic.
- In the city this means maximizing open source urbanism

Specificity of 'socio-digital formations'

- A basic proposition is the importance of capturing the diversity and specificity of 'socio-digital formations'

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Different kinds of socio-digital formations make legible different articulation between the technical and the non-technical (cultures of use of, aims of users

Focus is on digital interactive domains

- Analytically, I distinguish the technical capacities of digital networks from the socio-digital ecologies within which those tech capacities get activated.

- Intervening mechanisms that may have little to do with the technology per se can reshape network outcomes.

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Digital Formations of the Powerful and the Powerless

- The technical properties of electronic interactive domains deliver their utilities through complex ecologies that include non-technological variables, such as the social and the subjective, as well as the particular cultures of use of different actors.

- One synthetic image we can use is that these ecologies are partly shaped by the particular social logics embedded in diverse domains.

Making a "whole" via recurrence Multi-sited knowledge

- The technology can accommodate multiple particular settings or struggles, and still encompass them into a "whole" through horizontal dynamics, such as for instance, recurrence, rather than vertical integration.

- *Recurrence* of conditions/situations constitutes those localized settings/struggles as a multi-sited whole.

- Such possibilities and systemic drives *undermine generalization*. —about the local, the powerless, immobility, potentiatlities

Velocity: a driver for informalizing knowledges

- The greater velocities that digitization makes possible further drive the informalizing of whole bodies of knowledge, or some of their components.

- Velocity also makes legible, or helps us realize, the fact that a given knowledge might be in a trajectory that can go in different directions

- This in turn can generate emergent types of knowledge – that is, knowledge that is as yet informal, though it may eventually become formalized.

Social logics can alter tech capacities

- Interactive domains are inherently distributive given their technical properties.
- But once we recognize that social logics are at work in such interactive domains it is not necessarily the case that those distributive outcomes will be present every time.
- In both situations though, informal knowledge is ascendant –holds for high finance and for civil society orgs. Both exit bureaucratized and formalized systems.

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- IN THE CITY …all of these elements interact and produce a complex set of spaces

Intelligent Cities: Risk of technical obsolescence

- Excessively 'closed' technical systems that involve people (example Intelligent Cities) are at high risk of becoming obsolete .

They do not register the way users might keep diverging from what the engineer had in mind.

The more widespread the use of intelligent systems in a city, the more the city itself is at risk of becoming obsolete.

DEAD CITIES

What has enabled cities to have long lives?

The City is a complex system.

BUT IT is Incomplete.

- Historically, it is this mix of complexity and incompleteness that has enabled cities to outlive enterprises, kingdoms, and nation-states.

- Installing closed technical systems in a building to govern all its major functions would weaken that mix.

The city tells us what works

- The city is one window into understanding successful technological innovations for urban systems and urban life
- The city as a powerful "hacker" of technologies: it alters the original design, adjusts it to urban users.

Can Technology Hack the city?

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DE-URBANIZING A CITY

But ---The City as Hacker

- Of spaces
- Of technologies
- Of individual's self-interest: the capacity of making a collective good even if the individuals involved are selfish and nasty.
- Of excessively rigid technological systems

URBANIZING AN OLD OIL PLATFORM

Transforming abandoned oil platforms into ocean mini cities

The City: Knowledge Partner

- The city is a generous partner in this work:
- it is a lens onto larger realities
- Many non-urban processes and organizations now have an urban moment in their trajectories.
- This type of analysis keeps us from only seeing as technologists/engineers.

Why do we want to keep cities complex and incomplete?

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UNSTABLE MEANINGS

- Deurbanizing the city
- Membership in a nation-state

Surveillance regimes

- **1,271 government organizations and 1,931 private companies work on programs related to counterterrorism, homeland security and intelligence in about 10,000 locations across the US**

- An estimated 854,000 people – nearly 1.5 times as many people as live in Washington, D.C. – hold *top*-secret security clearances
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MAP OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECURITY AGENCIES IN THE US
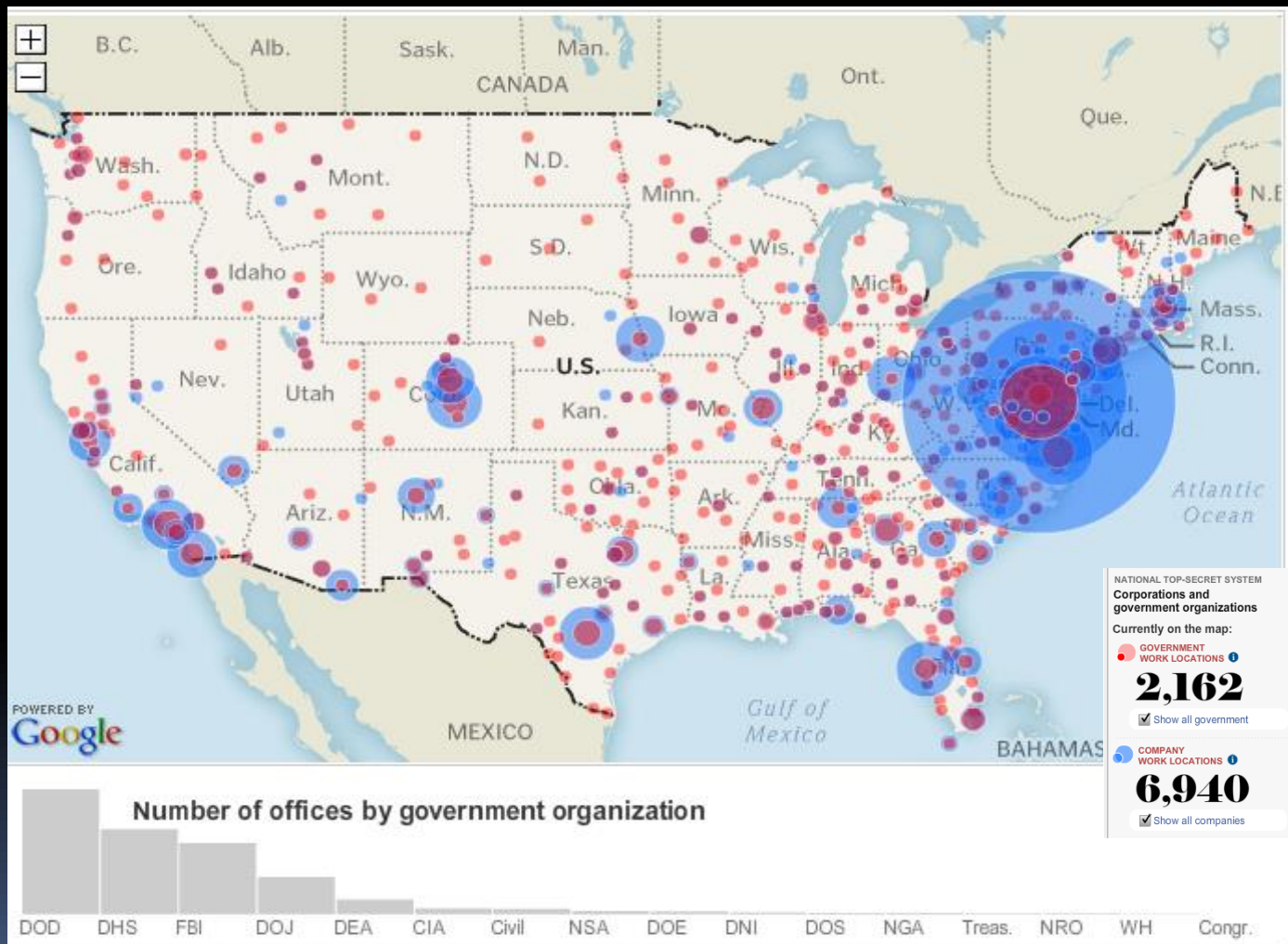
Source: Washington Post. 2010. "Top Secret America," Interactive Maps. *Washington Post*, July 2010. http://projects.washingtonpost.com/top-secret-america/map/