

**Project Group (Number and Name): Group 26, Range Anxiety and Digital Cultures:  
Batteries as Media of Urban Organization**

## Comment

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### Comment

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## Batteries do more harm than good to our society. A daring thesis?

It is certain, that batteries have become an indispensable part of our everyday lives and make a major contribution to our western prosperity. Built into mobiles, laptops, even headphones, batteries are shaping our lives as our constant companion, making it easier and more pleasant. Batteries have also revolutionised the world of healthcare and work, enabling leaner processes.

With all these benefits, however, we often overlook the negative social and environmental consequences that the consume of batteries entails. Since electricity is currently the only marketable sustainable energy, we are often resistant to criticism and unable to broaden our perspective concerning the issues that using batteries contains.

But let's take it one step at a time: There is no denying that batteries will continue to shape our society in the future. Since we currently have no marketable, sustainable alternatives for electricity as an energy source, the battery as a storage medium will prospectively take the place of conventional fossil fuels in transport.

Nevertheless, we should ask ourselves whether it wouldn't be appropriate to rethink our consumption behaviour regarding batteries in certain areas of our private lives.

Actually, a majority of us are not aware of the negative, ecological consequences of consuming battery-powered media. For instance, when mining the necessary raw materials used for batteries, such as lithium or cobalt, we severely destroy the environment and intervene in a sensitive ecosystem. For cost reasons, chemicals emerging from the mining processes are not being disposed of accordingly, making the mining areas uninhabitable for humans and animals.

What's more, the mining of raw materials and the manufacturing process of batteries produce toxic fumes and large amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>. This refutes the assumption that batteries in their current state of development can contribute to a climate neutral future.

Besides, batteries can only be recycled up to 90%, not forgetting the additional e-waste and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions caused by battery-powered media. Because of this, we should question in which areas of our lives batteries rather present a burden than an enrichment and where it would make sense to take a step back.

We all know the negative effects of mobile phones on our concentration and attention span. In addition, social media platforms only provide us with a short-lived pastime and do not add any long-term value to our lives. We should critically question whether it would not be better to concentrate on the essential functions of mobile phones such as texts and calls, inducing that we can once again build mobile phones that last a lifetime. All other functions are either only apparently of importance in a virtual world or can be replaced in an analogue way.

Moreover, it should not be forgotten that workers in resource-rich countries work for a pittance under the most adverse conditions.

In conclusion, it can be said that batteries definitely are indispensable to our society, as they play a role in numerous system-relevant tasks. However, we should try to not only regard batteries in comparison with other fossil fuels, but also evaluate them on their own, contemplating the mentioned social and ecological aspects. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no way around limiting the consumption of battery-powered media as long as no fully sustainable alternative is available.

## **Video Information**

**Title of the Video:** *Group26.mp4*

**Authors of the Video:** Anna Kröger, Ben Welzel, Mattis May, Mustafa Noorzai

**Music:** no music

**Other Data / Licenses for external material:** no other material