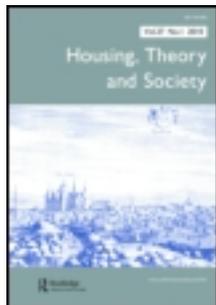


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The Poetics of Cartography and Habitation: Home as a Repository of Memories

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ABSTRACT *This article brings Proust and Bachelard into conversation about inhabiting the home and the role that remembrance, memory and the imagination might play in producing knowledge about the world. Proust and Bachelard both suggest that once a material object, such as a house, has been seized upon by the imagination by those who inhabit the dwelling, it no longer makes sense to assess the space-of-home using “objective” or “mathematical” modalities. Proust’s novel has particular relevance in suggesting how we might think about how the material objects of the home serve as the repository for memories. The aim is to investigate the tension between the experience of urban space and its representations to make cognizant and explicit the use of mathematically informed signs. I suggest that the material features of the urban landscape and home itself hold memories that should be viewed as significant artifacts that constitute how we understand the world. I argue that the formation of the self is constituted through our relations with both imaginary and material objects. This position challenges a concept of the home whereby habitation and imagination are constructed as subordinate to the mathematical measurements of the material world.*

KEY WORDS: Proust, Bachelard, Home, Cartography, Memory

Introduction

Maps are iconic rather than indexical because a cartographer can create a map solely on the basis of other iconic signs, such as diagrams and geological surveys; she may never have been to the place the map will signify ... One of the characteristics of such representational codes is that we become so accustomed to them that we may not recognize their use; they become as “natural” to us as the symbolic signs of language, and we think of iconic signs as the most logical – sometimes as the only possible – way to signify aspects of our world. (Seiter 1992, 36, 37)

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This revelation, born of Peirce (1911), de Saussure (1972) and Eco's (1976) structuralism, delivers a blow to our confidence in architecture and cartography for it shows we can be fooled and confused by plans and maps of urban space and built form. Cartography is no less discursively constructed than other forms of symbolic representation such as text, talk and other visual imagery. Maps and plans require the viewer to draw on an accumulation of knowledge that reinforces these visual codes so that they can be understood as signs in the first place.

Researchers can observe this taking place when urban planners hand over plans in "community consultations" for a new suburb to the residents of an existing neighbourhood that is set to be demolished (Urbis 2008). In one such "community consultation", I observed the state-sponsored consultants using aerial photographs, maps and plans of a neighbourhood "to educate the community in housing and design concepts" (Coates et al. 2008, 13; Rogers 2006). Some of the residents were familiar with this type of discursive device and the visual codes, orientating themselves to the north point, their street and their homes on the maps. Other residents struggled with the aerial photographs, maps and plans, turning them around in attempts to orientate themselves, to find their homes, their streets or their children's schools. These ways of representing their home and suburb seemed counter-intuitive to these residents (Rogers 2006).

On that occasion the maps and plans forced on the residents a set of scales that fixed the subject-to-image distance and confined or stretched the boundaries of their neighbourhood sense perception. In attempts to mitigate the perceptual problems that emerged between their representation of the urban space and the residents reception of the maps and plans, the state-sponsored consultants developed "skill building workshops" (Coates et al. 2008, 14) that "included how to read a plan and masterplanning" (13), with learning objectives such as understanding "what do all these lines and colors mean?" When the residents were presented again with the state's two-dimensional representations (plans) of their homes, within a specific demarcation of urban space (the estate), some residents still needed these mathematical representations to be decoded for them. Even with "skills building", if the architect of this visual representation had violated too many of the residents' perceptual clues, such as leaving out a familiar cultural marker or clue that might not be represented well mathematically or through forms of cartography that are informed by materialism, some residents stated that the urban space was not recognizable to them at all (Rogers 2006, 2012a).

Based on these reflections, the aim of this article is to investigate the tension between the experience of urban space and its representations to make cognizant and explicit the use of mathematically informed signs. I demonstrate how these seemingly "natural" or intuitively meaningful signs might actually be historical, changeable, culturally specific and, perhaps most importantly, politically embedded (Trigg 2009, 2012). Within urban regeneration projects in Australia, cartography is now embedded within discursive processes of policy deployment that increasingly measure, code, commodify and quantify people and urban space in specific ways. Certainly, the maps and plans of an urban space that is set to be redeveloped are mathematically coherent and would appear to hold the same symbolic value as older maps and plans of the same urban space (they are both signifiers of the urban space that have been produced at different points in time). Although, on closer empirical inspection, the historical, social and political context within which these maps and plans have been produced as signifiers might mean they hold different

symbolic meanings at different times (the signified urban space might have changed over time) (Butler 2005; Lacan 1988). Choosing to represent a resident's home using the discursive device of a plan over other discursive devices, at this socio-political moment in time, prioritizes this form of symbolic representation of home over others that might be informed by habitation and remembrance (Bachelard 1969; Jacobs and Malpas 2013; Lefebvre 1991).

It might seem inappropriate, reckless even, to present empirical data about housing issues and the meanings people place on their home that is so divorced from the dominant symbolic vehicles – maps, plans and policy texts – that are regularly deployed to structure socio-political knowledge of housing issues; but this is not the case (Jacobs 2002). There is little doubt that urban planning and architecture produce significant social benefits through the deployment of mathematically informed cartography (materialist doctrines) to design and redesign our urban spaces and dwellings (Schönwand 2008). Although, this is not to say that they do not, through their very discursive functionality, silence other forms of representation and create new social tensions and issues (Butler 2005; Schönwand 2008; Whitehead 2009).

It is important to show how these dominant symbolic vehicles might have historically muted other theorizations, perspectives and viewpoints of home and urban space. Relative silence does not mean that these alternative viewpoints are unimportant. Instead, by making explicit and discursively active these disenfranchised constructions of knowledge, the potential exists for the production of counter-ideological constructions and representations of home (Easthope 2004; Seiter 1992, 41; Trigg 2012). In fact, there is a lot at stake in this limiting of representations, even beyond the (in)visibility of different knowledge systems. Through the activation of different representation codes residents' capacity to articulate different housing "realities" might also be activated.

To forward this argument, the theoretical material is grounded with qualitative interview and participant observation data from three studies, all focused in part on habitation. The first study was conducted in 2006 and involved focus groups with public housing tenants living on a large public housing estate in Western Sydney that was about to be redeveloped. Tenants discussed their anxieties and fears for the future as they were about to be relocated from their homes. The second study was conducted between 2007 and 2010 and involved interviews with public housing tenants, employees of a non-government housing manager and interviews with the employees of a property development company that had been contracted by the state housing authority to redevelop a public housing estate by public-private partnership. The third study was conducted in 2012 and involved interviews with long-term public housing tenants of another south-west Sydney public housing estate. These tenants had been moved into temporary dwellings to facilitate the redevelopment of their estate.

When I asked public housing tenants to describe the way that urban redevelopments changed their daily lives, they often talked about the home as an assemblage of memories that had been collected and that were now "stored" in the material objects (Harrison 2012; Macdonald 2009) within the home or within the dwelling itself. I, therefore, set out to theorize a notion of home as an active process of embodied remembering (Degen and Rose 2012; Jones 2011; Waterton and Watson 2013). I found that mathematical conceptualizations of material objects alone are blunt conceptual tools for discussing the knowledge we acquire through habitation and our remembering of urban space (Bachelard 1969; Jacobs 2002; Lefebvre 1991).

Thus, the central task of this article is to theorize other possible forms of social experience and knowledge in relation to “the home” that might challenge those that prefer the mathematical measurements of the material world that are often forwarded as a “more valid” form of knowledge production. I argue that residents do not place the material world at the centre of their reported housing experiences. Rather, their perspectives are more dynamic, interweaving the phenomenological and the material together. While I have not set out to undermine these mathematical representations altogether, I do aim to soften, perhaps even synthesize to some degree, the hard-edged dualism of mathematical and experiential space that is often assumed of spatial theorists such as Bachelard (1969) and Lefebvre (1991). I conclude that the materialist analytic scholarship that is informing urban planning needs to better incorporate phenomenological theory so the physical environment can be wrestled away from the urban theory epicentre.

Proust’s Mnemosyne and the Materialization of Memory

Proust’s et al. (1996) *In Search of Lost Time, or Remembrance of Things Past* is a seven-volume novel that provides detailed descriptions about the interior spaces of houses and explores how the character identities are bound up with the value they place on material objects. One of the central ideas within the novel is the importance of the passing of time to processes of remembrance and for understandings of habitation.

Whilst conducting semi-structured interviews with public housing tenants recently, who were living on a public housing estate that was undergoing redevelopment, I was reminded of the novel’s central themes. In this study, I asked tenants “In just one sentence tell me what this house means to you?” One interviewee responded:

It means everything. 37 years of my life was here. Nearly 38. I’ve just got so many memories here of my grandchildren now, they’re in and out. It’s just everything. All my memories are here.

This response was typical of the study and tenants often returned to a number of subjective themes within these interviews, the most common of which were: (1) the notion of memory as a way of describing their subjective meaning of home; (2) the importance of time, or the passing of time, as a way of framing their meanings of home; and (3) the positioning of the subjective (habitual) over the material (dwelling) as a necessary condition for understanding their accounts of a meaning of home and their neighbourhood (for housing mobility and the importance of time see Dufty-Jones 2012). Hence, I set out here to theorize a meaning of home from these three empirical observations that might activate residents’ capacity to articulate different housing “realities”.

Moving outside the realm of the urban studies literature, Jacobs (2002, 105) argues that “discerning insights” can be drawn from fictional and poetic accounts of urban life. Giving some philosophical clout to this claim, Jacobs and Malpas (2013), drawing on the work of Proust and the role of the imagination in constructing notions of home, demonstrate that the imagination should not be thought of as solely internal to a social subjects consciousness, but rather as a link to their

knowledge of the material world (also see Trigg 2012). Smith (2004, 108) goes further still to argue that the “reader sensitive to social theory will detect in Proust’s work ... a more subtle or nuanced understanding of practice that allows Proust to be proposed as [a] successor” to more recent social theories and theorists. Indeed, in Proust et al.’s (1996) *In Search of Lost Time*, the implicit epistemology is that our *knowledge* of the world should be distinguished from our *experience* of the world, and the latter is always in the present (Jacobs 2012, Personal communication; Jacobs and Malpas 2013). Knowledge can only come from reflecting back on the past, through what Proust terms “voluntary” and “involuntary” memories.

Whitehead (2009, 104) argues that for Proust, voluntary or “habitual” notions of memory and remembering only reveal superficial appearances to us that are often characterized by a conscious effort to recall the past. The more habitual a memory becomes, from the continual retrieval of that memory, the less capable the social subject is able to discern “the truth” from such a recollection (Lowen 2002; Whitehead 2009). Involuntary or autobiographical memories are, by contrast, retrieved from cues encountered in everyday life that often evoke recollections of the past subconsciously (Tukey 1969). For Proust, involuntary memories capture the past in its totality, “revealing not only a memory image but [also the] related sensations and emotions” (Whitehead 2009, 104). In Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time*, a physical sensation (the sound of water running through the pipes) and the subsequent emotional response in the subject become the reagent for the retrieval of an involuntary memory. Proust et al. (1996, 231) writes, “the past still lives in us [and] has made us what we are and is remaking us every moment!”

Smith (2004) argues that for the narrator of Proust et al.’s *Remembrance of Things Past*, it is the:

... immaterial attractions that motivate efforts towards belonging (109) ... Proust has extensive discussions on the self as imprisoned by habit and engaging in repetitive tasks and mental routines. This self, habituated and embodied, is also shaped by class ... Proust’s model of the self [is] linked to a more thoughtful theorization of contingency, change and identity (109) ... The result is a more balanced picture of life, with oscillations between habituated action and reflexive self-awareness. (110)

Proust provides narratives about how “chance moments” in the lives of his characters, what Smith (2004, 110) calls “collisions of life”, jolted the characters out of their routine and habituated lives. Early empirical observations from my studies demonstrated that unanticipated events, such as residents finding out that their home and neighbourhood would be redeveloped, represented such “collisions of life” for the residents of the different public housing neighbourhoods (Rogers 2006, 2012a). I wanted to investigate why these moments – stages of being in time – made these residents reflect back into the past in search of meaning about the present (Trigg 2012). These moments seemed to create a distance between the residents’ current and past *selves*. From this moment, the residents became aware of their different *selves*, changed by this event and made aware (conscious) of this change through time-mediated self-reflection. What might be termed a Proustian temporal reflexivity was brought on by a traumatic moment, and it was by no means certain that it was the dwelling itself that was lost, but rather that the

moment signified the end of a *state of being in home*. Proust et al. (1996, 144) writes in *Remembrance of Things Past*:

As it had suddenly come upon me unaware ... those strange contradictory impressions of survival and obliteration crossed one another again in my mind. This painful and, at the moment, incomprehensible impression, I knew ... that if I ever should succeed in extracting the grain of truth, it could only be from it, from so singular, so spontaneous an impression, which had been neither traced by my intellect nor attenuated by my pusillanimity, but which death itself, the sudden revelation of death, had, like a stroke of lighting, carved upon me ...

Malpas (2012, 177–198) argues that for Proust, the awareness of death allows the subject to understand life, it becomes the *raison d'être* and motivation for a project of living. I observed this too in the actions of residents when their neighbourhoods and homes were metaphorically “sentenced to death” through redevelopment (Rogers 2006, 2012a). Their awareness of the pending demolition of their homes, or their physical removal from the neighbourhood, became the *raison d'être* and motivation for a project of remembrance and resistance (A Right to the City Alliance 2010; Rogers 2012a). Within the realm of fiction, we readily accept that notions of home are intricately connected to the emotions, imaginations and the passing of time for the inhabitants (Jacobs 2002). In *The Aleph* Borges (1949, 10) writes:

“My home, my ancestral home, my old and inveterate Garay Street home!” he kept repeating, seeming to forget his woe in the music of his words. It was not hard for me to share his distress. After the age of fifty, all change becomes a hateful symbol of the passing of time. Besides, the scheme concerned a house that for me would always stand for Beatriz [i.e. the dwelling had become the materialization of the woman he loved].

This bringing together of the emotions, imaginations and the passing of time as a way of describing notions of home was also evident within my empirical studies of public housing tenants’ attachment to their homes and neighbourhoods (Rogers 2006, 2012a). One resident reported, “My son grew up in that home, although now he’s moved on. But yeah, a lot of memories”. In another study conducted by Dang (2008, 80), conducted at the same site and time as one of my studies in Western Sydney, a resident reported after being relocated from her home:

That home meant a lot of me, I’ve lived there for 27 years and my kids grew up there. It’s still home, even when I walk by and see it all boarded up. Where I am now? It’s just a house that I’m residing in at the moment; it’s like nowhere, halfway, in between.

For studies of home and urban space, authors such as Proust and Borges serve as a prompt for us to think about how the material objects of the home, and the dwelling itself, might serve as the repositories for the memories of residents past *selves* (Bryden and Topping 2010; Jacobs and Malpas 2013). In one of my studies, a visually impaired public housing tenant, while discussing notions of place attachment,

perhaps most vividly articulated this habituated relationship to home and urban space. In the interview excerpt below, this tenant is discussing *home* as a central reference point within the urban landscape, a reference point that is devoid of visual clues informed by material references:

I forgot that we moved [house] ... because I'm so used to walking from like that sort of [street name] to the football oval and across the road. Anyway I thought I've ... done my shopping and instead of coming out this end of the mall to come around this way, I forgot and walked out the other end ... I went to my old house. They had the fence up around it. I forgot and I thought hang on, where's everybody gone you know. I'm so used to walking that way back ... I didn't realise that we had moved from there and to come here to live. My friend said to me "where are you going?" I said "going home".

Home, in the two empirical excerpts above, still existed for these residents as a memory of a material dwelling, a memory of a dwelling that had since been boarded up or demolished. "The longing for home becomes", writes Malpas (2012, 164) following Proust, "a longing for a time of stability and security, a time that cannot be found in the present". Proust's Mnemosyne,¹ the personification of memory (Mengue 2010), might thus be better deployed in the context of habitation and home as the materialization of memory. A dual process where in some cases one might remember a material object that has ceased to exist in material form, while in other cases a material object becomes the repository for the memories of residents' *past* selves. Central to both of these mental processes is the elevation of the role of memory and imagination and the apparent trivialization of the material (Byrne 2009). Not only is a stable material object no longer a necessary condition for understanding notions of home, the dwelling itself must also be considered outside the dominant frame that forwards the home as the materialization of, or a repository for, economic capital (Bourdieu 1985). This introduces an epistemological tension, described below within Mengue's (2010, 67) cautionary footnote about a Proustian Mnemosyne. With:

Proustism ... one quickly abandons any reference to the philological truth ... [and] this is extremely awkward, when one wishes to produce a critical study which is in conformity with the canons in force in the world of knowledge.

Bersani (1986, 403) is less dichotomized in his positioning of a Proustian "truth", and argues that Proust was "reluctant to divorce truth entirely from the experiences which it ultimately invalidates". So, while we need not abandon all references to the "truth" – philological, mathematical, financial or otherwise (Bersani 1986) – it is certainly the case that rigour and criticality are often demonstrated with reference to mathematical certainties such as those inherent to maps, plans or statistics within urban planning and architecture (Mengue 2010; Rogers 2012a). Proustianism thus problematizes the very signs by which the success of urban redevelopments are measured by urban planners, architects and indeed some urban scholars (Bersani 1986, 405; Jacobs and Malpas 2013). Scholars who seek to create additional bodies of knowledge that are drawn from memories and imaginaries of the home might challenge these widely accepted knowledge systems, and they could, therefore, expose themselves to resistance.

These types of epistemological tensions have long discursive and political histories that can be traced back to philosophical discussions that have been shaped by rationalist/empiricist, objective/subjective and the enduring positivist/relativist debates (Christians 2011; St. Pierre 2011; Tuominen 2009). The tension at issue here, it seems, is between Idealism and Materialism, and in philosophical terms, these precepts are often forwarded as duelling ontological doctrines. Idealism generally places ontological priority on a *reality* that is fundamentally phenomenological, mental, mentally constructed and ineludibly immaterial. Alternatively, materialism generally places ontological priority on a *reality* that exists only in matter or energy, such that the *reality* of things are conceptualized as the composition of physical materials, such as chemicals in the brain or physical “materials” like buildings (with important differences here² and I refer in this article to the latter).

Similar to the problems that emerge when social actors overstate and dichotomize the philosophical precepts noted above, which only serves to reinforce these somewhat false dichotomies, overstating and dichotomizing the distinctions between mathematical and experiential space can be equally problematic. I have argued elsewhere for a realignment of analytical enquiry into these philosophical and political struggles, away from false dichotomies and towards a focus on a better understanding of who has the “right to place boundaries around what will be constructed as “valid” knowledge” (Rogers 2012b, 239) and the philosophical precepts that these actors forward to pursue such projects. This analysis starts from accepting that mathematical and experiential conceptions of space are as equally “valid” as philosophical and political tools (Malpas 2012; Trigg 2012), and thus directs the analysis towards the politics of positioning different knowledge systems as “more valid” than others.

A Proustian understanding of “time as the key to a reflexive sociology of the self” (Smith 2004, 111) might, therefore, also represent a challenge to the dominant knowledge paradigm, and this is what makes it particularly illuminating. The passing of time, the role of embodied memory and unpredictability of chance collisions in life mean that the empirical observations researchers make about residents’ subjective responses to urban redevelopments are inevitable and will reoccur in spite of the mathematical certainties of urban planning. Within Proust’s extended discussions about the contradictions of mourning (*les intermittences du coeur*), he outlines, argues Moorjani (1990), that the social subject experiences two temporally mediated deaths. The first occurs at the crucial moment in life. For the residents of a public housing estate, this is the exact moment that the estate is “sentenced to death” within policy texts when the estate redevelopment is announced. However, through the mourning process the home, or the pending demolition of their home, is first kept alive within the *psyche* (Moorjani 1990, 876) when residents reflect back on their past *selves* to retrieve previous emotions and memories about the home. The home will, nonetheless, inevitably come to die a second death when it is finally removed (demolished) from the physical world.

Through this process of reflection, the open spaces and flora, such as streets and trees, can also become the repository of memories that are dialectically connected as both positive (safe) and negative (unsafe) memories. One resident I interviewed reflected on the safety of being inside the house and looking out by stating:

like I mean there’s a lot of memories in Smith³ Street ... Some horrible ones too ... I couldn’t believe they had about 100 police all marching down the

street and I thought; you know like it's all right when you're inside and you're looking out.

Another resident talked about their memories of children playing in the street:

Well, we did have a park close by and the memories are there of all the kids within the street ... playing football, cricket; get the garbage bins out as the stumps. Yeah.

While another resident reflected on the memory of a jasmine tree:

But the effect on me, okay, once the house was gone the tears flowed a bit; I've got to admit. There was a remainder of a tree that I had, a jasmine growing, and that remained there for quite a while, from memory ... I planted it ... I had it in there for about seven years ... Yeah, that jasmine tree, I put it there.

It is clear from these excerpts that the material world is not placed at the epicentre of the residents' reported housing experiences (Jacobs 2002, 103). Instead, their perspectives are more dynamic, interweaving memories, imagination and the physical environment together. Like Deleuze (1972), who uses Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* to wrestle the sign away from materialist analytic scholarship and toward existential and phenomenological theory (Drohan 2010, 26), the physical environment needs to be wrestled away from the urban theory epicentre. Deleuze (1972) showed that there are different regimes of signs and representation, each with their own rules and limitations. I have discussed Proust's Mnemosyne as one such regime of representation, that of the materialization of memories, and following Jacobs and Malpas (2013) I have used it to suggest that the home and urban space can become a metaphorical repository for memories from the past that might tell us something about the "truth" of the present.

In the next section, I move onto another regime of signs and representation, that of mathematically informed cartography. I contrast and attempt to soften the hard-edged dualism of mathematical and experiential space to allow for a more nuanced understanding of home within the context of the restructuring of the welfare state and the gentrification of Australian cities.

Of particular relevance is the restructuring of housing protection in Australia from a "public housing" system that was provided by the state through a state housing authority, to a system of "social housing" that is increasingly being managed by non-government, and even private sector, housing managers (Darcy 2012; Rogers 2012a). Darcy (2012) argues that over the last 30 years in Australia, the state housing authorities have ignored the decline of large tracts of publicly owned housing. However, these housing authorities are now redeveloping many large public housing estates by citing the material (market) decline of the urban spaces and the dwellings as a key justification for redevelopment.

Much like Proust, Bachelard (1969) shows that the home is a space for "day-dreaming" (6) which should be theorized in ways that will not place the role of "memory and imagination" (6) in a subordinate position to mathematically informed cartography and materialist understandings of urban space and home. For

it is materialism that is central to the state's rationales for the restructuring of public housing. Thus, materialist understandings of home and urban space represent two of the key mechanisms that are deployed to justify the restructuring of public housing and the gentrification of Australian cities.

Bachelard's Cartography and the "Truth" of the Past and Present

Bachelard's (1969) *The Poetics of Space* undertakes a phenomenology of architecture and he explicitly argues that architecture needs to be understood as an experience, rather than solely as a material product. Bachelard's states that:

Space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the surveyor (xxxvi) ... On the contrary, we must go beyond the problems of description – whether this description be objective or subjective, that is, whether it give facts or impression – in order to attain to the primary virtues, those that reveal an attachment that is native in some way to the primary function of inhabiting. (4)

Bachelard's bringing together of the inside (subjective)/outside (objective) as a way of understanding habitation expands the analytical frame with which to conceptualize notions of home. When I asked the residents of a neighbourhood that was undergoing redevelopment about their attachment to place, they often talked about the home as being a central reference point for their knowledge of the world. In one study, I explored how the residents of the neighbourhood viewed their home, street and neighbourhood within the context of a large-scale estate redevelopment project, and the home was often put forward as a unique vantage point from which to view the redevelopment of their neighbourhood. Some residents stated that they made sense of their experiences from the privileged position (their experience) of being inside the home and looking out (see above). *Others* – academics, policy-makers, urban planners, architects and the non-tenant public –, they reported, constructed an image of their estate and their homes from the outside by looking in (Arthurson, Darcy, and Rogers 2013). The vantage point of the *other* is no less imagined or real, but it is often informed and constructed using visual representations of residents' homes that the residents do not control or produce, such as media representations (Jacobs et al. 2011) and the plans and maps of residents' homes and their estates that are drafted by state-sponsored consultants (Urbis 2008).

Bachelard (1969) reminds us that these maps and plans are not exact miniature (accurate) representations of the inside (subjective) spaces of the residents' homes. The "masterplans" (Urbis 2008) that guide the public housing estate redevelopments, and which will engulf the existing spaces of estates and residents' existing homes, are not constructed in the imagination of the architects and planners from the inner experience of the residents that will inhabit the future teleological spaces and dwellings. These maps and plans are always constructed from the outside, by trying, but always failing, to look in. They are, perhaps more importantly, always constructed within specific institutional settings and are shaped by particular political processes that regulate the representational conditions of possibility for these maps and plans.

An example of this politics of cartography is the cartographic representation within the masterplan documents that outlined the redevelopment of the south-west

Sydney estate of Bonnyrigg. The plan in Figure 1 attempts to reshape the audiences' neighbourhood sense perception by morphing the individual dwellings of the estate into elongated clusters of developable space to be demarcated by (staged) time.

This spatiotemporal restructuring of even a more common cartographic representation of Bonnyrigg – such as a representation that might be found in a street directory – is so markedly different and interconnected to the governments' spatiotemporal vision for Bonnyrigg that the government needed to provide considerable supplementary written material to assist the lay observer to decode this plan. In this case, the “Concept Plan comprises the demolition of existing dwellings in stages” (Urbis 2008, 9) and the state-sponsored consultants clarify the governments' spatiotemporal vision for the Bonnyrigg redevelopment (as shown in Figure 1) as follows:

Staged construction of approximately 2,330 dwellings in 18 stages over 13 years ... comprising 70% private dwellings and 30% public dwellings to achieve targets set by Housing NSW. (Urbis 2008, 9)

In contrast to the materialist politics of cartography deployed by governments and their consultants, residents also construct their knowledge of the world from their current lived experience, their hopes for the future and their dreams about the past. This is a distinct vantage point from which to construct knowledge about the world for residents are the only people who “live in” their home. Therefore, “community

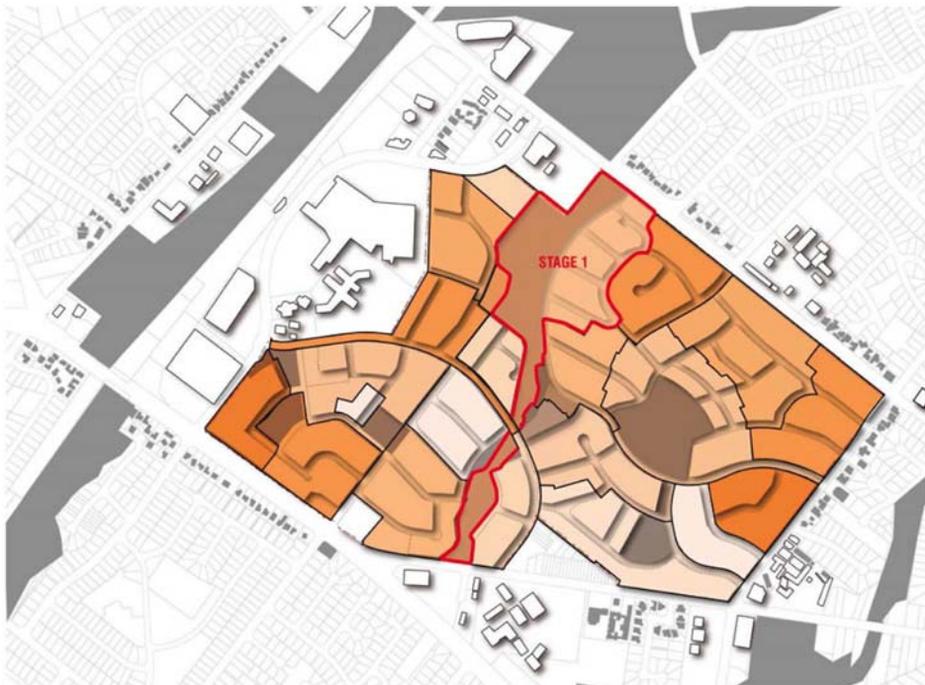


Figure 1. Mapping and the politics of cartography.

consultations” using maps and plans constructed from the outside rarely mediate, in an effective way, between tenants’ inner subjective experiences and the outer objective realities of urban redevelopment projects. The following exchange shows how tenants might struggle with the mathematical representations of their homes and neighbourhoods that are presented to them during estate redevelopment project “community consultations”.

Tenant: They told us to go, if we were interested, to go to a meeting. I think it was in the next street. We all – I went down and they showed us [a plan of] what they’re going to do and that.

Dallas: How did it feel when you were looking at a map like this? [I point to the plan of the estate and locate the tenant’s home].

Tenant: I don’t even know where I am. I don’t even know. I just – so [a state housing authority employee] pointed it out ... Well if they mark where I am then I can say, oh well then I can sort of work out where everything is. Just to look at that like that, I’d go well where am I?

While a particular vision for the future, which is constructed in the maps and (master)plans, might be intuitively obvious to an architect or urban planner who is viewing the neighbourhood within the context of the city, or that views the residents’ dwelling within the context of the neighbourhood, for the residents, this relationship between home and city is somewhat inverted (Crabtree 2013). Residents view the city from a privileged window within their homes (see residents excerpts above), and the city from the vantage point of their neighbourhood (A Right to the City Alliance 2010). Only residents understand and have access to this view, a view that is constructed from their memories, experiences, hopes and dreams of their habituated spatiotemporal experience. In this space, the bricks and mortar are not only the building blocks of their home, they also contain memories that assist them to structure their knowledge of the world, as discussed by a resident below:

No I couldn’t move because there’s too many memories like the children growing up you know and my husband and I lived here, but we’re separated now. You know it’s just too many memories. Like I just see the kids running up the hallway and their friends knocking at the doors and friends staying over and – oh, I couldn’t move.

The maps and plans that are presented to residents in “community consultations” are unlivable and, therefore, unknowable until they are experienced as created spaces; until the material objects begin to *store* residents’ experiences and memories (Bachelard 1969). Residents cannot know what it will be like to live in a new unknown space (a new home or neighbourhood) until it is created and experienced in relation to the other, older, spaces (their old home and neighbourhood).

Thus, the purpose for, and contradictions in, seeking reflections and consulting residents on these new unknown spaces before they are created and experienced by residents creates an almost unresolvable subjective/temporal dilemma. From the

subjective position of the imagination, the problems associated with consulting residents in any meaningful way about some future teleological space (Crabtree 2013), such as a home or neighbourhood, seem significant. Nonetheless, the inner (subjective) reflections and imaginations from residents – knowledge constructed from looking out of the windows of their homes – that could be collected before the (master)plans and maps are drawn up might still be insightful. Although, and in keeping with the Proustian epistemology outlined above, this approach would require those seeking these inner (subjective) reflections to contrast this knowledge with their mathematical representations – the maps and plans that represent the dominant “truth” within the urban policy knowledge system – in pursuit of a better understanding of home and habitation. This is encapsulated by Bachelard (1969) when he states:

From the standpoint of the imagination, he was not “wrong”; the imagination is never wrong, since it does not have to confront an image with an objective reality. (153) ... Need one point out that ... the gentle warmth of enclosed regions is the first indication of intimacy? This warm intimacy is the root of all images. Here – quite obviously – the images no longer correspond to any sort of reality. (154)

This provides a way of theorizing residents’ responses to questions about urban redevelopment projects whereby residents seem to ignore the dominant outside (objective) paradigm, and instead described an inner subjective logic and functionality of the home that cannot be captured on a plan of the dwelling they inhabit. Bachelard problematizes the assumption that planners and architects can construct an image on a plan that could wholly represent the dwelling or built form from the standpoint of the imagination for the residents. For Bachelard (1969, 150):

A geometrician sees exactly the same thing in two similar figures, drawn on different scales. The plan of a house drawn on a reduced scale implies none of the problems that are inherent to a philosophy of the imagination.

This brings us directly to the central task of this article; an investigation into the politics of positioning mathematically informed signs as a more valid and “natural” instrument for understanding urban redevelopment at this socio-political time and place. The materialist maps and plans that the planners and architects construct as part of the urban redevelopment process are not apolitical. Instead, as Bachelard (1969) reminds us, these maps and plans are culturally specific and politically embedded and these “representations become nothing but a body of expressions with which to communicate our own images to others” (150). This leads to questions about the reasons a particular map or plan is put forward, and the inconspicuous consequences of cartography as the dominant tool of representation.

Reflecting on cartography as a historically specific discursive process provides significant insight into contemporary socio-political deployments of cartography within urban redevelopment projects. Like the maps of the colonial empires of the eighteenth century and the meanings that the colonized attached to these maps (Blais, Deprest, and Singaravelou 2011; Hutchinson 2005; Longley 2012; Stone 1988), the meanings that the residents of urban redevelopment projects attach to

masterplans are directly related to the socio-political context in which they are signs. In short, these masterplans induce moments of crises; state orchestrated and temporally specific periods of uncertainty and stress for the residents (Crabtree 2013; Rogers 2012a). This uncertainty and stress can spark political projects to resist eviction. These political projects are informed by the recollection of memories, sometimes even newly retrieved memories, of inhabiting the home and the neighbourhood, as well as from the material realities of urban redevelopment.

This habituated driver of resistance is rendered less visible when the sets of symbols and discourses within these masterplans assume a shared history amongst the audience (Borges 1949), as is the case when the cartographer feigns a shared history of urban space and habitation through the cartography process. Malpas (2012, 49) uses the Heideggerian informed concept of “iridescence” to describe a “multivocity ... of overlapping and shifting aspects rather than a set of distinct and easily denumerable senses”, and iridescence is perhaps a productive concept by which to analyse cartography as a political project. From this position, the symbolic meaning of the masterplan becomes *iridescent* and seems to change when viewed from different subjective angles. Thus, while the masterplans often obscure the appearance of the available set of multiple (material/experiential) symbolic interpretations, there may come a temporal point, a moment in time, at which the multivocal and overlapping subjective angles are brought sharply into focus from many angles (Borges 1949).

One such moment in time is when the building contractors start work on an urban redevelopment, such as a public housing estate redevelopment, and the abstract plans for the urban space that have been drawn up by architects and planners turn into very real physical processes with very real effects for residents. At this moment in time, the tensions between mathematical and experiential space are brought sharply into focus when the building contractors, largely relying on their mathematical representations of urban space (i.e. their masterplans and site-plans) that are devoid of people, start manipulating the physical environment.

Despite policy processes to compensate public housing tenants for the removal or demolition of tenant-owned property that has been “approved” by the state (“authorized tenant improvements” in policy discourse), tenants often report that simply replacing a material object or providing financial compensation does not entirely compensate them for the loss of that material object. The material object, it seems, is worth more than the sum of its physical attributes and its replacement cost. Tenants also measure the worth of a material object in terms of the memories it represents or stores. In the exchange below, a tenant is discussing the demolition of a tenant-purchased garage as part of large-scale civil works on their estate. In this case, although the state housing authority had agreed to replace the garage, it nonetheless contained material objects that were very important to the family, which were damaged in the demolition process. This created a tension between the tenant (s) and the state housing authority and their contractors.

Tenant: Oh, just terrible things they’ve done to my daughter. They just took this big shed, which was like a big double garage, longer than this room, and they took half of it. Then they said they’d be coming back, like, to take the other half. So at the time she [the shed owner] was working, so I went across and I said “no you can’t do that because where are we going to put

everything that's in it? There's old furniture there, that belonged to my mum, and she wants to keep it". So what they done, they took it out of there, jammed it up against the house, put a tarp over it.

Dallas: So tell me about the garage. Was that [state housing authority owned].

Tenant: No.

Dallas: No. Did she put that up?

Tenant: Yes. Well she did ask for another carport to replace it so they've given her that. So they did that for her, but it doesn't replace TVs, the furniture, the memories of everything; like you never replace them!

Within the dominant materialist urban planning paradigm, tenants were limited in the ways that they could express these very real emotional (inner/subjective) concerns about their home and its contents. Equally, this dominant paradigm also impeded the state housing authority's ability to comprehend and, therefore, appropriately compensate tenants for their losses. Masterplanning cartography often preferences the material features of an urban space throughout the discursive process and this presupposes a particular future for the urban space. By contrast, the theorizing of a multivocity of materialist and experiential notions of urban space and home – without distorting these analytical concepts – originates and proceeds as an analysis of these concepts in relation to space in all their iridescent multiplicity. The purpose of such an analysis, argues Malpas (2012, 52), is to “uncover relations of what I term *mutual* rather than hierarchical dependence”. It thus requires a dismantling of the hierarchical superiority of the material over the experiential within notions of urban space and home, and the ontological reformation of these concepts as mutually interdependent. For both of these doctrines are implicated in the way residents construct knowledge about urban space and home over time, as shown by this final excerpt.

... the old house has a lot more in memories. It was the first house where the two of our youngest – mum and dad's two youngest – grandchildren stayed a lot. So there's a lot of memories there. It's where we had our pet dog. He grew up around there before he passed away.

Furthermore, cartography need not be restrained. Indeed, what might be required is quite the opposite. For the possibilities to *mutually support* the dominant forms of cartography with, for instance, the different forms of cultural cartography and emotional mapping (Jones and Evans 2012; Nold 2009), which are emerging within the discipline of visual methodologies, offer new possibilities. To be sure, such a project would also be a political process for the bringing together of these different knowledge systems in this way would also represent a challenge to the hierarchical dependence of one knowledge system over another. It is nonetheless a political debate that is worth undertaking in pursuit of a more nuanced understanding of home within the context of the large-scale restructuring of Australian cities. Indeed, attempting to bring together the multivocity of space and habitation, such as the

insider/subjective with the outsider/objective representations of home and urban space, appears to be an urgent representational and discursive project.

Conclusion

Deployed through urban planning frameworks, cartography is embedded within discursive processes of policy deployment that position materialist conceptions of home and urban space as intuitively “natural”. There is little doubt that mathematically informed cartography and urban planning produce significant social benefits when deployed through urban and social policy. However, these dominant symbolic vehicles of urban policy also structure the socio-political knowledge of housing issues and render invisible other representations that are informed by the inhabitants’ experience of urban space. Rather than being inherently coherent and stable, these materialist conceptions of home and urban space in policy texts are historical, changeable, culturally specific, politically embedded and, therefore, politically volatile. This volatility means they are also politically versatile, so that when the discourses of urban materialism are recruited to design and redesign our urban spaces and dwellings, the experience of the residents within the city’s *actually existing* urban spaces can be far removed from the teleological predictions for the urban space and citizens within the policy texts.

In this article, I argued that people “inhabit home” and that the mathematical conceptualizations of material objects alone are blunt conceptual tools for theorizing the knowledge residents acquire through their habitation and remembrance of their homes and neighbourhoods. By synthesizing the hard-edged dualism of mathematical and experiential space, that is often assumed of spatial theorists such as Bachelard and Lefebvre, the empirical material demonstrates that the home might also be theorized as an assemblage of memories that had been collected and that are now stored in the material objects within the home or within the dwelling itself.

I conclude that rather than restrained cartography, a more urgent task is to explore the opportunities to *mutually support* the dominant forms of cartography with the different forms of cultural and emotional cartography (Jones and Evans 2012; Nold 2009) and notions of home informed by inhabitation and the imagination. No doubt, bringing these Materialist and Idealist knowledge systems together in this way, within the context of urban policy, will challenge the hierarchical dependence of materialist over the phenomenological concepts of urban space and home.

Nonetheless, it is a political debate that is worth undertaking in pursuit of a more nuanced understanding of home within the context of the large-scale restructuring and gentrification of post-welfare state cities. This restructuring is facilitated by materialist understandings of home and urban spaces that are deployed to justify the transfer or sale of large tracts of publicly owned housing and land to non-state interests. Therefore, attempting to bring together the multivocity of urban space and habitation, such as the insider/subjective with the outsider/objective representations of home and urban space, is an urgent representational and discursive project.

Notes

1. In Greek mythology Mnemosyne was the personification of memory.
2. Materialism's most important contribution, in my opinion, was to philosophically do away with "gods" by forwarding a *materialist conception of the soul*. However, Steven Hawking recently argued that "philosophy is dead" and he forwards "science" – to be read as the physical sciences and in this case physics – as the only 'valid' knowledge system for understanding the social and material world(s). So, there are ontological implications for both promoting and challenging materialist doctrines. These might include: on the one side, the possibility of 'creating new gods' through the promotion of phenomenological or similar processes of remembrance; while, on the other side, the promotion of a hard-edge Hawkarian materialism – which denies the validity of 'philosophical' understandings of the social and material world – rules out other forms of knowledge about the world.
3. Not the street's real name.
4. Housing NSW is the state housing authority in the state of New South Wales in Australia.

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