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Materiality and urban communication

The rhetoric of communicative spaces

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In recent sessions in both Paris and Washington D.C., scholars interested in issues including media policy, architecture, communication, and urban planning met to discuss the concept and qualities of a “communicative city.” When asked to develop five normative criteria to determine whether a city could be considered especially “communicative,” one of the key themes that emerged from these scholars’ responses was the necessity for such a city to have “places to interact/places of feeling.” When asked what would disqualify a city from being considered “communicative,” a major theme that emerged from the responses was “lack of public spaces for interaction.” These were not the only suggested normative criteria for qualification or disqualification. Other suggested qualifying criteria included the need for a sound infrastructure (including technological infrastructure) and for elements of a civil society, whereas disqualifying criteria included segregation, political corruption and repression, and overly controlled social spaces and practices. However, all these responses suggest that, in order to understand the nature and possibility of communicative cities more fully, we would do well to actually examine the spaces within cities that enable citizens to engage communicatively. We refer to these spaces as “communicative spaces.”

Scholars in rhetoric have taken materialistic principles and, by applying them to artifacts and structures within urban spaces, shown how they function to encourage and evoke interaction and feeling. Gallagher and LaWare (2007) address this issue, arguing that public art in urban spaces serves several important rhetorical functions, including highlighting, evoking, and intensifying emotional responses; inviting judgment; and invigorating or enabling agency. They write that public art sculptures evoke a very different type of embodied emotional response than what is elicited in more traditional advertising and marketing appeals.¹ And, in one of the few contemporary essays to examine urban landscape architecture or “garden design” from a rhetorical perspective, Rosenfield (1989) investigates the extent to which Central Park – the first urban park expressly constructed for general public use – served much the same function as that of civic oratory or eloquence, providing the means “to celebrate institutions and ideological principles thought to be the genius of those cultures.”¹

Indeed, the late nineteenth century and turn of the twentieth century in America witnessed a great deal of interest in the relationship between urban landscapes/public art/memorials/monuments and civic and civilizing urban engagement as evidenced by the City Beautiful and urban park movements. Burke (1947) captured the rhetorical impetus for these types of civic projects, writing that because “social status is not fixed or clearly defined” in the US, citizens desire “objective evidence” of their “status” (ibid.: 5). Clark (2004) further develops Burke’s thesis, explaining that national parks represent symbolic settings that encourage visitors to “enact both individual and collective identity” (ibid.: 3). Burke’s project of expanding the concept of rhetoric to encompass the various symbols that constitute a shared culture offers an explanation of how people are prompted by their shared experiences – material as well as verbal – to understand themselves and their communities in similar ways.

These two concepts, rhetorical landscapes and communicative spaces, provide a critical lens for evaluating the rhetorical enactments of an urban space that has been described as straddling the past and the future. Chicago’s Millennium Park is “acclaimed as a unique fusion of art, architecture, and landscaping; embraced by diverse Chicagoans as a park for all people” (Gilfoyle 2006: x). In this chapter, we examine the extent to which Millennium Park lives up to these claims. In order to determine its potential as a rhetorical-communicative landscape, we examine how the material and symbolic features of the park create a space that is both *inside and outside* of the urban experience and of the city’s history, and that demonstrates the possibilities of the human–nature, human–human, and human–urban interface. In order to determine its potential as a communicative space, we explore how the park situates visitors as engaging in *modes of performance*, related to interacting and feeling. In what follows, we flesh out our critical framework and then apply it to an analysis of Millennium Park. We conclude with an evaluation of the communicative nature of the park and the potentials and pitfalls of this approach to defining and assessing urban spaces more generally. Our analysis is very much in concert with the themes of this collection because it directs attention to the role of “materiality” in communication in a very particular way. By examining and interpreting the materiality of Millennium Park – literally its brick and mortar construction – we illuminate the extent to which it functions as an important physical infrastructure of communication.

Rhetorical enactments in urban parks

In a recent essay examining the rhetoric of the Museum Park at the North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA), Zagacki and Gallagher (2009) exemplify how artifacts, such as the sculptures and installations in the park, serve as *enactments*² that invoke a kind of collective consciousness and sense of civic

and cultural understanding. Zagacki and Gallagher's analysis centers on two distinctive enactments which they claim are central to representations and experiences of the human–nature interface: *inside/outside* and *regenerative/transformativ*e. By *inside/outside* they refer to:

the experience of moving 1) between constructed spaces, such as a museum space or an urban landscape, to less constructed, more organic spaces such as the outdoor park or the rural landscape; and 2) between natural history and human history. By *regenerative/transformativ*e [they] mean moving 1) from natural states to human constructed states and back again to nature, and 2) from one state of understanding to another.

In this essay, we extend the concept of *inside/outside* enactments to an examination of the human–human and human–urban interfaces, in addition to the human–nature interface. As a result, *inside/outside* is used to refer also to the experience of moving (1) between highly constructed urban spaces and more organic urban landscapes and (2) between the past/present and present/future history of the city.

A key aspect of Zagacki and Gallagher's analysis of enactments is the extent to which parks may function as performative spaces. In the case of the Museum Park at the NCMA, the environmental sculptures and other artworks combined with natural elements to create an innovative public space ripe with meaning. In addition to supplying local residents with recreational and leisure opportunities, the NCMA and, as we will demonstrate, Millennium Park, represent an emerging trend in landscapes that seek to mediate the human–nature, human–urban, and human–human interfaces. The material rhetorics of parks and public art sites do not so much function to articulate policy proposals in an argumentative space. Rather, such sites open up an experimental, performative space, in which visitors are pushed to look beyond the normal conventions and boundaries of urban and rural landscape design, to experience what Crary calls "counter-forms of attention" (1999: 18).

In short, parks like the NMCA and Millennium point to how natural and urban/suburban spaces in Raleigh, Chicago, and elsewhere might co-exist or be alternatively imagined and how new versions of community might be experienced in these urban/rural settings. And, in this sense, they function as communicative spaces that enhance the "communicativity" of the respective cities in which they are located. As Gumpert and Drucker (2008) point out, communicative cities and the public parks that comprise them constitute places in which "to encounter others" (*ibid.*: 198), to encourage "civic engagement" (*ibid.*: 199), and to enhance "identity and identification" (*ibid.*: 199). Especially important to community are parks and other public spaces, which are "places to congregate and play to offset the constricting density" of the surrounding urban landscape (*ibid.*: 202).

Both the Museum Park and Millennium Park were developed as responses to (1) environmental issues of direct concern to citizens and/or

associated with environmentally sensitive programs and initiatives, and (2) the desire to bring urban populations into closer contact with each other in ways that foster a sense of community. While the city of Raleigh is known for its green spaces, many residents and their political leaders are wrestling with ways of managing the area's rapid growth and dwindling natural resources. The Museum Park's sculptures and installations enable visitors to experience the natural space into which they enter, and the environmental concerns associated with (spaces like) it in innovative ways, through what Cant and Morris (2006) call "embodied-sensuous experience ... and performative, 'non-representational' and reflexive approaches."

As material rhetoric, sculptures in the park contextualized their respective grounds, linking those who wandered there with an adjacent women's college and the rest of the city of Raleigh's Greenway trail system. Accordingly, the sites were evocative of community in that they acted as gathering places and as public passageways where visitors could convene, converse, and move to and from the surrounding urban areas. Millennium Park is also built in such a manner that visitors are connected – by bridges, railways, sidewalks, and bike lanes – to the rest of Chicago and with other visitors to the park and is, at least in part, a result of Chicago Mayor Daley's commitment to environmentally sensitive programs.³ As a focal point in the center of the city, the park extends outward in a series of nodes and networks constantly reminding visitors of their connectedness to the larger whole. But the interior set of walking paths, garden passages, lawns and other material features bring park-goers into contact with one another and thus, like the Museum Park, resist the sense of urban alienation and anomie sometimes experienced by urban dwellers. Gumpert and Drucker (2008) note that streets and transportation are crucial to communicative cities: even though they are physical, fixed, and semi-permanent features, they carry "emotional impact as well," setting agendas and communicating "to the [city's] inhabitants" (ibid.: 202). Indeed, the interconnectedness of Millennium Park to the surrounding cityscape evokes a kind of comfort in the knowledge that people can easily flow in and out of the park and stands as a kind of material invitation for citizens to travel to downtown Chicago, turning center city into a place of play and gathering rather than simply an area for business and shopping.

To the extent that Millennium Park's sculptures and material features, like those at the NCMA, provide enactments of the human-nature interface and interactive networks to increase citizen contact, Gilfoyle (2006) argues that,

Each component was designed to stimulate a reaction from viewers. Observers look into a sculpture, walk on water, listen to music, pass through a prairie landscape, or cross a bridge. The art still privileges the individual...but the viewer, not the artist interprets the art.

(Ibid.: 314)

This focus on the interpretation of the viewer, the stimulation of a reaction, as well as placing visitors into direct contact with each other, is consistent with the notion of "places to interact/places of feeling" as a criterion for communicative cities. In the analysis below, we examine the rhetorical enactments of Millennium Park's symbolic and material features to assess the extent to which the park lives up to this criterion.

Millennium park and its enactments

The forces that generated Millennium Park "are a reflection of nearly two centuries of Chicago history, politics, and culture" (Gilfoyle 2006: xiii). Indeed, prior to the 1850s, the waters of Lake Michigan covered the area. This was followed by nearly a century of land creation and usage determined by the Illinois Central Railway Company, which was followed by the gradual creation and development of Grant Park by civic leaders. The development of the final corner, of what is sometimes referred to as Chicago's "front yard," into a "combined park, outdoor art museum and cultural center" was completed in 2004, with the grand opening on July 16. Daley is credited with insisting that culture, including visual art, literature, music, and architecture, is "a primary agent of personal expression and social cohesion" and therefore necessary to urban life (Gilfoyle 2006: xii).

Of course, the park was not without its detractors, and in fact, generated considerable controversy during the process of raising public funds to help defray the cost of construction. Many critics raised questions about the cost overrun, complaining that the enormous tax expenditures could have been allocated to other worthy causes – namely, helping Chicago's impoverished citizens and inner city schools. An article in the *New York Times* raised the specter of big-city corruption and nepotism when it reported that an overcharged contract for cleaning up the park had been given to a company that funneled large contributions to Daley's election campaign (Kinzer 2004). Other critics have raised concerns about the use of mixed taxpayer and corporate funding and associated naming rights for sections of the park.

These criticisms notwithstanding, the Millennium Park experienced by visitors is a collection of powerful, large-scale art located within a series of spacious, open plazas and surrounded on two sides by some of the world's tallest skyscrapers and on a third side by the expanse of Lake Michigan. The park is comprised of a pavilion (the Frank Gehry designed Pritzker Pavilion and the Great Lawn), a theater (the Joan W. and Irving B. Harris Theater for Music and Dance); a bridge (the Frank Gehry designed BP bridge), a fountain (the Jaume Plensa designed Crown Fountain), a garden (the Gustafson designed Lurie Garden), and a sculpture (Anish Kapoor's *Cloud Gate*). Other features include the peristyle Millennium Monument in

Wrigley Square which is a historical reference to the peristyle that was long a part of the lake front/Grant Park area. Additionally, Millennium Park features the McCormick Tribune Plaza, which serves as a skating rink in winter and an outdoor music and eating venue in the summer; a below-ground intermodal transportation center (connecting automobile, bus, and rail traffic); the Bicycle Station (a 300-bike parking facility complete with lockers, showers, bike rentals, a repair area, a café, and the Chicago Police Department's Bike Patrol Group); the Exelon Pavilions (four structures that incorporate solar panels and photovoltaic technology and serve as entrances to the underground garage and transportation center); the Chase promenade and the Boeing Gallery which accommodate rotating public art exhibits. A second pedestrian bridge, the Nichols Bridgeway, designed by Renzo Piano and connecting the Modern Wing (also designed by Piano) of the Art Institute of Chicago with Millennium Park, opened in May 2009.

Inside/outside

One of the concerns voiced by critics of Millennium Park was that having so many large scale, distinctive sculptures, and architectural elements would leave visitors feeling as if the individual elements were screaming at each other. However, given the many entrances to the park and the ways in which it is experienced from both outside of the park (from a car window, a skyscraper window, while walking along Michigan Avenue, speeding by in a bus, etc.) and inside the park's physical boundaries, the sculptures, and elements function more as moments of performativity. For instance, Anish Kapoor's *Cloud Gate*, referred to by Chicagoans simply as "the Bean," is the most arresting site for visitors entering the park from the far northwest corner of Michigan Avenue. *Cloud Gate* "is one of the world's largest outdoor sculptures: 110 tons, sixty-six feet long, forty-two feet wide and thirty-three feet high" (Gilfoyle 2006: 261). The massive sculpture's gleaming, elliptical surface is forged of a seamless series of 168 highly polished stainless steel plates, each weighing between 1,000 and 2,000 pounds. Visitors can walk under and around the sculpture because of the concave opening along its underside. Once a visitor is underneath, his or her eyes are drawn upward into the 27-foot-high omphalos, a mirrored indentation providing multiple reflections of those below.

While the sculpture is literally *inside* the park, its reflective surface, as visitors approach, projects images of what is *outside* of the park – the surrounding cityscape, the sky, and the clouds. This sense of seeing what is outside, just as one is moving further inside the park and closer to the sculpture, provides a heightened sense of one's urban surroundings even as it accentuates the separateness, indeed, the set-apartness of the park. Yet, one never feels that the park is separate from the larger city. As a visitor draws closer, the reflection begins to change to include some of the park and its

features, and, ultimately, to include the visitor. Passing under and through, visitors actually enter "inside" the sculpture. As it were, they can look up to find a reflection of themselves and others that situates them both as individuals and as a type of human kaleidoscope piece, one of a larger collective of other visitors, all moving and twirling and shifting as they look up into the reflective surface of the sculpture's underbelly. But, as suggested above, *Cloud Gate* pays homage to the magnificence of the reflected cityscape as much as it interpellates viewers to be participants in, or citizens of, it. This performative moment isolates the viewer even as it calls upon him/her to be part of the larger city space to which they find themselves both literally and figuratively connected.

In addition to its arresting size and quality, the organic shape of "the Bean" contrasts sharply with the highly geometric shapes of the cityscape that surrounds and is reflected by it. Conceptualized as a gate, it becomes the metaphorical entrance both into and out of the park, further solidifying the inside/outside enactment it entails. The creation of multiple reflections, depending on one's physical distance from and orientation to the sculpture further enhances the performative nature of the experience – visitors enact multiple viewpoints of the surrounding cityscape, the park, the ground, and, eventually, as they are drawn into the sculpture itself, themselves and their fellow citizens/visitors. In this way, experiencing *Cloud Gate* changes the way people see the world around them, making them aware of the move from cityscape to art space/landscape and back again as well as supplying them with the cognitive frame from which to appreciate and partake in a city that claims to be cosmopolitan and multicultural.

By contrast, one of the rotating art exhibits, on the Chase Promenade and Boeing Gallery (exhibited during 2007 and 2008) featured five sculptures by Mark di Suvero, whose works are known for the way they appear to balance heavy industrial metal and natural forces, solids and vacant spaces, earth and sky, and human-constructed materials and nature. The choice of di Suvero's sculptures for (temporary) residence in Millennium Park was a good one. His works formed a conceptual bridge with the cityscape outside the park. With their steely surfaces and crisscrossing rectilinear planes and columns, di Suvero's sculptures mimicked the skyscrapers of downtown Chicago and in this sense brought them *inside* the park, where they could become both an object of commemoration and of "play." Thus, by allowing visitors/viewers to see the massive buildings outside as serving essentially human functions, and by inviting them to (quite literally) play on the imitations inside the park, di Suvero "humanized" the glass, concrete, and steel cityscape standing all around on the outside.

Further down Michigan Avenue is the Crown Fountain. It consists of two rectangular glass brick towers which are 50 feet tall, 23 feet wide, and 16 feet thick. The towers are illuminated by over 1 million light-emitting diodes

that line the interior of each tower's façade, turning them into high-rise television screens. The towers display the video portraits of approximately 1,000 Chicago citizens that change every 5 minutes. At timed intervals, the faces on the towers purse their lips and water spouts out [a digital reference to the European, Renaissance-era gargoyles that inspired Plensa (Gilfoyle 2006: 277)]. The towers also periodically broadcast a variety of nature scenes, interspersed between the faces. At night, the three sides of the towers not facing each other display changing colors of orange, red, yellow, green, purple, and white. The towers face one another across a 232-foot-long, 48-foot-wide rectangular reflecting "skin pool." In warm weather, water cascades down the sides of the towers into the shallow, quarter-inch-deep pool paved in black African granite, enabling visitors to "walk on water."

With its two tall towers facing one another, the Crown Fountain becomes a highly interactive and embodied experience: when a visitor is "inside" the fountain – that is, when he or she is standing between the two towers – he or she experiences the faces of two (fellow) Chicagoans, apparently looking at one another and/or at the visitor him or herself. The visitor also feels the water during the warm weather months – a welcome intrusion from outside, of nature entering into the heated cityscape – and experiences the "surprise" of the sudden stoppage of the cascading water and the streaming from the pursed lips. The experience is one that is uniquely inside the urban experience (but with hints of the natural), since for many people, it is only in urban space that they encounter and interact with people of multiple races, ethnic backgrounds, diverse economic classes, and so on. The fountain emphasizes the playfulness as well as the unexpectedness of such encounters, involving visitors' senses of sight, hearing, and touch creating a multimodal, performative space of interaction.⁴

The fountain also enacts a move between the past/present and present/future of the city. Thus, Crown Fountain provides additional communicative infrastructure because, as Gumpert and Drucker (2008) might observe, it transcends and stores "time and place" (ibid.: 203). Crown Fountain does so through its location and its enactment as a public fountain. Fountains have historically played significant roles in civic life, in cities across America and in Europe, initially serving functional needs such as washing and drinking and eventually serving more abstract, epideictic needs such as celebrating the values "of religion, health, purity, wisdom, or youth" (Gilfoyle 2006: 277). Plensa's instantiation of the idea of a public fountain gestures to the historic past of public fountains where people came to wash, and, by incorporating the giant LED screens, becomes a visual archive of a progressive city pushing into the future. In so doing it (1) "offers something eternally moving to the city" (is both inside and outside of the city's history), (2) is something that changes with the seasons (exists inside and outside of nature), (3) enables "later generations to interpret and reinterpret the art" (is inside and outside of the

contemporary moment; Gilfoyle 2006: 288), and (4) with its combination of traditional and yet more contemporary digital design, the fountain signifies Chicago's vision for urban living which, while rooted in the past, also remains solidly pointed toward the future.

The inside/outside enactments of the other features of the park are just as arresting and interesting to consider. The Jay Pritzker Music Pavilion and Great Lawn have together attracted more attention than perhaps any other element, not least because of a design that provides for multiple layers of the inside/outside enactment and the interactive possibilities that come along with it. A sculptural "headdress" of steel ribbons supported by 12 trusses provides cover for the closest seats and the stage portion of the pavilion is both an outdoor music stage and an indoor reception area. Additionally, two massive fifty-by-thirty-foot sliding glass doors can be shut to completely enclose the stage. On the Great Lawn, 4,000 fixed seats remain available for some visitors while 6,000–7,000 people can spread out on the lawn itself and easily mingle with fellow concert-goers. Like other city parks, the grassy surface gestures to the natural world that once dominated the landscape and captures the longing for nature many urban dwellers feel in a concrete and steel-dominated place. Here, too, however, the experience is one of moving between the past/present and present/future of the city, or inside and outside of history. As a unique instantiation of an outdoor music pavilion, the Pritzker Pavilion gestures toward the historical uses of the landscape and to the Grant Park Music Pavilion that preceded it.

The Gehry designed BP Bridge both complements the Pritzker Pavilion and provides another, distinct enactment of inside/outside. The bridge is 925 feet in length, 10 times the width of Columbus Avenue below, and is clad in brushed stainless steel plates that overlap like scales, transforming the structure into a slithering, snakelike shape. The form is both whimsical and functional: the large number of curves allows for a gentle, 5 percent slope, making the bridge accessible to wheelchair users. In addition, the bridge connects the newer, twenty-first century park with the older, lakefront park, linking past with present. As visitors cross the bridge, they reach a point where the waters of Lake Michigan become visible, the breeze from the lake can be felt, and the park becomes more of a traditional city park with tennis courts, trees, benches, and paths. The visitor has enacted a move from the highly constructed cityscape through the estheticized and highly experiential Millennium Park to the landscape of the traditional lakefront park. This is a walk that entails moving from supremely geometric to more and more organic shapes and ends in the lake itself. Thus, visitors experience enactments of human–urban, human–human, and human–nature interfaces as they walk through the park. The bridge acts as, what Gumpert and Drucker (2008) call, a "dynamic feature" of communicative cities, one of which is "flexibility and transformability" (*ibid.*: 203). "In terms of flexibility," the authors explain, "space and place are convertible: sidewalks

become cafes, streets become fairs, parks become concert halls ...” (ibid.: 204). Millennium Park itself represents such a dynamic feature, but the bridge in particular converts space and time. Functionally, it transports a traveler from one point in the park to another while simultaneously serving as a symbolic bridge between past and present and between the organic and the human-made; it is both a means of transport and a suitable resting spot or a place from which to peer at the magnificent lake beyond. As architectural critic Kamin says about the bridge:

It's a bridge, in a sense, to nowhere ... People cross it, then they come back to where they started. They just want to be on it ... The riverlike shape of the bridge forms eddies where, on occasion, people stop and talk to one another.

(Ibid.: 2004)

Implications and conclusions

As this discussion of the inside/outside enactments of Millennium Park suggests, the park may be said to meet the criteria of a communicative city, a space of feeling and a space for interaction – that is, it is a distinctly communicative space. The park's elements, taken together, are characterized by their highly interactive nature: visitors perform certain types of relationships between themselves and the cityscape around them as well as between themselves and other citizens. In so doing, they experience their city from a much richer and varied set of sensibilities, opening them up to interactions and new perspectives.

In the broadest sense what is particularly compelling about a place like Millennium Park is the degree to which it and other cultural public works projects fit within a history of attempts to redirect or reorient the conduct of individuals. Millennium Park, from this perspective, is an effort to govern particular forms of interactions with others, with the self, and with objects. As Ron Greene (1998) has pointed out, such material spaces are important because of the ways in which they “create conditions of possibility for a governing apparatus to judge and program reality” (ibid.: 22). In this respect, what remains to be examined in the future is, first, the extent to which these possible modes of governable performance (in this case, a specific form of reflection or interaction which occurs in Millennium Park – i.e., in the “places to interact/places of feeling”) actually emerge and how they are constitutive of certain pre-existing or shifting normative criteria of citizenship. The critical question here, of course, concerns *whose* criteria of citizenship are disciplined and the ways in which these criteria define one sort of citizenship over another. Second, if in fact public parks actually do work to alter people's behavior and/or alter their mode of reflection and interaction, it is important to consider how these projects of material rhetoric are more “material” than other

forms of discourse. In the analysis above, our claims of Millennium Park being materialist are, frankly, ontological. That is, we have suggested that the objects of the park *are* more material than what rhetorical scholars have previously been studying, such as live speeches, texts filled with speeches, even perhaps digital recordings taken by someone walking through a park. This is precisely because the materials (and the forms into which they are shaped) have the potential to make a difference in how people view and participate in them and in the larger modes of performativity related to urban living. As Blair explains about the materiality of memorials and other constructed sites,

they do perhaps even more obvious work on the body. They direct the vision to particular features, and they direct – sometimes even control – the vector, speed, or possibilities of physical movement. Touching them is very different from touching a book ... and that touch sometimes yields profound responses ... [Material] rhetoric acts on the whole person, not just on the “hearts and minds” of its audience.

(1999: 46)

At the same time, it is important to point out once again that Millennium Park was not without (and continues to have) its critics. Indeed the contested nature of the park reveals the fact that it emerged as part of a complex series of negotiations between political officials, local community and business leaders, artists, engineers, and architects, and other major officials who helped to plan for Millennium Park or who opposed it. These negotiations raise critical questions, similar to those raised above, that go to the heart of the notion of a communicative city: To what extent does the goal of urban “communication,” as a public good with material instantiation, come to trump the interests of underprivileged urban populations potentially made even more impoverished when publicly financed social programs fail to be funded because those monies are diverted to city park projects? Should the subordination of such interests actually disqualify a city as communicative, given that Gumpert and Drucker (2008) cite as some disqualifying features corruption, censorship and repression of speech, discouraging heterogeneous urban populations, ignoring the concerns of citizens who believe they do not have a stake in a city’s improvement, and so on? And in what sense does the rhetoric of esthetics and urban design favoring public projects like Millennium Park simply mask the deeper interests of multinational corporations and neoliberal institutions while devaluing or reducing the concerns of a particular city’s under or working class?

Alternatively, as partial antidotes to this critique, we might consider two points: First, a huge and somewhat controversial endeavor like Millennium Park actually suggests how social, political, and other

networks can stimulate the interaction (i.e., political deliberation, corporate fundraising, etc.) necessary to bring large, controversial public projects of any sort to fruition – projects that could be apparently beneficial to all. Just as Lanham (1995) has written about the productive debate surrounding Christo's "Running Fence," the arguments over Millennium Park may reveal much about the possibility of human transformation. Lanham described the outcome of the "Running Fence" controversy this way: "the hearing[s], the plan[s], the rendering[s], the Environmental Impact Statement; the construction worker, the councilman, the artist" – all of this demonstrated that "human purpose will be both the same and utterly transformed" (ibid.: 50). Second, despite the problems associated with planning (not to mention the internal structural defects and other shortcomings of) projects like Millennium Park, the Park nevertheless marks a hopeful move toward what many cities might yet become. As Gumpert and Drucker (2008) put it,

A chasm separates the normative criteria – our expectations and desires [for what, ideally, constitutes a communicative city] – from what occurs within the structures of the city – life as it is played out 24 hours a day in its harsh and multifaceted scope.

(Ibid.: 200)

As a product of machine politics but also noble philanthropy, civic engagement, and esthetic vision, Millennium Park reflects this deeper tension. Insofar as we believe the park can be seen as a material enactment of these norms, it may also resolve this deeper tension in a productive manner.

In providing an understanding of the rhetorical nature of the park's materiality, through an exploration of the inside/outside enactment, this analysis suggests how we can identify and evaluate the qualities that lead to interaction and enhanced agency for all citizens and, ultimately, to a way of theorizing communicative spaces and the cities which house them.

Notes

- 1 Whereas advertising uses emotional appeals quite often to override rational and/or argumentative capacity ... public art inspires a sense-making impulse ... It cannot be consumed like a product – it continues to stay in there in our path, in our city, in our day-to-day seeing of it long after the last candy bar, burger, pizza slice, Bud Light, are gone. (LaWare and Gallagher 2007: 163)
- 2 Blair used the term "enactment" to advocate for a shift, by rhetorical critics, from a focus strictly on symbolism to a consideration of material consequences and performativity in their analyses.

- 3 Throughout the 1990s, the park district planted an estimated 7,000 trees annually in city parks, totaling approximately 300,000 between 1989 and 2002 ... By 2003, 63 miles of Chicago streets included new median plantings. From 1997 to 1999, under the Campus Parks Program, Chicago built or restored 55 school parks. Daley also ... helped establish the Chicago Center for Green Technology, a former Brownfield site that was transformed into a model for sustainable environmental design. (Gilfoyle 2006: 83)
- 4 In fact, dualities such as public/private, interior/exterior, absence/presence, opaque/translucent are central to Plensa's work as is the desire to "integrate the viewer into an interactive relationship with the art" (Gilfoyle 2006: 283-285).

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The birth of the “neoliberal” city and its media

James Hay

Beyond the “new media” city

This chapter's account of the birth of “neoliberal” city and its media shares with various veins of research in Communication and Media Studies, Urban Sociology, and Geography an interest in the “new media” city. However, this chapter proposes an alternative theory, history, and analysis of the past and current relation between media and cities, specifically questioning recent formulations of the (new) media city. To what extent have recent theories' and analyses' understanding of the linkage between media and urban space emphasized that one is the primary determination of the other? To what extent have they emphasized politics, economy, culture, or technology as the single, primary, or most important determination? To what extent have they understood any of these determinations as singular and self-determining? These questions lead me to ask another set of questions. What would a study of the production of a media city involve if it did not place “media” or media-making at the center of a chain of productivity? What would be involved instead in an analysis that considers the current media city (the “newness” of the linkage between media and the city) through a history of spatial practice and the production of space? Addressing these questions involves recognizing the Modern bias of most studies of the media/city, as well as the possibilities of a counter-Modern form of thought and analysis from and about the media city.

Addressing these questions also allows me to examine how the current formation of the new media city has called forth, instrumentalized, and/or targeted specific technologies (“media”) of freedom and government. In this way, the chapter considers how the new media city became the object of liberal programs and policies (a recent rationality and arrangement of liberal government) oriented toward a new regime of *urban renewal*. The current liberal city's formation and reformism as media space and network are not new; the city has been a laboratory and performance stage of liberal reform since the nineteenth century. By charting this history, the chapter examines how a recent discourse and reasoning about the new media city develops out of and perpetuates a Modern reasoning about progress, renewal, and