1 Reason in the city of difference

INTRODUCTION
The city has always been the home of reason. From early Greek civilization the city was the polis, the location of political democracy. The agora was the site of open and enquiring debate amongst rational citizens. Yet that space of reason also excluded difference: women and slaves did not count as rational citizens. This association of reason with exclusivity and the activities of an elite persisted into the modern era, encoded in the urban Master Plan and efficient bureaucracy. In the past century the idea of reason has been assailed from all directions - through a turn to the body, to language, to culture, to the unconscious. The way that difference is registered across all these realms is now of primary philosophical and social concern. That the city should be the home to difference is an aspiration in metaphor as well as practical politics - where cities pre-eminently include the claims of multicultural and polyvalent identities. Surely it is time to banish reason, with all its exclusivities and homogenizations, from the city, and to let difference in?

THE CITY AFTER POSTMODERNISM
In his paper heralding the era of postmodernity Frederick Jameson (1984) pointed to the Bonaventure Hotel, a structure of endlessly curved mirror glass that refracted the city around it but gave no sense of its own interiority, as iconic of the new age. The postmodern turn in urban studies denied that explanations of the city could rest on ultimate foundations of knowledge and opened up the space for a cultural politics of identity (sexuality, gender and ethnicity as well as class). It treated space as multiple and emergent and critiqued the desire to locate or fix space, in the same way poststructuralist theory sought to evade the fixing of meaning in the word. And yet its anti-foundationalism and emphasis on difference ultimately meant that the postmodern city was seen as all surface, an endless play of space and difference, an unmappable space, a posthuman environment in which human activities are just one small part of an overall assemblage of emergent effects that involve also non-human biological actants, machines and texts.
In response to the claims of postmodernism, and whilst acknowledging the significance of its challenge, some urbanists claimed an interior, an identity, a stability for the city, based on certain urban orderings – be it the logic of capital, discourses of power and surveillance, or rational planning. So we have conceptions of urban space that see its coherence through the circulation of power or its pluralization through displacement and difference. These divisions can be seen in distinctions between system and lifeworld (Habermas), abstract space and lived space (Lefebvre), strategy and tactic (de Certeau), disciplinary space and heterotopias (Foucault), the space of flows and everyday life, the public and the private realm.

What I do in this book is suggest that there is another set of responses to the challenge of the postmodern city. It is a tradition of thought that has resonance with (and indeed was partly implicated in) postmodernism but it also has an earlier connection to the city: that of philosophical pragmatism. Over the last two decades there has been a rapid expansion of interest and debate around pragmatism (Rorty 1982; West 1993; Dickstein 1998; Stuhr 2003; Joas 1993). Recent developments in pragmatism have the spirit of postmodernism in the recognition of difference, but also capture some of the significance of communication and discourse after the linguistic turn in philosophy. The purpose of this book is to suggest how a certain reading of pragmatism gives us an understanding of a rationality that can live with difference, that in some senses comes out of difference and the nature of contemporary urban space. It is an understanding that does not dichotomize urban space into the instrumental or the communicative, the system and the lifeworld, abstract and lived. Rather it sees their situational interweaving in spaces of communication that are non-discursive as well as discursive. It is performative but also full of articulation and interpretation. The diversity of space-times of communication in the city is where what I call ‘transactional rationality’ is made manifest.

I think this leaves us with a different kind of city, one in which the space of power is not separate from the pluralization of difference. It is neither the postmodern city of pastiche – of separate and incommensurable social worlds that are endlessly emerging – nor is it the modernist city held together by singular orderings of capital, discourse or reason. It is instead an understanding of the city that is full of communicative difference but in which there can be an evaluation of claims across dissensus and difference, the resources for which come from the range of transactions rather than any appeals to transcendence. It is a city in which rationality is an attempt to respect difference through discursive and non-discursive argument and interpretation that goes on not in some singular public realm but in the myriad space-times of communication that exist between communities, within communities and within the ongoing project of the self.

All these themes are central to current understandings of the directions of urbanism, and all, I argue, provide the possible basis for a strengthening and deepening of reason in the city. But this is a reason very different from its forebear in modernity. Rather than being confined solely to mind, it involves body-mind as a form of intelligence. Rather than ignoring habitual action, habit provides its motive force. Rather than being based on an autonomous mind of the individual, it is built out of the social relations that make individuality possible. Rather than being confined to linguistic communication it also involves non-linguistic competences. Rather than being cool-headed and detached from emotion, emotion provides its focus. Rather than requiring coherence and self-presence, it is prompted by absences and delays. All in all it is a capacity that has always existed in the city but too often has not been able to be expressed. It is a rationality that works from within the city rather than over and above it.

**RETHINKING PRAGMATISM – REVISITING CHICAGO**

Philosophical pragmatism has a long-standing connection to the city. It was the work of the classical American pragmatists (Charles Sanders Pierce 1839–1914, William James 1842–1910, John Dewey 1859–1952 and George Herbert Mead 1863–1931) that was the major intellectual influence on the first sustained effort at urban theory: the Chicago School of urban ecology that came out of the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago in the early decades of the twentieth century. There are as many pragmatisms as postmodernisms at present and even classical pragmatism was host to a range of positions from the critical realist pragmatism of Charles Pierce that assumed a world out there of which humans had fallible knowledge, through to the perspectivism of John Dewey, in which knowledge and the world was an outcome of action in different socio-cultural settings.

Despite differences there are a number of characteristics that broadly define pragmatism. One is the judgement of knowledge by its practical consequences rather than theoretical coherence. This is related to its idea of praxis: that knowledge is something that must be practically acted out. It must be tested by its consequences, rather than by its a priori logical propositions. Logic is more like a process of inquiry, rather than a set of abstract propositions. ‘Reality’ is seen as unpredictable and emergent. Thus knowledge is fallible and always provisional.

One of the things Chicago School urbanists such as Park, Burgess and McKenzie took from classical pragmatism was its emphasis on the organic nature of life. Whereas positivism and mechanics were taking social science in the direction of causality and linearity and the borrowing of models from the natural sciences, classical pragmatists stressed the organic web of life as the basis of understanding social relations. For the Chicago School the city was seen as an ecosystem (and more specifically a plant ecosystem) in which different social groups vie for space and survival (Park et al. 1925). The growing metropolis of Chicago in the 1920s presented a challenging environment to which new immigrant communities had to adapt. Each community adjusted in its own way by developing its own conventions of activity in the
city. But often these adaptations were undermined by the power of economic forces to disrupt social relations and re-sort people not in terms of their communities of ethnicity but rather in terms of the community of money. People were sorted in urban space according to economic status rather than community heritage. These theorizations were based on the detailed ethnographies of different community 'situations' that constituted the work of the early Chicago School and still define this tradition today (Fine 1995).

There is, I think, an understanding of rationality at the heart of the work of the Chicago School which has not been so remarked upon in urban studies. For Park (1926) rationality was the ability of an individual to be understood in public, which meant by her or his 'social community'. It was an idea of expression and acceptance in public. So, rationality was a form of communication, and one that is limited by one's cultural community. Park argued that economic rationality undermines community, or communicative rationality resulting in social disorganization.

The idea of rationality as a relationship to one's community is advanced strongly in the 1930s onwards by George Herbert Mead. Developing Dewey's anti-Cartesian idea of the development of mind as something socially shared, rather than being an individual attribute, Mead takes forward an understanding of the role of communication in the formation of self and community (Mead 1934). Mind is formed when gestures shared between people (or animals) come to mean the same thing for the two participants, such that they can anticipate and influence each other's behaviour. This ability to share gestures in mutual anticipation is rationality in action. In humans it develops (over human history and in the social development of each) to become sophisticated and resourceful of which, is language. 'Mind' is an attribute of language. Mind as a social attribute is held together by rationality as a form of communication. For Mead rationality relied on the 'me' or 'generalized other', the ability of the individual to anticipate the response to an action by the generalized other of the community as a whole. This contrasts with the 'I', the unpredictable side of the self, the improviser, the historical agent. Mead gave most emphasis to the 'me' in ongoing social relation.

To Mead's emphasis on the 'me' of community Herbert Blumer (1969) stressed the symbolic forms of communication at the expense of the non-symbolic forms. This gave rise to a whole field of studies, symbolic interactionism, the analysis of shared symbols in social interaction out of which meaningful social worlds are built. This flowed out of Chicago School research and continues as a strong research tradition today (Fine 1995; Plummer 1997). So we have a double emphasis on language as the significant set of symbols in communication, and, the point I wish to emphasise, on rationality as a facilitator of communication, but strictly within community.

This is a continuation of Park's thinking about the separate social worlds of the city, where the city's size is able to support a critical mass and separate and diverse ways of life (witness Gans' (1962) 'urban villagers'; Suttles 1968; Peach 1975).

The difficulty with community ethnographies that typified the Chicago School was that they were based on microanalysis and took community norms at face value. Such studies were seen as too parochial to capture these larger circulations of power (Planagan 1993). This was evident with the strengthening of functionalism and systems theory in urban studies but especially true after the advent of Marxist urban studies with the publication of David Harvey's Social Justice and the City (1973). Community-based analysis had no way of explaining the logic of capital accumulation and the urban process in capitalism (Harvey 1978). There was a wider rationality of the system at work that often undermined the community and communicative rationality.

The way that system rationality undermines communicative rationality is the theme taken up by Jurgen Habermas in his reconstruction of social theory (Habermas 1984, 1987). Habermas's work connects to urban studies to some extent, especially in the work of Richard Sennett (1974, 2000) in his discussion of the public sphere (which I consider in Chapter 5), and through the 'deliberative turn' in planning theory (discussed in Chapter 7). Habermas combines the heritage of Marxism and critical theory in his understanding of 'the system', with an understanding of communication in the lifeworld that is based in pragmatism, and especially the work of Mead.

Habermas's work suggests how communication, rather than simply being held within community boundaries by the binding force of communicative rationality, is held in check from without communities by the instrumental power of the system (in the form of the 'economic rationality of the capitalist system and the instrumental rationality of modern state bureaucracy). This is what Habermas calls the colonization, or elsewhere the provincialization, of the lifeworld by the system. Communication is distorted by capitalist ideology and removed from a communicative context by the steering media of power and money. For Habermas this is a split within rationality itself, between the instrumental rationality of the system (economic rationality and bureaucratic utilitarianism) and the communicative rationality of the lifeworld. Following a division introduced by speech act theory (Austin 1962; Searle 1969) Habermas makes this separation based on the functions of language oriented to action (instrumental) and language oriented to mutual understanding without a press to action (communicative).

**PRAGMATISM AFTER POSTMODERNISM**

Habermas's view of communicative action is limited to language and to a representative view of language at that. Postmodernism marked a crisis of representation and, along with poststructuralist interventions, questioned the idea that language represents reality. Habermas also has a procedural idea of rationality, one that rests on a 'universal pragmatics' in which implicit validity claims underlie all language use. The contents of the validity claims relate to people's ideas of the objective world, their social norms and
their subjective worlds. In order to defend these worldviews in debate people must examine the basis of their validity — in terms of objective truth, social legitimacy and subjective sincerity. This reflection on one's own assumptions as well as the examination of other people's objective, social and subjective worlds is deliberative and communicatively rational. However the rational 'good reasons or grounds' on which participants defend their validity claims still stresses cognition and formal communication, despite Habermas's wish to move away from a philosophy of consciousness towards a philosophy of language and intersubjectivity.

In contrast there is a view of communicative action that is much broader, including non-discursive performativity, as well as discursive communication. This approach to communication involves bodies and gestures, as well as speech and thought. It suggests that there might be all kinds of uncontrollable effects (or excess) around communication. Communicative action is fraught with inconsistencies, slippages and misunderstandings. Performativity, slips and excess in communication can be as much a resource for social transformation as the more controlled communication towards consensus, on which Habermas focused. This is the point made by Judith Butler in her work on gender norms and communication (Butler 1993, 1997). But whereas Butler looks to the effects of body excess, or communicative slips as a sort of universal quality of communication, the pragmatist approach suggests how these effects are qualities of the particular situation and communicative transaction, rather than universal qualities per se (Sullivan 2001). The pragmatist approach also suggests how communicative action constitutes situations, rather than representing them, or being contained by them. It sees disensus being as much part of the communicative situation as consensus, and speculation being as significant as conformity.

These arguments for a more full-bodied view of communicative action (and communicative rationality) come from a group of pragmatist philosophers working in the philosophy of communication and feminism, and especially in the work of Lenore Langsdorf, Shannon Sullivan, Sandra Rosenthal and Charlene Haddock Siegfried. This deepening and broadening of the realms of communicative action is a contemporary renewal of the work of John Dewey and takes in many of the developments in contemporary philosophy after postmodernism and after the linguistic turn. This 'communicative turn' develops Dewey's dissolution of the Cartesian distinctions between mind and body (to body-mind) and suggests the mutual implication of instrumental and communicative rationality, argument and aesthetics, and system and lifeworld. From this perspective communicative action is implicated in systems of dispersal of power (in a Foucauldian sense) as well as being in resistance to power. Resistance is at the heart of power, rather than being provincialised and separate from it. Dissensus exists within as well as between communities, and indeed within argument and voice, as well as between them.

THE CITY OF REASON AND DIFFERENCE

A broadening and deepening of the idea of communicative action in the way suggested I think gets to the heart of contemporary debates about the city and urban space. There are the conditioning forces of tradition and the circulation of power/discourse. These 'conserving' forces Dewey (1922) called 'habit', a form of productive disposition. But tradition and power are not impervious. Non-discursive performativity and communicative 'excess' suggest that rationality is not limited to a form of practical reason within social boundaries. Rationality is not just confined to community, but overspills its limits. Individuals are not necessarily confined to community but increasingly operate in networks of overlapping communities — with different ties and pulls that sometimes rub against each other — a clash of habits. The city gives the chance of diverse connections as well as enclosure within enclaves: there is hybridity as well as singularity. The reproduction of structures of identity and power relies on everyday performativity of speech acts and non-discursive body communications. This approach is sensitive to the whole communicative repertoire that includes slips and give-aways that reveal other subconscious states. There are hints, innuendos, swarms of unratified messages that transact in the city. There are heart-stopping, world-disclosing moments that change the course of action and the life-course.

As those advocating the postmodern city argue, there are more voices and a greater diversity of connection, a proliferation of difference. But this might result in a city of disconnection, the city as a patchwork of differences between which it is impossible to communicate, or where any attempt to do so is an act of domination. Indeed some contemporary pragmatists think this way. Richard Rorty (2000) believes that rationality is a form of loyalty to community and that it is not possible to bridge different spheres of rationality. Ideas are just elements of conversation but are not decisive. What there should be is a strict separation of the public and the private realm, with the public delimited by basic tolerance and a minimal commonality in the mutual avoidance of pain and harm (Rorty 1988, 1991).

What I suggest in this book is that rationality cannot be confined to community in this way. There is a release of forms of 'rational' communication within community that leak out beyond it, between bodies (Chapter 2), in brief encounters on the street (Chapter 3), in the community (Chapter 4), in the public realm (Chapter 5), in the economy (Chapter 6) and planning more widely (Chapter 7). What I am emphasizing is that these communicative actions are also a resource for rationality. They are part of the speculative action that occurs when different spheres of rationality collide. It is the rationality that includes Dewey's 'I' of historical agency, as well as the 'me' of the generalized expectations of community. This form of argumentation and interpretation takes place within community, as well as between communities.
Rationality is the attempt to meliorate all the conflicting (pre-cognitive) traditions, body interactions, emotions and cognitive thought, both within community and the self. Argumentation is part of this process; however, it does not rely on universal ways of validating claims but on ways that emerge from the resources of the participants in the transaction. Whereas it was condemned as a force of rationalization in modernity, postmodernism sought to banish rationality from the city altogether. I suggest another fate for rationality since postmodernist claims for the recognition of difference: not its banishment from the city as the heinous logic of identity, but rather its release from the confines of community but without then having to rely on the claims of universality. Rational argumentation continues to exist in the plethora of constitutive, communicative engagements, the bubble and buzz of the city.

**THE SPACE-TIMES OF THE CITY**

How does the communicative array suggested by these arguments relate to space and times of the city? There is a good deal to suggest that they might be peripheral to the inner fashioning of urban space. The classical models of urban form were predicated on an idea that centrality was a constitutive feature of the urban. Nowadays the niching of production and the segregation of consumption are leading to a radically decentralized urban form consisting of bundles of transactional activities (Scott 1989). Added to this is the decline of the importance of the city as a central place for social relations, a public space (Sennett 1974, 2000).

Decentralization and distantiatsion via communication technologies can mean that much of the activity in the city is more and more automatic (Amin and Thrift 2002). The everyday experience of the city is full of imperatives that, benignly or malignly, make up much of human life (Lingis 1998). The flow of pedestrians on the street, traffic signals, automatic doors, swipe cards and software to help organize thought – human activity is more and more infused with technology, to which much of the responsibility for ongoing activity has devolved.

Distantiatsion and automation relate to the fact that the properties that characterise cities are increasingly emergent and relational. Cities are no longer built on fixed assets as sites of the manufacture of raw materials or the exchange of goods but rather rely on relational assets such as place marketing and inter-urban competition (Amin 2000). It is also suggested that cities no longer comprise fixed social identities based on predictable labour markets – the prevailing environment is more risky and flexible. In terms of their physical and social characteristics the compelling metaphor for cities of late has been as constellations of emergent networks in spaces of flows (Castells 1996, 1997, 1998).

Automatic mediations, stretched out and less predictable relations, relational assets many of them based on image management – the city is more and more coming to consist of signs and surface forms or simulacra (Baudrillard 1981), perfect copies that dissolve the distinction between the authentic and the derivative. The city of surfaces was the privileged icon that heralded postmodernity. Los Angeles has been seen as emblematic of the postmodern urban condition (Dear 2000) or the postmetropolis (Soja 1997). For others these changes signalled the latest phase of capitalist accumulation (Harvey 1989) or a more liquid modernity (Bauman 2000).

This distinctive idea of urbanism can be seen as a move from the rational to the post-rational city. If cities are more and more decentralized and distantiatsed, emergent and networked, full of automatic activities and surface manifestations this works against the rational city in a number of ways. Postmodern planners suggest that the decentralised and distantiatsed city works against a planning rationality that seeks to conceive of the city as a whole with coherent, specialist sub-districts that contribute to the overall efficiency of the urban system (Beaurregard 1989; Dear 2000; Sandercock 1998). If cities are emergent and networked this works against an idea of urban citizens as having given preferences from stable identities which come into conflict and are argued over in the urban political arena (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). It also denies fixed ends of activity to which rationality provides the most expeditious means. If many of the activities that go on in cities are automatic and coordinated increasingly by machines, then the idea of rational choice and deliberation and the scope for influence of such human rationality is much reduced (Amin and Thrift 2002). And if the city is increasingly about surface and serendipity and an endless play of difference, this denies any ontological depth, which the idea of human reason has claimed historically.

Many urbanists have been happy to bid farewell to reason (Soja 1996; Dear 2000; Gibson and Waton 1995). It has been all too implicated in certain forms of construction of the public realm, in rational planning regimes that focus on means-ends efficiency and the rationality of the market, in the instrumentalization of bodies and the limiting of communication to instrumental action.

In this book I suggest that distantiatsion and decentralisation are the very conditions in which a transactional rationality might operate. The prompts for this reconstruction of rationality are some emergent and intensifying characteristics of, and concerns with, the contemporary city and especially with city as a site of difference (Fincher and Jacobs 1998). These characteristics are all to do with the nature of urban space and the way that it is relationally constituted with objects and humans.

Cities are assemblages of overlapping and distantiatsed communication networks; these networks involve acting objects as well as humans. As well as being hubs of mediated relations, the heterogeneity of cities still maintains the capacity for direct encounters and unpredictable situations. Bodies meet in the city. These encounters involve linguistic and non-linguistic communication. The encounter with the other involves this broader set of communic-
ative competences but also connects to the wider net of distantiated relationships. Encounters between different groups and interests in the city are often also emotionally charged and a challenge for urban politics to cope with these conflicts. Cities are also the sites of wider instrumentalities, especially those of work. Here the ideas of Dewey suggest a broader understanding of instrumentalism to include technical-experimental activity (Buchholz and Rosenthal 2000). It might be that there are inherent tensions in the use of technology and other implements – over whether they are confined to the narrow instrumentalism of the capitalist economy, or whether they might be used to broaden contact and communication to serve more emancipatory goals.

Transactional rationality has a very different relationship to difference. Whereas traditional rationality sought to absorb difference within universality of content or procedure, a ‘logic of identity’, this rationality recognizes the socialized construction of self, or rather selves, and rationality of as the modification selves. Difference is a part of identity. The self is heterogeneous. This rationality does not converge on teleological goals but has ends-in-view. It is not convergent instrumentalism, rather instrumental purposes involve contacts that are quasi-experimental and that can alter what gets done. Instrumental purposes are more open to difference. Delays, absences and novelty enhance rational capacities. The breaks in communication and mediation of contact start to shade into the space of difference, one that is neither here nor there, neither self nor other.

This approach to rationality suggests that Habermas's distinction between system and lifeworld, like the distinctions between micro and macro or structure and agency, are overly dichotomized. One clear way this is registered, discussed throughout the book, is that even the distinction between instrumental (or strategic) rationality and communicative rationality starts to break down very quickly. Communicative gestures often have instrumental goals. An understanding of rational choice theory and game theory indicates how rapidly even narrowly self-interested action takes on social forms – and just how difficult it is to achieve coordination as a result. Equally, by taking a relational approach to the social and the individual, micro-macro distinctions start to disappear. Rather than overbearing structures determining action, power is present (and absent) in social/technical networks and in the constitution of self. Thirdly, by focusing on the production of *urban space* we get an idea of the kaleidoscopic nature of phenomena, the whole-in-part, and how miniature movements can capture much larger urban rhythms.

Transactional rationality involves both space-time distantiations and compressions in urban space. These space-times are constituted by a range of communicative spaces comprising community 'habits', transactions between bodies, and a range of discursive and non-discursive interactions (from the instrumental to the aesthetic) of varying intensities and durations. Nevertheless it is productive to consider the city in terms of the locations where different forms of rationality are assumed to dominate. The book is structured around these key locations and their dominant rationalities as well as alternative transactional rationalities that might exist in these spaces.

**THE SPACES OF RATIONALITY IN THE CITY**

The city is a collection of bodies. Bodies might themselves be rationalized by economic forces and instrumental bureaucracies as Foucault (1977, 1978) has shown so well. Alternatively bodies are seen as sites of resistance to rationality (Lefebvre 1991). They are non-cognitive, habitual and sensory, providing alternative orientations in urban space. Bodies are produced in urban space but they also constitute that space. In Chapter 2 ‘On the body’ I argue that the body is neither wholly submerged nor in resistance to rationality but rather there is a mind-body interaction that is balanced differently in different spaces of the city. It develops Dewey’s idea of body-mind and a more active notion of habit to suggest how body-mind operates in usual and novel situations. It takes Sullivan’s (2001) reading of Dewey to suggest how one form of communication is ‘transactional bodying’ that involves ‘bad’ knowledge as a form of ongoing intelligence. This includes elements of habit and disposition but also performative and communicative excess. It offers a pragmatic, situational, alternative to Judith Butler’s (1993, 1997) ideas of the reproduction of norms and social transformation. Rationality here is a form of embodied rapport. Transactional bodying is explored in a number of urban situations, from situationist derives, clubbing and raves, flash mobs and glamour.

Simmel (1950) famously noted how the excess of stimulation in the modern city leads to a form of urban rationality in social interaction based on mutual indifference between strangers. The size and heterogeneity of the modern city makes it impossible for strangers to meet openly and emotionally. In Chapter 3, ‘On the street’ I argue that even in this most pared down communicative situation there is an excess of messages that start to expand communication. Narrow urban social relations guided by instrumental rationality are in fact structured in the same way as much richer forms of communication. This is explored via Goffman’s work on interaction, in ethnomethodology, and the ethnographic work of the later Chicago School. Street communication includes non-verbal body performances. These are forms of communication that cannot be represented in language but are performed by communicating bodies. Dewey accepts a strong performative element of the ‘Y’ (historical agent) and its relation to Mead’s (1934) idea of the ‘generalized other’ (the ‘me’ of community expectation) and this suggests the capacity for innovation and creativity in interaction. It gives the potential for an opening up to others rather than the stark limit of communication that Simmel originally observed as urban rationality. The chapter explores how the range of communications on the street can lead to a closing down or opening out of interaction. De Certeau’s (1984) pedestrian rhetoric suggests how ways of walking and talking can
improvise on the structure of communication. I compare Mardi Gras in New Orleans (Shrum and Kilburn 1996; Fankowski and White 1999) and Sydney (Bruce et al. 1997) to suggest how communication at carnival can lead to a reproduction of social norms (in New Orleans) and a transgression and challenging of those norms (in Sydney). I also explore examples of the Melbourne artspace – Roseter and Gibson 2000) and to make a political statement (the street politics of Jackie Smith – Jones 2000).

Ferdinand Tonnies' (1887) distinction between gemeinschaft and gesellschaft influenced questions about whether social relations in the city were community-like or based on specialized association. The point I make in Chapter 4 ‘In the community’ is that the distinction between gemeinschaft and gesellschaft in as much about division between different ideas of rationality as it is about different forms of settlement and social interaction. There is the tacit and intuitive rationality of gemeinschaft and the contractual and abstract rationality of gesellschaft. This chapter explores the relationship between rationality and community. In contrast to Tonnies' assumptions of communicative rationality within community and instrumental rationality without, I argue that rationality is transactional both between and within communities and not always in conformity to community norms. This is explored in the context of the speculative rationality of the Hull House settlement in Chicago (through Addams' work 1968, 1910), and in the situational and transactional forging of gay identities in Chaurcey's (1994) analysis of the rise of gay New York. I go on to discuss the tensions between community and hybridity in the city.

Chapter 5 ‘In the public realm’ explores Habermas's (1984, 1987) communicative rationality and Sennett's (1974) ideas of performativity in public as part of a wider interpretation of communication, rationality and the public realm of cities. Using Fraser's (1992) and Young's (1990, 2000) work it looks to the edges of communication as significant in setting the tone for public debate. I include non-discursive and speculative behaviour as part of public deliberation and a rationality in public that involves improvisation as well as conformity. These themes are explored using Mattson's (1998) investigation of public discussion in the civic clubs of the Progressive Era as a detailed case study. I also look at contemporary spaces of communication that might open up the public realm, through music for example, as a form of transactional rationality. The possibilities of a fuller public realm are in part the experience of being the city and the way that selves and others are constituted in interaction

Economic rationality is the dominant form considered in Chapter 6, ‘At work and home in the urban economy.’ I suggest how, following Veblen (1899), economic rationality can be distorted by the forms of communication that aim to convey status. The conspicuous consumption of elite gentrification is explored via my research in Sydney and London. I pursue the idea that economic processes are often embedded in particular socio-cultural situations, of which what I call the ‘gentrification premium’ is a prime example. More recently the city has become a key arena for understanding the interrelationships between the economic and the cultural. The embeddedness of cultural processes in the operations of the economy of the city has turned attention to the specificities of the economy and the situatedness of economic rationality within the city. Understanding the culture-economy of the city is the latest move in an analysis that reads economic activity in an expanded realm of work, leisure and taste and as socialized rather than individual. I argue, adapting Dewey, that it involves a re-evaluation of economic rationality, taking on a broader idea of instrumentalism as a form of social communication. These developments in the analysis of the operations and effects of economic rationality are traced using the example of the rise of the new middle class and the gentrification of the city.

In Chapter 7, ‘In city hall’ I look at the relationship between rationality and urban planning. The chapter considers the various schools of planning – rational comprehensive, radical, deliberative and postmodern – in relation to rationality and urban space. It suggests how deliberative planning may capture more of the situated practices of everyday life that were ignored in the modern city of comprehensive planning (and shown through Holston's (1989) work on Brasilia). I explore the deliberative turn and the use of the idea of communicative rationality as a tool for planning (especially through the work of John Forster 1989, 2000). The last part of the chapter considers the prospects of the related ‘pragmatic turn’ in planning, a development that links to the broader aims of the book. I aim to advance calls for a pragmatist planning by suggesting a role for planning as a form of argumentation.

In Chapter 8 ‘Cosmopolitan reason and the global city’ I explore the links between cosmopolitanism, rationality and professionalism in the context of ‘global’ urban spaces. The degree to which a new middle class, in possession of professional skills and knowledge and decontextualized cultural capital, displays a transversal rationality is debated. Transversal rationality is a logic of transition between recognized irreconcilable spheres of rationality (Schrag 1992; Weisch 1998). This rationality of transition exists in the smooth ‘space of flows’ (Castells 1996) between global cities. This contrasts with the ‘space of place’ (Castells 1996) that makes up the rest of the city that is home to a form of practical reason that is limited by context and disconnected from power. In contrast to this divided city I suggest a broader view of communication and deeper idea of communicative (transactional) rationality results in an idea of cosmopolitanism that is as much about the encounter with difference in fully lived space of the ‘ordinary’ urban neighbourhood, as is it about mobilities between transnational situations.

The book offers a series of different communicative sites, from the body through to the space of the global city, on which dominant forms of rationality and communicative alternatives are registered. The point is that these sites do not exist in some sort of simple cognitive and power hierarchy, but
are constantly in tension. The sort of sensory intelligence provided by body-mind is at work in the higher reaches of urban planning and in the workings of the global economy. Stark instrumentalism and extraordinary aesthetic experience, communicative rationality and instrumental rationality, system and lifeworld, abstract and lived space – all exist in a continuum, not as separate spheres. The space to best understand that continuum is the city. It is in the city where transition between communicative realms is most possible and where the diversity of lifeworlds (difference) might still be gathered into a transactional rationality of more meaningful experience.

2 On the body

RATIONALITY AND THE DISCIPLINED BODY

In western philosophy the body has been the inferior other of the mind. It has at various times been associated with instincts, habit, woman and nature. Elevated above the body is the mind, the locus of reason, culture and transcendent values. This dualism was realized in western city space from the nineteenth century in the constitution of the public and the private. The public was a realm beyond bodies, a male space of cognition and debate. The iconic figure of the modern city, the flaneur, moved through the city like a ghost, disembodied, observing the heterogeneous activities of the metropolis without any tactile involvement (Wilson 1991). In contrast private space was female and static – the home of nurturing bodies.

It is possible to see the mind/body dualism as the city ridding itself of bodies. In the Greek polis the body was celebrated as the epitome of human excellence and full citizenship. This was recouped for a time in the Renaissance but certain influences of Christianity meant that the body was thought of as low, fleshy, sinful. In the modern era Georg Simmel saw how the inhabitants of late nineteenth century Berlin closed down their bodies in public as a form of indifference, protection against the overstimulation of the city (Simmel 1950). They were unable to deal with each other emotionally. Le Corbusier’s (1971) plans and buildings treated the city as a machine in which bodies circulated like abstract atoms. The pulse and press of the city is captured by Henri Lefebvre’s rhythmanalysis (Lefebvre 1996). The city is full of imperatives, one of the most obvious of which is the movement of large numbers of bodies on the mass transit systems. These bodies and their particularities were lost from the planning imagination: the city was decorporealized.

In contrast the city was all about head. Le Corbusier’s vision was to use the plasticity afforded by modern building materials to create a city of open, endless vistas, composed of glass and light, a transparent place. Vision is the sense most closely associated with rational faculties and Le Corbusier was projecting a rational vision both on the plan and in the heads of the inhabitants of his Ville Radieuse. The city and its inhabitants would be literally enlightened.
Questioning Cities
Edited by Gary Bridge, University of Bristol, UK and Sophie Watson, The Open University, UK

The 'Questioning Cities' series brings together an unusual mix of urban scholars under the title. Rather than taking a broadly economic approach, planning approach or more socio-cultural approach, it aims to include titles from a multi-disciplinary field of those interested in critical urban analysis. The series thus includes authors who draw on contemporary social, urban and critical theory to explore different aspects of the city. It is not therefore a series made up of books which are largely case studies of different cities and predominantly descriptive. It seeks instead to extend current debates, in most cases through excellent empirical work, and to develop sophisticated understandings of the city from a number of disciplines including geography, sociology, politics, planning, cultural studies, philosophy and literature. The series also aims to be thoroughly international where possible, to be innovative, to surprise, and to challenge received wisdom in urban studies. Overall it will encourage a multi-disciplinary and international dialogue, always bearing in mind that simple description or empirical observation which is not located within a broader theoretical framework would not – for this series at least – be enough.

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