

Social Construction of Parks in Paris Suburbs National Science Foundation Report

Introduction

The following report outlines research I conducted during the summer of 2001 in Paris, France, under the aegis of an extension grant to the National Science Foundation's Environmental Science, Policy, and Engineering Sustainable Cities Program at the University of Southern California. I was based at the Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées (ENPC) in Noisy-Grand, a suburb to the east of Paris. Through the assistance of my host and the association with ENPC, I was able to make extensive contacts with local park administrators, geographic researchers, and landscape architects as well as attend a local conference and acquire a variety of scholarly, popular, and visual materials relating to park design, park usage, and park creation in the Parisian, Ile-de-France, and French context. The experience provided an invaluable opportunity to test my qualitative methodology I had drafted for my Los Angeles research and to see similarities and contrast between how two major world cities transform their urban environment to reclaim areas for nature and recreation.

Scientific Goals

Initially, Stephanie Pincetl had coordinated with a researcher at our host institution for me to assist the city of Montreuil with an open space project. The city had three different projects from which I could choose : culturally significant historic walls where peaches were grown espalier style; an examination of open space around a particular social housing project ; or an evaluation of Montreuil's Agenda 21 document relating to sustainability. Any of these projects would have related well to my home research into open space in a dense, working class, ethnically diverse neighborhood in Los Angeles. Though the place was different, the themes would surely be the same.

Upon arrival, however, I discovered the possibility of examining the park creation process at the département level (county level) with the assistance of Mme. Sophie CAMBON-GRAU. She was instrumental in setting up meetings with administrators at two different départements just outside the Parisian city limits. Because this opportunity to meet with administrators involved with citizens in the park creation process paralleled my research plan in Los Angeles, I chose to shift my focus from interning at Montreuil to investigating new park case studies at the département level.

After my first meeting with administrators at Département Val-de-Marne, I realized that I had the beginnings of a comparative research project between two world cities. Despite differences in administrative structure and park design (both historic and contemporary) in the two cities, many consistent themes relating to park creation and public participation arose. What began as a small opportunity with one French park project that had vague connections to my research blossomed into a comparative analysis that will hopefully become my dissertation topic and future body of research. Through a mix of good luck, being open to asking questions of a variety of people, and having a willingness to change, I was able to create direct links to my base methodologies defined in Los Angeles earlier in the year. I have arrayed an extensive constellation of contacts and resources in Paris for when I return to conduct further inquiry.

Los Angeles Research

Before arriving in Paris, I had crafted an array of qualitative methods to investigate the recent and continuing park creation process along the Los Angeles River in and around a neighborhood known locally as « Frogtown. » Specifically examining the role of public participation in this process, I developed a plan to conduct one-on-one interviews of local residents to learn of their level of involvement in park creation efforts. As part of the methodology, I would solicit personal visual representations using artistic or photographic media

and then conduct formal discussions to investigate citizen perceptions of nature through representations they have created. I also planned to observe people's use of these spaces, to learn of the daily social construction of place. I would augment these methods with archival research into the neighborhoods' development, the natural history of the area, and historical personal reactions to the area, in addition to including an review of the transformation of the Los Angeles River from its natural to concretized course. Indeed the controlled channel is the *loci* of contention regarding the « greening » efforts of all interested parties – residents, non-profit environmental groups, and governmental agencies. Ultimately, I would design a variety of maps to visualize landuse, demographics, and ecozones, in addition to capturing local knowledge that residents and institutional players share in the interviews.

My qualitative methodological approach allows for deep research of a local place, revealing intersections between political economy, social production of space, and human interaction with the natural environment. In addition, my multi-method approach (archival, interview, dialog, performance, quantitative surveys, geographic information systems) establishes an integrative model. The initial research suggests that both the institutional approach and citizen participation activity reveal new models of cooperation and involvement in transformation of land use for park space. All of these methods would « translate » easily to the Parisian cases for a comparative analysis of how a variety of players visualize and ultimately transform urban space. Future research in other neighborhoods in Los Angeles and Paris might provide deeper insight into the "localness" of park creation and land transformation.

French Experience

Initially, I connected with Florence RUDOLPH of Université de Marne-de-Vallée. She arranged a contact at Mission Environment, ville de Montreuil. Given her tight schedule and geographic limitations (she resides in Strasbourg), I began working closely with Sophie

CAMBON-GRAU, chargée des DEA et de l'international à la direction de la recherche à ENPC. Mme. CAMBON-GRAU was also my residential host during my stay and generously shared space in her office. Given her research specialty in co-production of public services, though our subject matter is different (parks instead of water supply systems), we shared an interest in the results that institutional and individual players create together.

Contacts

I was able to establish extensive contacts during my research period. All contact details are included in the Appendix A. Mme. CAMBON assisted in setting up interviews with a variety of park administrators at different levels of administration. I was able to meet with representatives of two départements outside le peripherique de Paris : M. BADER and Mme. JOSSERAN of Département de Seine-Saint-Denis and M. POURRE and Mme. POURRAT of Département Val-de-Marne. M. POURRE, Chef de Service a Val-de-Marne, was also kind enough to meet with me at his home in Ivry-sur-Seine (dépt. Val-de-Marne). In addition to meeting with M. MORRISSE at Montreuil (dépt. Seine-St.-Denis), I took meetings with M. GUERNALAC and Mme. ARKWRIGHT, park administrators at ville de Vitry sur Seine (dépt. Val-de-Marne) to discuss specific model park projects that incorporated public participation. Through a contact I developed on my own, I met with Mme. BARTHE, a geographer and researcher at the CNRS Laboratoire des espace et culture. Her earlier research examined public participation in park creation in Amiens, looking at the creation of social space from a geographic standpoint.

I also met many landscape researchers who study parks and French gardens. Though not directed related to my specific research questions, these interviews, meetings, and visitations gave me better insight into the French approach to landscape and the outdoors. M. RUMELHART provided a site visit at the Potager de Roi at l'Ecole Nationale Supérieure du Paysage (ENSP) in Versailles, and I also met with Mme. BLANCHOT at ENSP who has

researched the history of landscape architecture in modern France. Given that most park designs originate from ENSP, her paper will undoubtedly help me understand the cultural framework of French landscape design. Visits to the gardens of Versailles, Trianon, le Hameau, Vaux le Vicomte, le Fôret de Fontainebleau, Château Sceaux, the picturesque parcs de Butte Chaumont et Vincennes et Bagatelle and le roseraie at L'Häye les Roses have all given me a diverse view of French constructions of nature in and around the city. Visiting the postmodern parks of André Citroën and Bercy and the Maison de Cinq Sens also gave me insight into French comingling of art, nature, agriculture, recreation, and performance in the outdoor public space of parks.

Materials

During my visit, I took advantage of visiting as many parks in Paris and les banlieus as I could. Choosing traditional jardins français, jardins anglais, hybrid types, picturesque parks, community gardens, mid-century playgrounds, wilderness areas ; and post-modern plazas and designs, I was able to see not only how designers have transformed urban space for « nature » (spaces for flora, fauna, et terre) but also for « culture » (leisure, recreation, spectacle).

To get a deeper background on the culture of nature in Paris, I also visited several exhibitions : l'Arsenal (extensive maps, models, and presentations of green spaces in Paris), the Exposition de Lavande (tourist consumption of agricultural nature in Place des Vosge), Bibliotheque National François Mitterand (where I explored their collection of materials on espace vert and secured a research library card), Musée Zadkine's exhibition *Paysages dell'Entre Ville*, and a one-day conference at l'Institute Français Urbansime, *La ville change, et le paysage aussi...* for example.

In addition, I collected and reviewed a variety of scholarly articles and primary materials published by les villes et les departement relating to parks, nature, and landscape.

These materials are documented in the Bibliography of this paper. I also collected a vast array of popular materials relating to parks, nature, and landscape including magazine articles, advertisements, flyers, posters, postcards, and art books.

An Encapsulated History of French Park Planning

I met with Didier POURRE, Chef du Service Vie des Parcs, and Chantal POURRAT, who does Promotion for Espaces Verts. Sophie CAMBON-GRAU translated for us, but M. POURRE especially was easy to understand (even speaking only French) as he is an excellent lecturer. Both of POURRE and POURRAT are public administrators, holding competitive positions, and they received special public administration training through a national institute.

M. POURRE gave an encapsulated historical perspective on the French park, starting post-revolution. After the revolution, public parks became available and open for the people. Many were royal grounds that were simply opened as parks. Then around 1850, Hausmann introduced urban smaller parks and gardens that were within walking distance of the neighborhoods of Paris. As an aside, he mentioned that with winds prevailing from the West, the economically privileged neighborhoods tended to be on the western side of Paris because the winds took the poor Parisian, industrial air away to the east. Therefore, Bois du Boulogne (the large park on the east of Paris) was *bourgeois*, while Bois de Vincennes (a similarly large park on the west of Paris) was *populaire*.

Post WWII, with the creation of Ile-de-France (the administrative unit encompassing Paris and its suburbs) and a *Plan d'Etat* (the highly centralized state of France we know today), a progressive regional idea emerged. This area around Paris and Corse are the only regions in France controlled directly by the national level. Despite control at the *etat* level, each regional entity planned its own landuse transformation, including park planning.

Around 1960, *espace vert* became a more popular concern as it does around the world with a greater awareness of environmental issues. At the same time, however, a major need

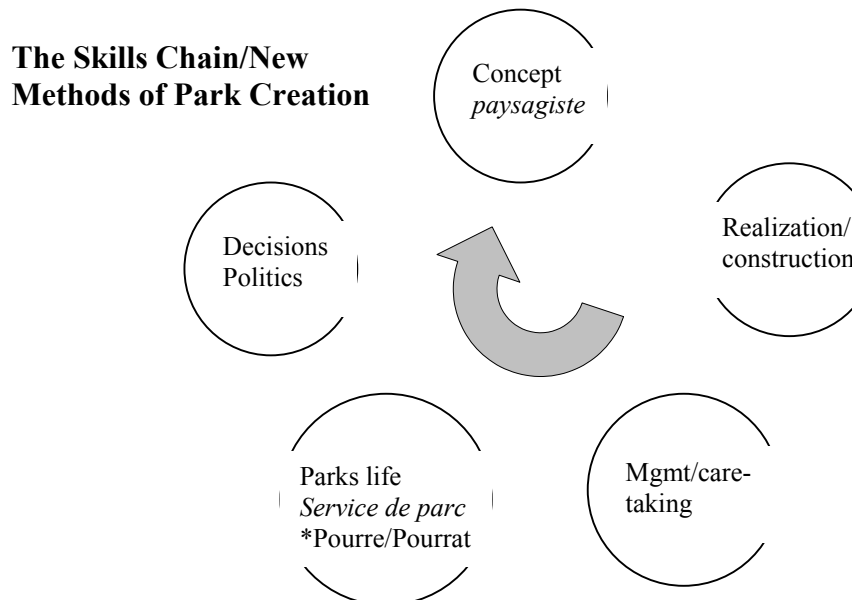
for social housing because of an influx of immigrants from former colonies resulted in many unmanaged open spaces, *terrains vagues*. In 1967, the *département* (similar to the US county entity) of Val-de-Marne was established. This year also marked the beginning of green space policy programs in France.

With the national system of elite education (les ecoles nationales), elected officials at all levels of government participated in a top-down approach to park planning (in addition to any other public-oriented projects). Trickle-down from an idea with elected officials, the *paysagistes* (landscape architects, also all trained at an elite institution) would design a more artistic plan without any consultation with the public at large or local public where the park was to be created. Indeed, *les paysagistes* were not educated in social science, even though this was standard curriculum in the architectural school. According to POURRE, this lack of focus on social issues for *paysagistes* was the case until the early 1990s.

Between 1990-1997, political and educational administrators began to recognize the necessity of linking *espace vert* and social participation. The director of *espace vert* at Nîmes, a city in the south of France, believed that social problems could be « solved » with gardens and parks (this was a mid-19th century idea known in the US as the Progressive Movement). Also at this time, people of France became more interested in protecting *patrimoine*, or their national, regional, and local history. Ultimately, a public administrator in Nantes held a special colloquium in 1997 to focus on green spaces, areas that were not specifically chosen for parks but the left-overs. This conference marked the beginning of a new era. Though people had been thinking about the links between green space and the social fabric, the era was finally ripe, and the colloquium brought the ideas to the forefront and subsequently formal incorporation at administrative level.

The « skills chain » where everything and everyone in the planning schema is interrelated and has equal power is a new model that is emerging for park development in

France. POURRE drew a diagram to help us visualize how he sees this skills chain in action and who the major players are.



Le Plage Bleu- A Story of Top-Down (mis)Planning

An interesting idea that arose from our discussion and which has since become more compelling to me in my research is the difference between public and private vision (in the French case, the *paysagiste* and the public). POURRE shared a humorous example of *La plage bleu*, a classic mismatch between the *paysagiste* vision and actual public wants, needs, and uses. In the name, *plage* means a beach ; someone seeing this name would expect a swimming beach. In a very funny story, POURRE describes a man seeing the signs for the park on a hot day. He is driving and keeps following the signs thinking about how wonderful it will be to swim at the beach. He arrives at the park, continues to follow the park signs. After parking and then following signs to get to the *plage*, the sign at the beach says « no swimming allowed ». Despite the name, conceptualized by the *paysagiste*, that hinted at a swimming place in the suburban fabric, people were (and still are) not allowed to swim because it did not fit into the *paysagiste*'s artistic concept.

Also at *La plage bleu*, the *paysagiste* designed the picnic tables to have benches on only the side that provided a view of the lake. A wonderful idea to showcase the beautiful lake as an object to view (especially since people could not interact through swimming) except people do not want to use the picnic tables in this way. They want to sit across from friends and family and share a meal. The top-down design is in conflict with actual use. In addition to the design, the materials of the picnic tables were also designed conceptually, not practically. The tables are made of iron and have no shading feature, so they become too hot for sitting and eating. According to POURRE and POURRAT, the *paysagiste* views her design work as art with a particular integrity, and that changing it would violate her artistic vision. She has refused to alter any of these designs, and at least for the moment, the *département* is adjusting to the existing situation. Clearly, *La plage bleu* is an example of the older, top-down model of park design and creation. To deal with these design challenges, they are currently working with an artist who is sensitive to public and social needs to improve the interpretive signs at the park. Eventually, they hope to

Parc des Cormailles – Embracing a New Model of Citizen Inclusion

Located in the *ville* of Ivry-sur-Seine, behind the apartment building where POURRE resides, is a park in the making, *Parc des Cormailles*. Currently, the park is vacant land, a site of an old automobile factory. People access the site for strolling, dog-walking, and sitting and talking with friends even though it is not yet a formal park. The park is adjacent to downtown Ivry and to several large apartment buildings, and therefore several thousand residents. In addition, the future park space is approximately a ten-minute walk from a Paris Metropolitan subway station, allowing easy access to residents from other communities.

As planning for this park began, the *département* consulted the local residents to solicit public opinion using examples of existing parks in the area. In addition to paper questionnaires, the *département* also hosted expositions where administrative employees

interviewed people to get their input on desires, needs, and whatever opinions they had. The *département* also contracted a private company to conduct telephone interviews of Val-de-Marne citizens to learn of their visitation patterns to local parks. They transcribed all the responses (very open-ended questions), then had an international *concours* (competition) for *paysagistes* to design the park. The greatest challenge was that the *paysagistes* went too far, incorporating all the public's desires into the park, which resulted in a bad « patchwork » design. POURRE and POURRAT hope to eventually arrive at a middle ground where the *paysagistes* make an interesting design that fills the needs of as many people as possible.

Parc de Cormailles is one of the case studies for further research in the Parisian context because it exemplifies the new model of citizen inclusion in the initial design of the park. Still the concept originated at the administrative level, but instead of continuing the elite method of having the *paysagiste* design a park and then giving it to the public, the administrators in this case have first gone to the « ground » to get citizen input and have continued to include them as integral players throughout the design and implementation process. As this park is not slated to be completed until 2005, it offers a unique opportunity for continual study at the administrative, design, and public levels to monitor the contentious boundaries between good design and good usage.

Parc de Haute-Île – Citizens Vie for a Nature Park

A sixteen hectare area along a dead meander of the Marne River, Parc de Haute-Île is my second case study in the Parisian suburbs. It is located in the *département* of Seine-Saint-Denis, east-northeast of Paris just outside the *peripherique* (the perimeter autoroute that rings Paris). Initially, this space was a psychiatric hospital with extensive grounds; after the hospital closed, it was slated by Ile-de-France to become a massive reservoir serving 144 communities. Given technical and geological problems on the site, however, the reservoir project languished, and the site became « wild » with flora and fauna. Local residents grew

accustomed to the sites re-naturalized state and successfully lobbied to have the site converted into a nature park as opposed to a recreational park. The *département* has conducted extensive floral and faunal inventories to document the richness of the local biodiversity. They have documented a variety of birds, but few mammals and reptiles on-site.

Ten *associations* (local citizen groups that are similar to US citizen-based non-profit organizations) have been involved in the conceptualization, design, and implementation of *Parc de Haute-Île*. Also, to engage individual citizens, publicity announcements were sent to residents in three local communities : Noisy, Gournay, and Neuilly. Thus, people were informed of an *atelier* (workshop) they could attend to give input. Eighty people attended the workshop. Later, administrators hosted five different consultations to solicit public input into the design of the park. After these consultations, citizens were able to attend an exposition of design ideas hosted by a professional mediator specializing in urban projects. At this exposition, 127 people wrote specific comments, and 125 people expressed interest in having administrators contact them regarding the park's development.

Like *Parc des Cormailles*, *Haute-Île* offers the opportunity to study the process in the midst of the project. Actual work on the ground does not begin until late 2002 or early 2003, providing ample time to interview representatives of the *associations* and individual residents who participated in the *atelier* or the other workshops.

Other Contextual Experiences

Journee Debat a L'Institut Francais d'Urbanisme

I attended a one day conference coordinated by students of Institut Francais d'Urbanisme in their DESS Management Public Urbain program. Several scholars spoke about urban design theory relating to nature in the city. Most problematic was my ability to understand the language (the entire conference was conducted in French), but I was able to discern a few key concepts relating to spatial theory from a design perspective. Following are

some threads from the *debat* that helped as I branched out to architecture and landscape design in my explorations of Parisian landscape and institutions.

Chris Younès, a philosopher and « psychosociologiste, » discussed nature and culture in the city focusing on modernity and imagination of nature for urban residents. She sees a new mixing of nature and culture in the urban realm, from scholars and citizens. Alliances are being created today to link nature and culture. She reflected on the historical perspectives on nature (humans as superior to and separate from nature). She traced through scientific philosophy and the industrial revolution, detailing humans' increasing distance until we get to today's ecological management and restoration efforts. These perceptions have had a great effect on human interaction with nature. For Younès, symbolic nature is important to be incorporated into the city fabric to represent human connection to the greater cosmos.

Franck Hercher, a plastic artist, described his passion for « spectacular » gardens in reference to music and performance arts in the garden (even hip-hop). He described the garden as a place of liberty, despite that fact that humans must work in garden to maintain it. The concept of performance in the garden park is extremely agreeable to him ; he viewed even the work as performance. The garden is also a place of pleasure, a representation of liberty of expression and liberty of spirit. The designed landscape is a somewhat permanent artifact of the human expression of freedom and liberty.

Edouard François, discussed modernity and progress in international technology, but recognized a new focus on economy and its relation to ecology. Today's *paysagiste* considers context and materials together in light of ecological concerns. He showed two intriguing projects he had designed. In the first, he used natural rocks as a component of the architecture of a housing building. In addition to the design effect of rough, natural rock, residents could also use them for rock climbing practice. He showed slides of a whimsical « flower tower » with pots on each balcony growing fuzzy plants. His final slides were of an

entire apartment structure covered with hairy plants, much like a « chia pet. » His works clearly combined a knowledge of plant types, ecology, and local geography with a strong sense of humor and desire to stimulate and activate imagination. Indeed, the audience at the *debat* was most appreciative of his whimsical designs.

Pierre Donadieu, another landscape architect, claimed *espace vert* is a communal experience in the city. People share experiences and performances in these openings for nature. He has investigated the incorporation of agriculture and agri-belts into urban designs plans, and, like Herscher, recognized the symbolism of agriculture to urban residents. These agri-zones trigger collective cultural memory of earlier eras, as well as stimulate new interests in community gardening and new urban vegetal « experiences. » He showed slides of the forest park inside the *Bibliothèque Nationale* and discussed its importance as a symbolic space of forest in Paris.

Overall, these scholars and designers were particularly interested in the symbology of designed landscape in the city and the importance of those landscapes for the spiritual health of the city and its residents. Whereas often in the US a focus is placed on the mental and physical health benefits of open space, parks, and gardens, I was surprised at the focus on the spiritual and metaphysical benefits of nature to urban residents at this institutional presentation.

Potager du Roi – Performing in the Vegetable Garden of the King

Because of a fortunate contact at a dinner party, I was able to get a tour of the *potager du roi* at Versailles, which was the king's vegetable garden for the palace. My guide was Marc RUMELHART, Professor at l'Ecole Supérieure du Paysage (the elite landscape architecture school of France, which is located on-site at the *potager*). I was particularly interested in this garden because it is designed, even as a vegetable garden, in the traditional *jardin français* style with highly regimented pathways, regulated rows of vegetables and fruit

trees, and controlled *espaliers*. *Espaliers* are fruit trees trained to grow in particular shapes or patterns, for example like a fan or in the shape of a goblet (these types of trees were grown against walls in Montreuil). In addition, the school located on-site is where most of the *paysagistes* study, so this site is and has been a *locus* of design for the entire French park system.

The most interesting aspect of the garden that RUMELHART shared during our tour was the design of the terraces surrounding the main garden space. Historically, this elevated walkway served as a means for royalty to observe not only the garden as a beautifully designed sculptural space, but also as a place of performance. Clearly, the designer, LaQuintinye, had this performative aspect of gardening in mind when conceptualizing the *potager*. Today's visitors can have the same experience, strolling the terrace walls and watching the gardeners and students working the garden space ; however, visitors are now also welcome to descend a variety of stairways and walk along the garden paths to view ancient *espaliers* as well as new trees just beginning to be trained into shapes. So, visitors are both spectators and performers in this historic space. This theme of performance in garden/park space was also discussed extensively in the *debat* I outlined above and is a new theme developing in geographic theory (Cosgrove and Martins 2000). I believe performance is an understudied aspect of open space and parks. A variety of references Maya Lin's *Vietnam Veterans War Memorial* clearly detail the importance of seeing others and experiencing communal performance of grieving within a shared physical outdoor space. The French scholars I spoke with were actively aware of performance and artistic/creative aspects of open space and integrating this knowledge into their planning and implementation process. The *potager* simply confirmed that the performative aspect of these spaces has clear historic roots.

Methods for Research Plan

Archives

To increase my knowledge of the history and development of Frogtown, the Los Angeles neighborhood, I will examine archival maps and land use records of the City of Los Angeles, as well as the Solano-Reeve Collection and other holdings at The Huntington Library in San Marino, California, to glean information on nineteenth century perceptions of the local area. These collections will offer written and visual records of the study area before it was channelized.

For the Parisian study areas, I have established contacts at two villes within two different départements to examine two park case studies. With my contacts at the administrative bodies, I have access to public documents from public meetings, published reports, design plans, and other archival materials. In addition, I have established research privileges at the Bibliotheque Nationale, and I have a basic familiarity of the collections at the Pavillion l' Arsenal, the city of Paris' urban planning exhibit space and library to review historic plans, maps, and documents relating to historic landuse and contemporary park space in and around Paris.

Dialogs and interviews

I will conduct a series of dialogs with Frogtown residents allowing them to share their memories and their personal history of the of the natural environment of their neighborhood. Structuring these dialogs to maintain focus on the natural environment and people's experience with and perception of it, I will ask people about their interaction with the river and park areas, whether areas in the neighborhood have been used and/or continue to be used as impromptu parks, and how and if they are and/or were engaged in recent park creation efforts. I hypothesize that people are attached to the place in which they live; evidence of their attachment may exist in

family photographs, home videos or movies, or even paintings or drawings of the surrounding landscape. I will ask people if they maintain personal archives that they would be willing to share. My method of inquiry - sharing representations - is a portal into requesting a longer dialog session where residents can share their memories of parks through their photographs or artworks. All of these methods, with the assistance of a translator (and my own improving knowledge of French language) will be used in the Parisian case study areas.

Because they have spearheaded efforts to create parks and restore vegetation along the Los Angeles River, environmental organizations and regional institutions can provide insight into their perception of public participation from residents. I have already established contacts with several Los Angeles organizations. I hypothesize that watershed councils may have different expectations and priorities than those that have been involved in the park and trail creation process. In addition, the City of Los Angeles has also been involved in the park creation process by channeling state funds to convert vacant lots to parks.

A variety of associations in and around Paris at various scales (ville, département, état) have also been involved in advocating park development and recommending design elements. The same methods deployed in the Los Angeles context will be used to make contact and interview knowledgeable players in the French associations, for example the Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO, similar to US National Audubon Society). I will re-connect with the governmental administrative contacts I cultivated this summer to continue asking questions about the developments of the new parks as both case studies are still in the design and implementation phases.

Participant observation

To understand residents' use of the existing and transformed places along the river and in parks, I will observe and record people's activities in these places - the pocket parks, the bikeway, and the river itself ; for the Parisian cases, despite the parks not yet being completed, I can observe the current, impromptu use of these spaces. Even though the park spaces are not formalized into designed parks, each is still accessible to an adventurous local public. Participant observation provides insight into the social construction of place at these locations, shedding light on how the space is actually used « on the ground ». In effect, this generates a way to understand space-time relationships in place. Different times of day, different activities take place, and new « parks » develop based on the usage of the same space. I suggest incorporating data collected through participant observation as a layer of human performance into a geographic information science framework.

Conclusions

Because of the rich interview experience of park personnel at various levels within the French administration, I have a clear idea not only of the questions to ask in Los Angeles, but also who to ask. I also have a solid framework of artistic and performative themes to focus my questions and observations on (especially helpful as I am currently drafting a grant request for the Social Science Research Council's Program for the Arts). To draw a comparative analysis, I realize that my questions may shift, but I have a base from which to begin.

The goal of my methodological approach is to illicit public response, to focus on learning from residents where parks are being created and to use visualization to trigger discussion. Indeed, in addition to actual park space as a discussion point and focus, I am interested in how the representations of these spaces also trigger personal memory and connections to nature that surrounds urban residents in their daily life. The interviews with

French officials have helped me crystallize my approach for interviewing the institutional players in the land transformation process and provided thematic threads to help me create focused groups of questions. At this point, I now have a strategy for interviewing the institutional players back in Los Angeles, and can deploy and refine my methods working with residents of Frogtown. Future research in the case study areas around Paris will incorporate a similar methodology for interviewing residents and associations building on initial results from Los Angeles interviews in Spring 2002.

Appendix A Contacts and Resources

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