

RAMBLING AS RESISTANCE: FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED, MICHEL DE CERTEAU, AND THE MICROPOLITICS OF WALKING IN THE CITY

Michel de Certeau's "Walking in the City," which appears in his *Practice of Everyday Life*, attempts to demonstrate how the potential for radical politics lies inherently within ostensibly mundane, value-neutral actions, especially that of walking. He contends that, if Michel Foucault is correct in claiming that power does not simply emanate from individual actors and institutions, but seeps through social space itself by disciplining individual bodies, then a resistance to such power must take the form of practices that creatively reinterpret the local places and landscapes that mold action, gesture, and somatic perception. de Certeau acknowledges that Pierre Bourdieu's conception of *habitus* does demonstrate how day to day practices do autonomously adapt themselves to social discipline inherent within spaces, but he criticizes Bourdieu's own claim that such adaptations constitute only slight variations from the genres of action and response imposed by systems of power. In contrast to the structuralism he sees pervading many accounts of how power lies inherent within seemingly neutral spaces, de Certeau supposes that walking in cities constitutes a method by which individuals use their bodies and not their minds to resist the discipline and *habitus* imposed by social space, thereby cultivating a subjectivity that allows them to autonomously interpret the environment around them, and to not be subjected to interpretation by it.

Although de Certeau presents a compelling vision of the hidden micro-political potentialities of walking, many questions remain unanswered concerning the viability of his project. Most notably, what de Certeau claims to be universal properties of walking, in fact represent only a small and specialized instance of this daily activity. For walking to embody the potentials for autonomous subjectivity that he claims, it must be guided by a unique approach to every individual's unconscious appropriation of his or her immediate environment: Because power works through space, it can only be undermined through challenging this discipline. Many have noted that de Certeau too liberally universalizes what remains a particular instance of the body moving itself through social space. Furthermore, many theorists of

urban space undermine de Certeau's depiction of those spatial properties that enable walking to have the ability to resist bodily discipline. This essay contends that the work of an unlikely ally, that of landscape Architect Frederick Law Olmsted, can possibly provide support to de Certeau by articulating spaces or, for the purpose of this argument, the properties of spaces which maximize the likelihood that individuals will engage in the kind of subversive walking that de Certeau describes.

Olmsted's parks provide a particularly good environment for encouraging de Certeau's vision of walking, due to their ability to foster the unconscious, autonomous, somatic movement through space that counteracts the discipline inherent in other parts of the urban environment. This is especially true of Prospect Park in Brooklyn, New York, which Olmsted believed to be his most fully realized work. Its sloping pathways and landscapes prompt individuals to move without proscribing direction, and thus, "ramble" throughout its complex environment with only their own "feel" for the landscape as a guide. Such non conscious yet subjectively guided movement undermines the rationalistic, cognitive somatic suggestions that characterize urban experience. With repeated instances of "rambling," walkers "unbend" their faculties and gain a sense of "enlarged freedom" as they, both, somatically appropriate and reinterpret the park's environment, while gaining the general propensity to use their bodies for such purposes in environments beyond the park. If the geographic properties of Olmsted's parks were thought of as general spatial characteristics that could be applied to various extents in other contexts, then Olmsted's work could play an important role in designing "spaces of resistance" where individuals undertake processes of undermining the power that contemporary disciplining environments impose upon them.

Before the essay proceeds, it is important to note that it will avoid discussions of Olmsted's "true" intentions for his work. A robust biographical literature upon his life and work already exists, but remains mostly irrelevant to the work of this essay. It is only necessary to discuss the actual spatial properties of Olmsted's parks in order to use his work to answer the questions raised concerning de Certeau. Furthermore, one must recognize that Olmsted's language concerning the spatial qualities discussed in the essay is that of a denizen of the 19th century and, therefore, seems inappropriate to addressing theoretical issues of 20th century French theorists. But, even though Olmsted described his work with language that seems to imply goals far afield from de Certeau, it will become clear that he understood space to

have influences on bodies that presaged many insights from theorists such as Bourdieu and de Certeau.¹

The essay will proceed in four steps. First, it will outline how de Certeau's understanding of walking attempts to overcome what he sees to be the lack of creativity within the description of everyday practices inherent in Bourdieu's understanding of *habitus*. Second, it will explore how de Certeau's understanding of the potentialities of walking remains much more limited than he portrays: Walking as resistance only occurs under limited spatial circumstances. Third, it will outline the aspects of Olmsted's parks that possess relevance to understanding how walking might act more reliably as resistance to spatial discipline. Prospect Park's landscapes prompt the body to guide movement using wide spatial suggestions. Such non-instrumental journeys comprise the groundwork for his concept of "rambling," which represents a particularly creative form of that movement. Frequent rambling produces what he describes as the "unbending of the faculties" that leads to a sense of "enlarged freedom." This can be understood as a process of somatic reinterpretation of built environments that may be applied in a number of different contexts.

HABITUS, TACTICS AND WALKING

Michel de Certeau's finds a major intellectual influence in the work of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* with his own concern for the process by which systems of power both structure day-to-day experience to produce norms, and allow for agency within these systems. Dissatisfied with overly structuralist understandings of the relationship between individual actions and the social systems that structure them, Bourdieu sought to articulate how norms and understandings were enacted in the plural micro-variations of everyday life. Bourdieu claims that systems do not perpetuate themselves by imprinting rigid patterns of belief and response upon individuals, but instead encourage the cultivation of flexible styles of reactions to situations

¹ Hiss (1990) explicitly argues that Olmsted's designs, especially Prospect Park presage much contemporary work that elucidates the process by which landscapes mold perceptions of the body and how bodies subconsciously react to landscapes, a process he calls "simultaneous perception." He states: "All these factors that modern research has shown to be part of the human response to landscapes are present along the entrance to Prospect Park. ... Were these factors incorporated deliberately? Scholars of the work of Olmsted and Vaux tell us they were. But how could Olmsted and Vaux have known what we're just now finding out? ... Olmsted had a clear personal understanding of the need for simultaneous perception, even if he lacked a late-twentieth-century vocabulary with which to describe it." (42)

which he calls *habitus*. He states that:

the conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce *habitus*, systems of durable, transposable dispositions structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcome without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without being in any way the product of obedience to rule they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor. (Bourdieu 1990, 53)

He notes that these patterns of behavior, while "regulated" and "regular," flexibly adapt and translate macrosociological systems to the myriad everyday situations that individuals actually face. Bourdieu stresses that the creativity inherent within *habitus* remains limited, explaining that "because *habitus*, like every 'art of inventing,' is what makes it possible to produce an infinite number of practices that are relatively unpredictable (like the corresponding situations) but also limited in their diversity." (1990, 55) Thus *habitus* constitutes a meditative property that translates relatively stable macro structures into the relatively unstable realm of everyday existence.

Both the transference of these systemic principles to the individual and the method of their adaptation to everyday context, Bourdieu states, occur through the body, not the "mind" that adopts the patterns of the system. He states that "practical belief is not a state of mind, still less a kind of arbitrary adherence to a set of instated dogmas and doctrines (beliefs), but rather a state of the body..." (1990, 68) The body reacts to concrete situations that require individuals to quickly adapt to changes in their immediate environment; not through conscious deliberative processes, but instead through non-cognitive adaptations that mold universals to particulars. He claims that this process "orients choices which though not deliberate, are no less systematic and which without being ordered and organized in relation to an end, are none the less charged with a kind of retrospective finality. A particularly clear example of practical sense as a proleptic adjustment to the demands of a field is what is called in the language of sport, a feel for the game." (1990, 66) So, just as a baseball player does not consciously choose when to swing at a pitch, a social "player" does not consciously choose when to either use charm or aggression in conversation. She instead gets a "read" on that person and a "sense" of what is appropriate at the right time. Furthermore, although the exact enunciation of this charm or aggres-

sion will be appropriate and adaptive of the particular situation, this choice of the appropriate response will be of a particular genre indicative of larger patterns of cultural and social morays. In other words she will unconsciously mold the contingencies of daily experience to the strictures of the larger patterns of “acceptable” behavior within society.

But how does a person learn to get a “feel” for the practice of their daily lives, and how does this non-cognitive ability remain consistent and creative at the same time? Once again, Bourdieu relies on his understanding of how action depends on the body functioning as a repository of unconscious social knowledge. He claims that, as individuals move through physical spaces, perform socially prescribed practices within these spaces and interact with others in socially constituted non physical spaces, this result in a series of postures, gestures, patterns of movements that are proscribed by these spaces and that imprint themselves as somatic “memories” on the body and thus shape *habitus*. Furthermore, once the body “learns” how to adapt to situations, *habitus* becomes mobile and bestows stable styles of interpretation, adaptation and action to multiplicities of situations. He states:

Every social order systematically takes advantage of the disposition of the body and language to function as depositories of deferred thoughts that can be triggered off at a distance in space and time by the simple effect of replacing the body in an overall posture which recalls the associated thoughts and feeling, in one of the inductive states of the body, which, as actors know give rise to states of mind. (Bourdieu 1990, 69)

Bourdieu also stresses that because bodies do not simply exist in a singular location, , but move through space with distinct rhythms, paces and speeds, that temporal qualities of everyday actions influence *habitus*, and thus profoundly affect the sustenance of social patterns of interpretation and power. He claims:

Social disciplines take the form of temporal disciplines and the whole social order imposes itself at the deepest level of the bodily disposition through a particular way or regulating the use of time, the temporal distribution of collective and individual activities and the appropriate rhythm which to perform them. (Bourdieu 1990, 75)

Because *habitus* cannot embody specific concepts or action, it sculpts actions through imbuing spatial and temporal styles of interpreting the concepts and actions that individuals employ on a day-to-day basis.

These styles and basic metaphors can constitute powerful inducements to adopt authoritative understandings of acceptable behavior and thus legitimate powerful institutions, groups and individuals. Thus, as bodies move through particular environments, *habitus* takes on the spatial conceptions and metaphors consistent with that space, and these metaphors go on to influence interpretations and actions in a multiplicity of contexts. For example, Bourdieu notes:

The manly man who goes straight to his target without detours is also a man who refuses twisted and devious looks, words, gestures and blows. He stands up straight and looks straight into the face of the person he approaches or wishes to welcome. . . . A gaze that is up in the clouds or fixed on the ground is that of an irresponsible man, who has nothing to fear because he has no responsibilities in his group. (1990, 70)

Thus, a style of walking leads to a style of thinking, both in one's interactions with others and in interactions with the world. Moving one's body "straight to his target," an actor focuses directly, and ignores other visual, intellectual and even moral possibilities; while gazing up at the clouds leads a person not simply to become easily distracted to tasks at hand, but open to otherness, "less responsible to the group," and possibly more independent. Thus, Bourdieu demonstrates how styles of gestures, modes of movement, and rhythms of action constitute highly influential avenues through which spaces discipline bodies and identities.

While de Certeau remains highly influenced by the contention that everyday life plays a powerful role in the imprinting of systems of power to the individual through the spatial and temporal experience of the body, he strongly takes issue with Bourdieu's understanding that *habitus* only transfers relatively stable repertoires of action and patterns of subjectivity. He instead claims that everyday experience and bodily dispositions afford much more opportunity for creative appropriation of, and resistance to, systemic patterns of power. Whereas Bourdieu describes *habitus* only in terms of practices that, while superficially multiple, varied, and creative, recapitulate inflexible social systems; de Certeau claims that the negotiations of daily life contain the potentiality for individual agency, when they take the form of what he deems "tactics." He makes this distinction by explaining that:

A tactic is a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus. No delimitation of an exteriority then provides it with the condition necessary for autonomy. The space of a tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain

imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power. (de Certeau 1984, 36-37)

In claiming that tactics are enabled through “the absence of a proper locus,” de Certeau suggests that they come to be employed when an individual does not possess strong social resources for resistance or autonomy. A tactic is an action “lacking its own place, lacking a view of the whole, limited by ... blindness” (1984, 38), and this lack of focus forces individuals who operate within disciplining spaces to subtly take advantage of characteristics of these spaces themselves in order to exercise their subjectivities.

But, although landscapes are structured by concrete and panoptic control leading individuals to undertake spatially and temporally scripted practices, de Certeau insists that these forms of social discipline have gaps that allow for creative interpretation. He asks how individuals can reinterpret and act creatively, despite the obstacles created by disciplined space:

What constitutes the implantation of a memory in a place that already forms an ensemble? . . . It is furnished by the conjuncture, that is by external circumstances, in which a sharp eye can see the new and favorable ensemble they will constitute, given one more detail. A supplementary stroke and it will be “right.” In order for there to be practical “harmony” there is lacking only a little something, a scrap which becomes precious in these particular circumstances and which the invisible treasury of the memory will provide. (1984, 86)

Thus, the exercise of tactics depends upon an absence within a particular space that calls individuals to re-establish the equilibrium of their relationship to their environment. In spatial terms, such opportunities arise because, even though individuals must move within the most highly structured spaces, such movement diachronically changes the body’s positionality creating anticipations of impending consummations of goals and thus incomplete realms of discipline. Entire journeys do not occur instantaneously and the attempt to fulfill one’s plans— “adding one more detail,” such as the visual suggestion of a novel path through a landscape or a creative gesture within a the fulfillment of a routine— can prompt an unexpected memory or interpretation to become employed in a often experienced situation. It is because movements take time, that goals are not immediately achieved; or in other words, because actions are embodied, that individuals can creatively utilize already-possessed understandings to fulfill everyday tasks, and thus undertake tactical movement and not simply recapitulate *habitus*. And, because “harmonies” can take many concrete

forms, many different possible interpretations may be used to re-establish the equilibrium that the original action was meant to provide.

de Certeau likens this ability to the Greek *metis*, which he defines as inclusive of “flair, sagacity, foresight, intellectual flexibility, deception, resourcefulness, vigilant watchfulness, a sense for opportunities, diverse sorts of cleverness, and a great deal of acquired experience.” (1984, 88)² Notice here how he indicates that when one effectively exercises *metis*, one draws upon many non-cognitive properties, such as sense, watchfulness, and flexibility, an observation that recalls Bourdieu’s invocation of the importance of “feel” and of not “presupposing a conscious aiming” to the adaptations of *habitus*. He goes on to place further emphasis upon the non-cognitive and the somatic through his claim that *metis* is characterized by three distinct properties all dealing with the experience of space and time: “*Metis*, counts and plays on the right point in time, (*kairos*) it is a temporal practice. Second it takes on many different masks and metaphors: it is an undoing of the proper place. Third it disappears into its own action, as though lost in what it does without any mirror that re-presents it: it has no image of itself.” (1984, 82) When exercising one’s tactical sense or judgment,³ a person appropriates (the right) time in choosing the most advantageous moment for implementing one’s intervention and undoes the “proper place” by moving within its confines by paths, with rhythms, and through gestures contrary to the discipline the environment normally expresses. Furthermore, de Certeau’s claim that tactics “disappear” into their own action emphasizes that they come to be retained, not within conscious memory, but instead as unconscious modes of response and interpretation. In using space and time to one’s advantage, de Certeau proposes that the subjectivity of one’s body need not simply act as an agent that mediates objective social structures to subjective situations, but can in fact act as a vehicle for agency and resistance.

² Highmore (2006) makes the mistake of equating tactical action to poesis in an effort to interpret de Certeau’s understanding as a “speech act” or a “practice of enunciation” (107). The problem with such a position is that it ignores the pre-cognitive and alinguistic aspects of tactical actions.

³ Just as Bourdieu, de Certeau uses the word “sense” to describe his “ability.” de Certeau explicitly ties his “sense” to an active ability, that of aesthetic sense as described by Kant in his Critique of Judgment. He states “(Kantian) judgment (*logishche takt*) does not bear on social conventions (the elastic equilibrium of a network of tacit contract) alone, but more generally on the relation among a great number of elements and it exists only in the act of concretely creating a new set by putting one more element into a convenient connection with this relation, just as one adds a touch of red or ochre to a painting, changing it without destroying it. The transformation of a given equilibrium into another one characterizes art.” (72)

de Certeau goes on to describe one particular activity that encourages the exercise of individuals' tactical sense, that of walking in the city. He claims that, even though cities represent highly structured spaces that impose numerous spatial and temporal disciplines of bodies, walking (as opposed to activities of commerce or entertainment and other modes of transportation such as automotive or public) allows the individual to choose paths, paces, and objects of moment and to undermine structured spaces, while pursuing quotidian aims. Although the map of the city certainly imposes a structure, the "walker actualizes some of these possibilities... but he also moves them about and he invents others since the crossing, drifting away, or improvisation of walking privilege, transform or abandon spatial elements." (1984, 99) Thus, as opposed to following predetermined paths and moving one's body in patterns determined by unitary spatial and temporal structures:

Walking affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses, respects etc., the trajectories it 'speaks.' All the modalities sing a part in this chorus, changing from step to step, stepping through proportions, sequences and intensities which vary according to the time, the path taken and the walker, these enunciatory operations are on an unlimited diversity, they therefore cannot be reduced to their graphic trail. (1984, 99)

In the process of these creative micro deployments and "sequences," de Certeau claims that a walker tells an individual "story" of a journey, while simultaneously undermining the spatial and temporal practices a particular urban space attempts to impose upon its inhabitants. He describes this dual construction and deconstruction of space by stating:

Walking selects and fragments the space traversed; it skips over links and whole parts that it omits. From this point of view every walk constantly leaps or skips like a child hopping on one foot. It practices the ellipsis of conjunctive loci. (1984, 101)

By directing their own bodies through a space that might otherwise wish to claim authority of direction, walking individuals exert their own "sense" of how to complete their journey and fill the lacunae offered by the multiple, diverse opportunities provided by the complex, yet incomplete system of urban space.

de Certeau goes on to explain that, in the process of creating their own trajectories through structured spaces, individuals not only exercise creativity within space and time, but produce their own interpretations of spaces. When walking, an individual tells a "spatial story" and, with their bodies,

he claims that individuals transform places into “spaces” or “practiced” places. In other words, they take the space given to them and integrate it into their own lives and interpretive schema. In the absence of stories, the only tools individuals might use to transverse the spaces of their lives are maps; which, when used in isolation, constitute “disquieting, fatalistic experience of a formless, indistinct and nocturnal totality.” (1984, 123) de Certeau claims specifically that stories perform two functions, that of “founding,” and that of establishing “frontiers and bridges.” In their capacity to engage in foundation stories, they “create a field that authorizes dangerous and contingent social actions” (1984, 125) that are fragmented, miniaturized and polyvalent. Thus, in walking a path and therefore telling a story about it, a person comes to experience, through first hand knowledge, that a particular space represents a field for creative action and appropriation. In being able to cross the street, choose one’s pace, and modify one’s goals in mid journey, a person realizes one small, partial, fleeting, instance of agency. Furthermore, in the course of one’s journey’s on foot, one establishes boundaries, the safe and the not safe, the pleasant and the not pleasant, while simultaneously fusing streets, buildings, neighborhoods and even regions into narrative structures. It is through these two particular functions that individuals may somatically appropriate even the most disciplining environment.

It is through the process of this appropriation that de Certeau claims individuals can creatively reinterpret environments and thus exercise autonomous subjectivity. He claims that in experiencing physical bridges that lead to creating psychic bridges, individuals transform ideas and spaces they once regarded as “other” into part of their own repertoire action and response. He contends that “in recrossing the bridge and coming back within the enclosure the traveler henceforth finds there the exteriority that he had first sought by going outside and then fled by returning.” (1984, 128) Thus, “what the map cuts up, the story cuts across” or establishes possibilities for spaces of action and connections between spaces not apparent through reading “maps” or established systems of movement through space. Whereas habitus instantiates established somatic metaphors of the appropriation of space within an individual’s subjectivity, tactics allow the charting of one’s own paths through space, and thus cultivates the ability to establish unique relationships between environments and ideas they evoke. The metaphors of the body sculpt the metaphors of the mind, and metaphors developed through tactical movement remain open, flexible, and resistant to discipline. With the ability to establish their own “bridges and boundaries,” individuals need not follow the prescribed routes and

rhythms of movements dictated by maps, and instead can tell their own stories about how they relate to their larger world.

CONTEMPORARY URBAN SPACE, SPATIAL STORIES

de Certeau gives a compelling account of how walking in an urban environment allows for movements and gestures that undermine spatial discipline of bodies and foster the ability to creatively appropriate structured space to one's advantage. The only problem with this supposition lies, as many have noted, in the fact that the actual design of cities, and the manner in which individuals walk through these cities, varies internally, with some environments encouraging the tactical movement de Certeau describes and others undermining this facility. From the beginnings of modern urban life, walking has been interpreted ambiguously, with many questioning its liberatory possibilities.

For example, Benjamin (1999) discusses Baudelaire's fascination with the figure of the *flâneur*, or the sophisticated, world-weary, urban vagabond, as the "character type" of the Paris boulevards. This attitude arises due to the dramatic changes in urban space and temporal characteristics experienced by Parisians of the mid 19th century. Benjamin observes that "a kindred problem arose with the advent of new velocities, which gave life an altered rhythm." (199, 417) As the *flâneur* traipses through the crowded streets, he "collects" perceptions and experiences of both other people and his environment in general. He does not avoid the crowd, nor does it overwhelm him. Instead, he selectively picks encounters that might amuse him in an effort to constantly discover banal novelties. Benjamin ties the specifically spatial and temporal qualities of street life with this attitude when he states:

If, let us say, we were to live vis-à-vis some things more calmly and vis-à-vis others more rapidly, according to a different rhythm, there would be nothing "subsistent" for us, but instead everything would happen right before our eyes; everything would strike us. But this is the way things are for the great collector. They strike him. How he himself pursues and encounters them, what changes in the ensemble of items are affected by a newly supervening item— *all this shows him his affairs in constant flux.* [italics, jk] Here, the Paris arcades are examined as though they were properties in the hand of a collector. (At bottom, we may say, the collector lives a piece of dream life. For in the dream, too, the rhythm of perception and experience is altered in such a way that everything even in the seemingly most neutral—comes to strike us; everything concerns us). (Benjamin 1999, 205-206)

Benjamin's collector accumulates facts but certainly does not tell a "spatial story," or establish foundations through "building bridges" and delimiting boundaries. "Thus represented," he claims "the things allow no mediating construction from out of 'large contexts.'" (Benjamin 1999, 206) Therefore, the *flâneur* moves through space but exercises no direction, no tactical "sense." Instead, he merely "pursues and encounters" space, and his movements, instead of representing autonomous interventions into structured environments, these actions constitute aimless movements prompted, not by subjective choices, but instead by the myriad spatial and temporal inducements he encounters in his daily life.⁴

Furthermore, some theorists have emphasized how urban environments present much less opportunity for the "new and favorable ensembles" that de Certeau claims to enable tactics. Jane Jacobs describes that, although neighborhoods with short, irregular blocks, allow for variation of movement, exploration, and the exercise of tactics, much of urban design actually does not follow this path. Whereas the street pattern of her ideal neighborhood finds its roots in preindustrial development, since the late 19th century, urban design has taken a much different route. As opposed to short blocks and irregular patterns, long grid blocks have become the norm. Jacobs discusses one neighborhood characterized by this design strategy, the Upper West Side of Manhattan, and observes how such spaces regularize urban movement and discourage the variation of the individual's position within time and space. She states that an individual who lives on Eighty-Eighth street, "may very well never enter the adjacent blocks on Eighty-Seventh Street and Eighty-Ninth Street for years." (Jacobs 1961, 178) Because these short blocks feed into a long perpendicular avenue, the environment encourages a unitary, particular path. As Jacobs states, "this man would have every justification for disbelieving that Eighty-Seventh and Eighty-Ninth streets or their people have anything to do with him." (Jacobs 1961, 178-179) This observation implies that the "boundaries" that de Certeau believes individuals to establish by experimental walking are often imposed by the geography of urban spaces. Furthermore, this boundary inhibits the

⁴ Buchanan (2000) notes that some have actually attempted to equate Benjamin's interpretation of the *flâneur* with de Certeau's description of tactical walking. He points out that "it should also be obvious that what Benjamin describes is a peculiar type of city-user, whereas what de Certeau has in view is the most ordinary of city users." (113) Although this statement does correctly highlight the differences between the two descriptions, it begs the questions of, first, how "peculiar" and unique the *flâneur* actually becomes in urban spaces that possess even more of the spatial and temporal "flux" indicative of Benjamin's description; and, second, if de Certeau's understanding of walking represents the prevalent form of city use, then how does one account for the many impediments to such tactical activity?

formulation of a “bridge” between the inhabitants of one block and another; something which might have occurred, if the street layout had encouraged a different pattern of movement. Jacobs is explicit in identifying these dangers to the potential for encouraging subjectivity within urban environments when she states, “long blocks in their nature, thwart the potential advantages that cities offer to incubation, experimentation and many smaller enterprises” (Jacobs 1961, 183) Such troubling urban geography comes to be replicated through many different iterations: fragmented neighborhoods with seemingly impenetrable boundaries, dispersed communities not amenable to walking, and increased use of surveillance all seem to undermine de Certeau’s relatively unitary account of walking.

In fact, the possibility for resistance to the somatic discipline of the modern space which de Certeau claims for all acts of walking seems to be an incredibly specialized instance of this daily activity. As Morris states:

It is easy enough to think of pleasurable waking practices that exemplify this poetic and highly romantic sense of being unconsciously taken where one’s footsteps lead (for instance a Sunday afternoon walk in an unfamiliar district of the city in which one lives). On the other hand, it also seems to be an unnecessarily limiting framework; in other words, the metaphors of ‘absence’ and ‘presence’ are simply not that helpful when considering a range of more regimented or functional instances of walking... (Morris 2004, 684)

Many urban spaces and structures of *habitus* encouraged by these spaces simply do not allow for tactics and telling spatial stories. City blocks, the very resource that de Certeau feels to be the spatial resource for encouraging somatic tactical creativity, actually encourage the more rigid *habitus* that he fears. The spatial lacunae de Certeau claims to be present within all urban space only occur within particular environments, and only certain styles of walking within these environments actually manifest the creativity of tactics.

In fact, whether it is modernist rational design or post modern pastiche, the experience of living in cities seems to be more and more hostile to exercise of practices as de Certeau describes them. Many observe that urban life seems to be more totalizing and fractured at the same time.⁵ Within particular spaces, individuals face more and more observation, control and disci-

⁵ For example, Zukin (1991) states, “One of the most fascinating aspects of place in recent years is that it has become more homogenous in some ways and more heterogeneous in others. (12) See also Ellin (1996) for a through exploration of various interpretations of postmodern urban space.

pline through both spatial and temporal strategies upon the body, yet the fragmentation of spaces, cities and regions ensure that individuals do not traverse the entirety of their environment with freedom or creativity. In fact, individuals increasingly face the situation described by Jacobs in that they are led to never enter seemingly adjacent spaces which are related to their immediate environment, and thus decreasingly find their own spatial and temporal bridges and boundaries. Zygmunt Baumann describes an instance where his driver insisted there was only one way to travel through a city, and how this spatial rigidity, lack of depth in urban geographical familiarity, and seeming blind adherence to habitual patterns represents an increasing occurrence in urban experience. He notes:

My guide's assurance that there was no way to avoid the center's traffic was no pretence, it was sincere and faithful to her mental map of the city in which she was born and had lived ever since. That map did not record the unsightly street of the 'rough districts' through which the taxi took me. In the mental map of my guide, in the palace where those streets should have been plotted, there was, purely and simply and empty space... That city just as other cities, has many inhabitants, each carrying a map of the city in her or his head. Each map has its empty spaces, though on different maps they are located in differed places. (Baumann 2000, 104)

The holes within "mental maps" are an example of the manner in which the spatial and temporal discipline are imprinted on bodies as they move through urban space, and imply how this somatic discipline "carries over" into other realms of interpretation and action. Many describe the experience of postmodern space in terms of its fragmentary, pastiche-like characteristics. The "maps" imposed upon individuals, whether physical or mental, come to be increasingly rigid and partial, leading to an increasing lack of freedom and decreasing opportunities for agency.⁶ The "empty spaces" in one's "mental map" of the city come to be transferred to gaps in one's mental map of one's society, with huge gaps obscuring the connections between communities, institutions and paths of power. Providing pure information

⁶ Tuan (1977) describes a similar instance of how contemporary modes of the experience of space might actually inhibit agency. He states, "imagine a man of our time who learns first to ride a bicycle, then to drive a sports car and eventually to pilot a small aircraft. He makes successive gains in speed; greater and greater distances are overcome. He conquers space but does not nullify its sensible size; on the contrary, space continues to open out for him. When transportation is a passive experience, however conquest of space can mean its diminishment. The speed that gives freedom to man causes him to lose a sense of spaciousness. Think of the jetliner. It crosses the continent in a few hours, yet its passengers' experience of speed and space is probably less vivid than that of a motorcyclist roaring down a freeway. Passengers have no control over the machine and cannot feel it as an extension of their organic powers." (54)

remains only a partial solution, and a solution that remains undermined by the *habitus* generated through the actual experience of city life. Disciplined, rational habits of body make for disciplined, rational patterns of interpretation of available facts, and thus more information would be interpreted through disciplined *habitus*. Thus, is de Certeau's emphasis upon the liberatory implications undermined by the very spatial resource, the city streets upon which he rests his hopes?

RAMBLING AS TACTICS

Although many have claimed that Frederick Law Olmsted's parks were meant to forcibly acculturate lower-class immigrants to bourgeois values, discipline political dissent,⁷ or merely offer respite from the oppressiveness of the city's concrete landscape,⁸ a close examination of the park's actual layout and of Olmsted's intentions for these spatial and temporal landscape characteristics reveals a more complex picture, and unveils possible resources for encouraging the tactical sense so valued by de Certeau. Though couched in antiquated 19th century language, Olmsted articulates specific spatial attributes of his park that could encourage users to undertake styles of walking that exercise and engender "tactical" abilities very similar to those described by de Certeau.

For example, when Olmsted describes the exact attributes he hopes the park will embody, he speaks not of enjoyment or beauty, but instead of a specific attribute: "to this process of recuperation a condition is necessary known since the days of Aesop as the unbending of the faculties which have been tasked, and this unbending of the faculties we find is impossible except by the occupation of the imagination with objects and reflection of a quite different character from those which are associated with their bent condition" (Sup. Vol. I: 86). Although provocative, this passage can only be helpful to modern theorists if one determines the exact characteristic (and its political function) to which Olmsted refers through his suggestion that faculties that are "bent." Notice how he uses a specifically spatial metaphor, describing faculties as "bent" to explain the deleterious qualities of urban life. He extends this spatial language, and even seems to allude to the disciplining

⁷ See Ryan (1997) and Rosenzweig and Blackmar (1992).

⁸ For an example of the view that Olmsted was an anti-urban Romantic who felt the park fulfilled purely decorative functions, see Taylor (1999). She claims Olmsted "conformed closely to the European notions of Romanticism à la Rousseau." (425)

characteristics of urban environments when he decries the “cramped, confined and controlling circumstances of the street.” (Sup. Vol. I: 83)⁹ In addition to the spatial language permeating his description of the personal characteristics upon which he focuses concern, he also decries the manner in which urban life leads individuals to adopt increasingly rationalized, and even commodified identities:

If we consider that whenever we walk through the denser part of a town, to merely avoid collision with those we meet and pass upon the sidewalks, we have constantly to watch, to foresee, and to guard against their movements. This involves a consideration of their intentions, a calculation of their strengths, weaknesses, which is not so much for their benefit as our own. . . Much of the intercourse between men when engaged in the pursuits of commerce has the same tendency, a tendency to regard others in a hard if not always hardening way (Sup. Vol. I: 179)

Both “consideration” and “calculation” suggest Olmsted’s concern with the manner in which urban life encourages specific cognitive structures that privilege particular political values. Yet the passages where he discusses his apprehensions concerning city life alternate between frustratingly vague descriptions, such as the previous quotation, and antiquated theories that claim the park provides necessary ventilation to the crowded city environment.¹⁰

To understand how the park might “unbend” the faculties, I present a drawing of Prospect Park, the Park Olmsted considered his greatest work. (See Figure 1) The park is divided into two main areas. A long, uninterrupted, slightly winding road surrounds the exterior of the park. The interior is divided into distinct environments characterized by a primary landscape theme, the Long Meadow (point B), the Lake (point C), Nethermead (point D), etc. An ideal park goer, upon entering the main entrance of the park at Grand Army Plaza (point A) by foot, by horse, or by carriage, finds herself upon the drive surrounding the interior of the park. Olmsted designed these roads to invite the park denizen to move forward with the least possible cognitive exertion. He states that:

A drive must be so prepared that those using it shall be called upon for the least possible exercise of judgment as to the course

⁹ All citations from Olmsted heretofore will be represented intertextually and originate from *The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted*. The citations will follow the following format. (Volume Number: Page Number).

¹⁰ See, *Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns* (Sup. Vol. 1: 88-90) for Olmsted’s observations concerning the salubrious affects of clean air within cities.

pursued, the least possible anxiety or exercise of skill in regard to collisions or interruptions with reference to objects animate or intimate, and that they shall as far as possible be free from the disturbance of noise and jar. To secure these negative qualities the course of the road must be simple; abrupt turns must be avoided, steep grades that would task the horses or suggest that idea must not be encountered. (Sup. Vol. I: 88)

But this “exercise of the least possible judgment” does not mean that the park drive should be straight. Such a spatial property would evoke monotony and would result in boredom and cessation of movement. Olmsted instead insists:

The drive must either run through beautiful scenery already existing or to be formed, and for this purpose it may be desirable at any point to deviate from the line which an engineer would be bound to choose as that which would best meet the first class of requirements. (Vol. VI: 88)

In order to satisfy both principles, interesting novelty and ease of movement, the park drive slowly curves, rises and falls, pulling the traveler forward by creating vistas that suggest expansiveness beyond vertical or horizontal barriers. No path ever proceeds straight ahead, because then nothing is left to the strolling person’s imagination. Instead, Olmsted designed the path so that travelers will wonder what lies beyond the numerous bends, hills and hollows. And this curiosity, Olmsted hopes, will lead the individual to constantly travel throughout the park, being led by spatial and temporal inducements, not by specific goals, or destinations; and conversely, to not simply stop in repose and gaze upon pleasant scenery.

But, Olmsted hopes that this curiosity will lead walkers to spaces in the park beyond the curving paths. In a seeming innocuous comment, he notes, “it will do no harm if here and there a broad opening among the trees discloses its open landscapes to those upon the promenade,” (opt. ct., 11) a statement suggesting his desire that individuals frequently leave the paths, enter into the interior of the park, and continue their movement once there. He designs each internal space within the park with particular spatial characteristics, in order to induce park goers to exercise the same effortless, somatically perceived subjectivity that he encourages on park ways. One seemingly insignificant detail that takes on an important role in this process is that, as aforementioned, each of the park’s areas manifests one primary environmental feature. He states:

There are certain kinds of scenery which experience shows to be most satisfactory within a town park, which require an extensive

aggregation of their elements... all the water we collected in one lake, all the trees in one grove, all the strips of grass in one broad meadow. (Sup. Vol. I: 90)

Each of these internal geographies presents a distinct space to the traveler and, therefore, all act as visual enticements that pull the walker off the path; not by dazzling the walker through excitement, but through continuing the suggestions of expansive space presented by the curving paths. Furthermore, when one looks at each of these prominent areas of the park on the provided map, such as the Long Meadow and the Lake, all slightly curve in order to entice the traveler to move into the next area. No limit is seen at the opposite end of the meadow. "The imagination of the visitor is thus led to form the idea that a broad expanse is opening before him, and the more surely to accomplish this a glimpse of a slope of turn belonging to the border of the shrubs in the middle distance has been secured." (Sup. Vol. I: 92) This characteristic is especially powerful and predominant in the Long Meadow (Point A). He states of this environment that:

From any point of the drives, rides and walks the eye will range over a meadow-like expanse where in the first definite obstruction or break in the turfy surface will be at least a half a mile away, sometimes considerably more than that and in which treetops will be seen in rising perspective fully a mile away,... the visitor will feel the sense of freedom and repose suggested by scenes of this character and be impressed by their breadth of light as shadow, all the more because they will be enjoyed in alternation and contrast with the obscurity of the thick woods already established. (Vol. VI: 325)

When they reach the end of one environment, the process repeats itself with the next setting, prompting them to continue their movement and prompting not simply repose, but "freedom." Thus, the park's spatial qualities subtly structure the experience of the park goer, not only to alternate between areas that encourage specific styles of association, but also to move through all of the discreet areas of the park and to regard them as diverse places that constitute parts of a larger whole.

While Olmsted stresses that the park does attempt to influence the movement of individuals through its landscapes, it still allows for individual initiative and choice within the confines of these broad inducements. The park does not restrict travelers to a specific path, but instead allows freedom for the individual to roam over its different environments in any pattern she wishes. In the following passage, Olmsted emphasizes his contention that controls may in fact enable spatial and temporal freedom:

Adequate provision for simple rural recreation requires large spaces of ground, it being the primary object to secure the greatest possible change of scene from the confinement and rigidity of the city and to induce a sense of freedom and the *disposition to ramble*. [italic, jk] This object has moreover to be reconciled as has been shown with that of maintaining neatness and good order, in spite of often careless and reckless movement of many thousands of people all turning out for exercise and recreation at once, and it is impossible of accomplishment except on a site of considerable breadth on which large opportunity and invitation to dispersion can be given. (Vol. VI: 413)

Olmsted sees park goers “wandering for hours at a time, constantly finding new scenes of natural beauty” (Vol. VI: 414), repeating their steps and walking in multiple combinations of different environments during numerous trips to the park. In fact, the park’s design not only allows for individuals to embark upon many diverse journeys, but actually encourages it. After citizens embark on their journey through the main entrance at Grand Army Plaza, “at a short distance from the principal entrance, the course of the walks is designed to invite dispersion... ” (Vol. VI: 404) Because of this and other landscape innovations that scatter groups and prompt park goers to vary their direction, it is clear that Olmsted means for each trip to constitute a novel experience for the visitor, inviting repeated use of the park and encouraging individuals to create their own paths through and experiential combinations of the park’s distinct environments.

With repeated rambling walks through the park, Olmsted suggests that individuals cultivate a further characteristic. Even though Olmsted designs the park with distinct landscape areas, he continues to emphasize that the park be experienced as a whole by visitors. Olmsted’s desire that citizens interact with his parks as integrated totalized spaces can be seen in his admiration for the harmonious interaction of certain scenes in nature:

A scene in nature is made up of various parts; each part has its individual character and its possible ideal. It is unlikely that accident should bring together the best possible ideas of each separate part, merely considering them as isolated facts and it is still more unlikely that accident should group a number of these possible ideas in such a way that not only one or two but that all should be harmoniously related to one another. (Sup. Vol. I: 89)

Note his stress upon not simply appreciating each component of the landscape individually, but also his desire for consideration of the distinct characteristics as possible “ideals” that constitute a larger, interrelated whole. The combination of these “isolated facts” and “possible ideals” within con-

sciousness, allows walkers to gain the sense of what Olmsted calls “enlarged freedom” produced through “increasing the general impression of undefined limit.” (Sup. Vol. I: 83) It is clear that Olmsted wishes the park’s whole geography to profoundly affect the individual, and this affect he terms “enlarged freedom.” But the question remains of how the enlarged freedom might relate to interacting with the park as a whole, with each of its parts “harmoniously related to each other.”

This answer to this question becomes clearer when Olmsted discusses the function of its central landscape feature, Lookout Hill (Point F). The centrality of this feature expresses itself clearly when he states:

The circumstances which make a special arrangement for the accommodation of an assemblage at this point desirable are, first, the view which is obtained here, and nowhere else in the park of the outer harbor, the distant mountain ranges of New Jersey and the ocean offing... All the principal walks of the park tend to lead the visitor from whatever entrance he starts, to finally reach the lookout, though he may visit every other part of the park... (Sup. Vol. I: 94-95)

He contends that ending one’s “ramble” across the diverse-yet-distinct landscapes of his park at this high point allows the park user to cognitively reconstruct her fragmented journey into a coherent, understandable whole. He best explains the effect of this feature of his parks when discussing the conclusion to a typical walk through Mount Royale Park in Montreal, which also encourages travelers to conclude their journey at the highest point in the park:

Looking over this deep foreground of forest we should now have before us more extended views in all directions than we had before in any. Did they offer nothing for our enjoyment but a rolling surface of grass, or an endless prospect of desert sand, with only sky and clouds to relieve its monotony of color, the effect would be irresistible. As it is, what element of interest could be added without crowding? What new object of beauty with out disturbance? Yet, gradually led up to it from the streets, as I have supposed our friends to be, so that it comes in natural and consistent sequence of the entire preceding experience, the impression could but carry to a still higher point the restful soothing and refreshing influence of the entire work. (Sup. Vol. I: 396-397)¹¹

¹¹ Olmsted also planned a lookout tower for the summit of Mount Royale Park in Montreal, Canada, which was never built. See Rybczynski (1999: 325) for more on Olmsted’s understandings of parks, vision, and enlarged freedom throughout entire regions.

Notice how he emphasizes not simply the individual elements of the park, the “rolling surface of grass” or the suggestion of expanse due to “endless prospect of desert sand,” but also the “*natural and consistent sequence of the entire preceding experience*” [italics, jk] which lead to the generation of enlarged freedom engendered by the park.¹² To heighten this experience in Prospect Park, Olmsted planned that a tower (see Figure 2) be built to aid individuals in retracing their entire rambling journey. Although it was never completed, with the view provided by such a tower, the citizen would have been able to view her entire rambling journey across the various sectors of the park; and subsequently, to experience the manner in which the various sectors, which were experienced as fragmented episodes during a seemingly aimless walk, relate to one another in a coherent whole. Furthermore, such a structure would have assisted her in equating her experience of the journey with her mental representation, and in freely using the park much more effectively than she could have, if she relied on a physical map that she did not create herself.

When the function of Lookout Hill is related to Olmsted’s earlier discussion of the undesirable “calculating” characteristics imprinted on citizens by walking on most city streets, and thus the manner in which the urban space sculpts the body’s role in patterns of interpretation and identity, “enlarged freedom” can be interpreted as a much more robust concept. With “enlarged freedom,” an individual has linked the many autonomous journeys they have taken through her body’s interaction with the park and linked them to a visual image. Her somatic unconscious “tact” for moving through a particular space becomes integrated with her conscious mind, and thus she begins to be able to translate her “feel” for autonomously generating kinetic and somatic possibilities into conscious efforts at critically interrogating and molding her daily experience. With such linkages, the “freedom” that one senses due to the curving expanse of the Long Meadow, the “freedom” to ramble about the park, comes to be known as the freedom to reinterpret and resist the spatial discipline of the most controlled environments. Furthermore, because the geography of the park has actually been experienced through walking, the knowledge gained through lookout hill becomes “imprinted” on the body as a “spa-

¹² Many have noted Olmsted’s concern with citizens’ ability to understand and map increasingly complex social spaces, and his desire that his parks be integrated into larger urban wholes. Bender states, “although Olmsted’s thought was dominated by the image of Central Park as a symbol of social unity, he encouraged the development of suburban neighborhoods and downtown public squares as the foci of communal life because he recognized that in the course of their daily lives men do not usually leap to a vision of the whole city as a singly united community” (1982: 184).

tial ability,"¹³ and thus becomes part of the individual's repertoire of action and response. In a sense, because individuals gain "enlarged freedom" through actually experiencing various combinations of spatial relationships between the park's environments, the park and its somatic possibilities become autonomously integrated into the individual's identity. Studying the visual information contained in a map might give the individual greater information, but this knowledge, Olmsted implies, does not become truly understood until this "spatial knowledge" is paired with their faculty, or "spatial skill" for somatically appropriating an environment.¹⁴

One further interesting aspect remains in Olmsted's brief discussion of the role assigned to Lookout Hill, and similar features in other parks, that suggests a much wider political significance for his endeavors. Note how Olmsted stresses that the view extends beyond the park into New Jersey, New York Harbor, and the Atlantic Ocean. Here, he suggests that the park could act as a tool for the citizen to gain "enlarged freedom" within an area greater than the park itself. Olmsted describes how at the culmination of a ramble, the traveler can see not only where she entered the park, but additionally where she began her journey that culminated at the park. Olmsted designed major arteries, or "Parkways," (in the case of Prospect Park, Ocean Parkway extending south and Eastern Parkway extending east) to ease travel from the rest of the city, invite greater use, and establish the park as a place to creatively appropriate the geography of the entire city. Thus, the "enlarged freedom" Olmsted sees accruing to the frequent park user might extend across an entire urban environment as she travels from various parts of the city and, subsequently, slowly "unbends" her faculties in the park. If one possesses the "bent" faculty of imagination, one might well not be able

¹³ I get the term "spatial ability" from Tuan (1977), who claims, much like Bourdieu and de Certeau, that individuals move through space guided as much by their somatic habits as their conscious intentions. He goes on to claim that certain environments in particular can hone this spatial ability. He states, "how do human beings acquire the ability to thread their way through a strange environment, such as unfamiliar city streets: Visual cues are of primary importance, but people are less dependent on imagery and on consciously held mental maps than they perhaps realize. Warner Brown's experimental work suggests that human subjects can learn to negotiate a maze by integrating a succession of tactual kinesthetic patterns. They learn a succession of movements rather than a spatial configuration or a map." (70) He goes on to state, "when people come to know a street grid they know a succession of movements appropriate to recognized landmarks. They do not acquire any precise mental map of the neighborhood... Each special configuration in the landscape which may not always be easy to specify in recapitulation—triggers his next set of movements... When space feels thoroughly familiar to use, it has become place." (73)

¹⁴ Tuan (1977) articulates the interaction between somatic spatial ability and cognitive spatial knowledge by stating, "spatial ability precedes spatial knowledge. Mental worlds are refined out of sensory and kinesthetic experiences. Spatial knowledge enhances spatial ability. This ability is of different kinds, ranging from athletic prowess to such cultural achievements as ocean and space navigation."(76)

to use the knowledge of geography provided by a map: It will contain black spots— or gaps, as Bauman states— because of the propensity of individuals to use only “well-traversed” and “familiar” features of a geography. And, through extension, a person with “bent” faculties might transfer this ability to gain “embodiment” and therefore subjectivity, to larger public environments such as other parks, the entirety of New York City or whatever public scale the citizen deems as relevant to his or her political self-understanding. By means of the “rambling” or creative movement of one’s body through the carefully designed spatial and temporal inducements provided by the park, a person might gain “enlarged freedom” or a unique, embodied relationship with the myriad ways she can autonomously appropriate and resist spatial control within environments. And although the extension of the creative spatial appropriation encouraged in his parks into the exercise of “enlarged freedom” within larger urban environments remains only a possibility, Olmsted’s attempt to integrate the park into the larger urban geography through innovations such as parkways suggest one possible path to broadening the application of this practice.

RAMBLING AS RESISTANCE

With Olmsted’s contention that the park assists individuals in developing “enlarged freedom” through “rambling,” the connections between de Certeau’s understanding of the “liberatory” possibilities of the embodiment of everyday activities, such as walking, begins to take shape. Furthermore, it becomes clear that the spatial and temporal qualities of movement within the park can actually act as a space uniquely able to encourage the specialized type of movement that de Certeau mistakenly claims to be characteristic of all walking. To recall, while impressed with Bourdieu’s understanding of the manner in which semiotic systems become impressed upon the body by everyday movements through space, de Certeau criticizes this understanding of *habitus*’ inability to account for how individuals unconsciously take advantage of spatial and temporal opportunities within space and time to creatively appropriate environments and thus develop their autonomy and subjectivity. Ironically, through its inducements, limitations, and attempts to subtly control the body in space and time, the park can act as an incubator of the somatic tactics that de Certeau deems inherent within the act of walking itself.

The first area of similarity between Olmsted and de Certeau lies in their stress upon how creative physical movement with the potential to under-

mine spatial discipline should be directed by an individual's non-cognitive abilities and somatic perceptions. Olmsted's insistence upon "restful" movement and his concerns about the "calculating" manner induced through avoiding others on crowded city streets invoke the aesthetic judgment of *logische takt*, the temporal "sense for opportunities" he describes as the operation of *metis*. But Olmsted claims that walking in Prospect Park represents a qualitatively different experience than walking on the crowded city streets, one that encourages the use of one's tactical sense. When focused on avoiding others on the street, considering their intentions, walkers become micro focused on what remains directly in front of them: a limited space and a very discrete constellation of sensory and spatial perception. Furthermore, because individual landscapes remain unified around one characteristic, individuals will focus more upon the spatial quality of the whole immediate environment as opposed to "collecting" details within it. When avoiding collisions or rushing to an appointment, Olmsted contends that a person's attention becomes acutely directed towards the obstacles within the environment. The park, in minimizing the possibility of collision by providing large landscape inducements to movement, allows the individual to exercise her tactical sense in a way that much walking on the city streets does not allow. Additionally, because individuals exercise the "least possible judgment" when following the "suggestion of expanse" within the park's environments, their "feel" for space comes to be particularly exercised. They are led by the shape of the park's landscape, instead of choosing to move in a certain direction or manner due to conscious intentions; and this rambling allows the body to reeducate itself, shedding the discipline it has acquired through its movements in more structured spaces.

Furthermore, de Certeau's invocation that individuals creatively use tactical sense and *metis* during all walking, although similar to that of Olmsted's invocation of "rambling," does not adequately discuss how some environments are more amenable to this activity than others. de Certeau notes how walking "tells a spatial story" through "selecting," "skipping" and "linking" spaces in ways not indicated through maps. This selecting and skipping comes about by "stepping through proportions, sequences and intensities" based upon a sense of incompleteness and partial harmony within an environment, along with a subsequent judgment of a "new and favorable ensemble they will constitute, given one more detail." Olmsted also builds his conception of rambling upon a walker's propensity to absorb spatial and temporal opportunities to creatively traverse a complex environment. But the landscape inducements Olmsted names as enabling of rambling— such as sloping paths and landscapes, linked, unitary environments, and the pos-

sibility for many trajectories within his parks -- provide the concrete conceptual linkages between environment and activity lacking within de Certeau's work. Opportunities to restore the "harmony" within an anticipated series of movements are particularly encouraged by the suggestion of incomplete, expansive space found so frequently in the park. As Jacobs relates, "rambling" or creative movement, is discouraged by long city blocks; and, thus, de Certeau's understanding becomes much less convincing without a linkage between specific spatial characteristics of environment and the antidisciplinary potentialities of walking the type of which Olmsted provides.

Finally, both Olmsted and de Certeau are concerned with the ability of walking to not simply to allow for somatic exercise of spatial and temporal creativity, but to also assist individuals to gain a personal relationship with an environment beyond mere knowledge. Remember that de Certeau stresses that, although maps might inform individuals of possible routes through an environment, they provide a "disquieting, fatalistic experience of a formless, indistinct and nocturnal totality." (123) Walking, through telling a specific story of a creative movement through an environment, represents the personal "founding" of a relationship with an area, and the building of "bridges" with "other" environments which urban dwellers might have ignored using only the rational depictions in a map. Once again, Olmsted provides for specific landscape inducements to facilitate an operation that de Certeau deems inherent within all walking. The design of the park, centered on Lookout Hill, encourages individuals to look back upon their journeys in order to perceive the stories they have told with their walking bodies and "enlarged freedom." And, because users take different unique trajectories through the park to this central destination, the stories that they tell comprise numerous instances of building bridges between seemingly disparate environments and enlarging boundaries of what seems to be within one's relevant environment. This emphasis upon the temporal dimension of telling creative "spatial stories" that transform non-descript places to a practiced places, that break up imposed maps and "found" one's own boundaries, requires repeated traversal of an environment. Furthermore, in encouraging individuals to connect the stories they tell with their bodies to a holistic visual representation they perceive with their eyes, the tactical sense becomes intertwined with cognitive faculties, enlivening mental maps with the body's creative appropriation of space. Although he did not explicitly design the park for this purpose, Olmsted's design encourages freedom to use maps and not be used by them, to tactically transform disciplined geographies to practiced places, and thus to cultivate a *habitus* of resistance.

One seeming incongruity exists in this description — that a highly structured controlled space can in fact prompt individuals to cultivate the skills of somatic appropriation of environments. But in fact, no space is neutral in the sense of not impacting and molding the bodies that move through them. All spaces privilege certain gestures, patterns of movements, and hence, *habitus*. The task for those wishing to encourage resistance to spatial discipline does not lie in attempting to identify and recreate spaces that do not mold bodies and thus free individuals to exercise their subjectivities; but instead, to seek spatial characteristics that influence the body in a way that enable subjectivity. If subjectivity remains constructed by space, then those interested in resistance must explore which are the properties of space that may construct subjectivities which might counteract control and discipline; and, from this political standpoint, it is necessary to make controlled spaces play a role in this effort.

CONCLUSION

Of course, the contention that individuals should flock to Brooklyn in order to shed the discipline imposed on their bodies remains ludicrous; but, if the properties that render Prospect Park a particularly apt generator of tactical waking could be distilled and transferred to a multiplicity of places, Olmsted's innovations could constitute a powerful tool to employ against the disciplining power of spaces. The question now arises of what the general spatial principles that encourage the somatic appropriation of space might be. First of all, in order to prompt the body to move without semiotic inducements, environments must contain the suggestion of limitless space. This spatial gap pulls the body forward, and mobilizes the body's ability to both read and react to environments. Secondly, spaces must be comprised of several distinct environments within their larger boundaries, each containing multiple expanses that invite movement. This characteristic remains necessary to allow individuals to creatively travel through many environments, or to "tell a story" with their bodies. In the process of telling such a story, the walker builds bridges between different areas of the park, or in other words, becomes accustomed to the "feel" of juxtaposing one individual landscape, with its unique "ideal," to another; therefore "learning" the feel of one area versus another. This knowledge can then be re-deployed during other journeys and combined with other parts of spatial "stories." Finally, the space must contain some type of "ending point" reachable through many different paths, where individuals can survey the paths their bodies have taken in the proceeding stories. With this expansive

view of their previous movements, individuals are able to link the stories that their bodies have told to their conscious understanding of these stories; and thus can more readily cultivate a conscious, subjective form of autonomy that could be considered an integral aspect of their identity.

The question still remains of what relationship such practices might have beyond the environment of the park. Recall Bourdieu's description of the *habitus* embodied by the man who walks "straight" to his destination. He refuses "twisted and devious looks," he gazes "straight into the fact of the person he approaches," and finally he eschews irresponsible gazes "up in the clouds or fixed on the ground" that suggest "irresponsibility." A person who repeatedly "rambles" around an environment, embodying Olmsted's spatial characteristics by definition, not only does not walk "straight" to her destination, but possesses no destination beyond where her body leads her. Thus, her gaze dances around her environment, open to possibilities for further movement and interpretation. As opposed to "calculating" the most efficient method for negotiating her environment, or simply "collecting" stimulating fragments of her surroundings, like the *flâneur*, she moves with intention, but not with calculating intent. She is simultaneously led by her body and autonomously tells stories with her body, and thus exerts herself in a way that mediates between the aimlessness of the *flâneur* and the intentionality of the calculating street-negotiator. Rambling remains open to the opportunities offered within an environment it exercises micro tactics, not an overarching rationalistic strategy. Instead of the dichotomous responsibility and obligation, or irresponsibility and disconnection, rambling establishes its own boundaries and bridges, and thus suggests the autonomous formation of one's relationship to one's surrounding.

Thus, although Olmsted presented his prospectus for Prospect Park in 1866 to the Brooklyn Department of Parks, the style of walking and the values he suggests within the document suggest the tactical appropriation of space that de Certeau advocates a hundred years later in his work. The spatial characteristics of the park, no matter Olmsted's intentions, complement and enable the style of walking that de Certeau articulates in reaction to Bourdieu's account of the formation of *habitus*. Rambling represents a tactical somatic intervention that leads to the subjective appropriation of space; and, if an environment enables such movement, individuals will develop a sense of enlarged freedom that allows them to enact autonomous interventions that undermine the spatial disciplines located within environments. Because the park fulfills this function, it could possibly act as a "space of resistance" that plays a partial, yet important, role in undermining the spa-

tial discipline of both the city and of modern life. More importantly, this analysis suggests antidisciplinary urban-spatial characteristics and everyday practices that could be recreated on less grand scales than huge cities. For, although Olmsted could not know this when he designed his parks, “rambling” constitutes a resource that could undermine a distinctly contemporary mode of power.

Figure 1



Figure 2
The Collected Papers of Frederic Law Olmsted
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Design for Lookout Tower, Prospect Park

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