

CHAPTER 2 THE SOCIAL PRODUCTION OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND THE LANDSCAPE OF CONSUMPTION

In this chapter, I review literature that provides a theoretical background for understanding the development and public art processes in Schuylkill River Park (SRP). All of this literature highlights the socio-political nature of the human-made landscape. Using the important contribution of Lawrence and Low (1990), I will outline how anthropology frames the study of the built environment. I argue that the most relevant way to frame my study of SRP lies within an approach that focuses on the social, economic, and political forces that produce the built environment, as well as the ways in which the socially produced environment shapes social action (Lawrence and Low 1990: 482). This theoretical framework is referred to as both the social production of the built environment, as well as the social production of space, and is a multidisciplinary endeavor, as important contributions have been made within the disciplines of geography, sociology, philosophy, as well as anthropology. I will elucidate contributions by anthropologists Lisa Peattie (1987) and Setha Low (1999), philosopher Henri Lefebvre (1976, 1979, and 1991), as well as geographer David Harvey (1985 and 1989). Lisa Peattie's case study of the development of a Venezuelan city is an early anthropological investigation of spatial production. She reveals the multiple interests involved in urban planning and underscores planning's disregard for the needs and desires of the people who already live on the site. Peattie's work foreshadows studies of the social production of the built environment because she emphasizes the social, economic, and political forces that restructure community (Lawrence and Low 1990: 483). As will be explored in Chapters 5 and 6, the development process in SRP in general, and the public art process in particular, provide an opportunity to examine the myriad interests that converge in the social production of space.

The last segment of this chapter explores the convergence of the social production of space and the postindustrial city. Here, I examine thinkers who pose the question: what kind of built environments are socially produced in cities whose economies are based no longer on industry, but on service? The question is relevant since the development of SRP occurs in a city struggling to redefine itself as it continues to deindustrialize and there are indications that SRP will be developed to economically revitalize Center City, Philadelphia, by offering leisure and recreational opportunities to tourists.

In recent years, Philadelphia has undertaken a variety of major building projects that provide services in the hopes of economically revitalizing a city whose industry has rapidly declined in the past 50 years. The buzzwords for economic growth are tourism, entertainment and leisure offerings, and revitalization through attracting new residents. Redevelopment projects underway since 1997 include the rehabilitation of office buildings for hotels and condominiums (with tax credits, grants, and low-interest loans available for hotel developers); the building of an entertainment center on Penn's Landing; the building of a regional performing arts center on Broad Street; the expansion of the convention center; and the completion of bulkheading along the Schuylkill River banks, which will be followed by the comprehensive development of the park. The issue of redevelopment and industrial decline will be addressed in Chapter 4, and more details will be provided on the context of the building projects mentioned above.

While SRP is still in the planning stages, economists and tourism officials have articulated a vision for SRP based on a service economy landscape model, what Sharon Zukin, as I will soon elaborate, terms a "landscape of consumption" (1995). At the "Spotlight on the Schuylkill" conference I attended, which was organized by the Schuylkill River Development Council (SRDC), a representative of the Pennsylvania Economy League (PEL) argued that SRP could play an important role in increasing the livability of downtown Philadelphia by retaining existing residents and attracting new ones; by encouraging the development of apartments, retail facilities, and hotels on the Schuylkill waterfront; and raising property values of outlying residences. The PEL speaker stressed that the construction of a hotel could create a visitor base for SRP and also precipitate the development of retail establishments and restaurants. Tourism officials and retailers envision the creation of an indoor recreational, retail, entertainment facility that might integrate a variety of leisure activities under one roof, thus providing consumers with year-round attractions in SRP. Indebted to Disney's concept of the adult education vacation package, one tourism representative sees the offering of more "authentic" experiences as way to attract tourists to SRP. Through clever marketing, programs based on local history, science, and water-oriented recreation could bring tourists to the park. These ideas will be elaborated in Chapter 5.

The work of three urbanists shines light on the proposed directions that SRP development might take, discussed above. Urban sociologist Sharon Zukin (1995 and 1996) attributes the rise of what she calls the “symbolic economy” to the decline of the industrial base of cities. In the postindustrial city, cultural production—not in the anthropological sense, but akin to what Bourdieu (1984) would define as the commodities and lifestyles that attest to the taste of their owners—displaces material production. The symbolic economy hinges on two parallel production systems, the production of space and the production of symbols, which precipitate landscapes of consumption. Here, the arts, notions of “good” taste, and the pursuit of leisure, are used as never before to push goods, services, and the image of the ascendant city. Architectural historian Christine Boyer also emphasizes the landscape of consumption (1994). She explores the mall-like environments that have recently evolved in urban settings. Former industrial areas are converted into sites for the consumption of goods and services, which often offer a nostalgia for imaginary representations of the past, despite the fact that such spaces gloss over the particularities of place. They all look the same. Urban anthropologist R. Timothy Sieber (1991 and 1993) also notes the sameness of the new landscapes of consumption, specifically waterfront developments. He attributes sameness to the ascendancy of the service economy and the new urban professional class, who both control and are the target group for redevelopment. As water is used less and less as a source of economic livelihood in urban areas, the emphasis shifts from water as a site of work, to water as a site of leisure. The ideas of these thinkers contribute to my research because they provide important context in understanding postindustrial Philadelphia and the strategies it undertakes while economically restructuring, as well elucidating the ramifications of SRP as a particular kind of postindustrial landscape.

The Social Production of the Built Environment

Anthropological interest in the built environment stems from the discipline’s attempt to study culture in its various forms. Attention to the built environment has evolved from the premise that if what we do as human beings is, by and large, cultural expression, then, certainly, what we build and how we design our environments are subjects worthy of anthropological investigation. Much of the interest in anthropology has been in the production of shelters nonliterate societies build and occupy, but theories on the built environment can be readily applied to Western, urban settings, as well (Lawrence and Low 1990:

453). According to Lawrence and Low, the built environment is an abstract concept used to describe any product of human building activity. In the broadest sense, it refers to any alteration of the natural environment by human means. The built environment can include built forms or building types; spaces that are defined and bounded, but not enclosed, such as parks, plazas, and streets; and landmarks or sites (1990: 454). In this dissertation, I am more concerned with parks and sites than buildings. Lawrence and Low point out that theoretical approaches to the anthropology of the built environment can be organized around specific questions and that the most promising direction that studies of the built environment might take focuses on the following: “how does society produce forms and the forms reproduce society? What roles do history and social institutions play in generating the built environment? What is the relationship between space and power?” (1990: 455). These are the questions that Lawrence and Low pose that have the most relevance in my study of the development and public art process in SRP.

In anthropology and other social sciences, it became evident that theories needed to address not simply the meaning of the built environment (see for example, Rapoport 1980 and 1982, which privileges the search for meaning over the social and political context), but the interests and processes that produce it in the very first place. Thus, explorations of the social production of built form were developed, focusing on the social, political, and economic forces that produce the built environment, and conversely, the impact of the socially produced built environment on social action (Lawrence and Low 1990: 482). Much of the recent work in anthropology within this domain owes its origins to research technically outside the field, in such disciplines as geography, sociology, and even philosophy. David Harvey’s geographical Marxism (1985 and 1989), Foucaultian studies of power and disciplinary technologies (1975 and 1986), and Lefebvrian social-spatial dialectics (1976, 1979, and 1991) informs the theoretical terrain.

However, even before the vogue for continental theory and Marxist geography, anthropologists and sociologists sought to engage the problems of power and the production of the built environment in the urban redevelopment process. Relevant studies of urban redevelopment and resettlement that sought to frame the different perspectives of community were undertaken during the 1950s and 60s by sociologists and anthropologists concerned with the destruction of neighborhoods caused by urban renewal and new town planning. While I am certainly *not* claiming that the neighborhoods which border SRP are under the

threat of poor urban planning policy which threatens to destroy the community, I believe that studies by anthropologists in these kinds of contexts provide us with insight in terms of how those in positions of power frame the concept of community. It can be argued that a chief problem inherent in the SRP public art process has been an underexploration and a lack of articulation regarding who constitutes the community for SRP. For the most part, as I will explain in Chapters 5 and 6, the community was viewed as a given, or not investigated at all. The notion that communities evolve and are created rather than de facto entities is an idea that has caught the attention of anthropologists in recent years, albeit in more grandiose contexts such as nation states. In their essay, “Culture, Power, Place and Ethnography at the End of an Era,” Gupta and Fergusson write:

. . . all associations of place, people, and culture are social and historical creations to be explained, not given natural facts. This is as true for the classical style of ‘peoples and cultures’ ethnography as it is for the perhaps more culturally chaotic present. And the implication, animating an enormous amount of recent work in anthropology and elsewhere is that whatever associations of place and culture may exist must be taken as problems for anthropological research, rather than the given ground that one takes as a point of departure (1997: 4).

Lisa Peattie (1987), Herbert Gans (1962 and 1967), and David Epstein (1973) were among scholars who worked as members of interdisciplinary architecture and urban planning teams that wrote “classic studies of the social and cultural impact of community relocation and resettlement” (Lawrence and Low 1990: 482). These studies stress the ways in which macrolevel planning and decision making affect the local community and in some cases the fabric of social life, demonstrating how power and the influence of external processes determine the design of local communities (1990:483). Following is a review of Peattie’s contribution to the anthropology of urban development, which elucidates the impact of planning on a community paying careful attention to the different perspectives of those involved in the process. In Chapters 5 and 6, I offer an ethnographic account that resonates with Peattie’s based on my role in the public art process for SRP taking into consideration the myriad views of public art advisors, SRDC employees, and local residents.

Lisa Peattie’s *Planning: Rethinking Ciudad Guayana* is exemplary in the field for its analysis of an urban design policy implemented in a Third World context, with careful attention paid to the multiple interests involved in such an undertaking (1987). As an anthropologist, she was hired by a Venezuelan

development agency, along with a large staff of development and city planning experts from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, to assess and implement a design strategy for the creation of Ciudad Guayana, beginning in 1961. Peattie was asked to contribute ideas about “native customs and values” relevant to planning, housing, and commercial activity, as well as on social problems connected with the development of the city. City planning, then, functions ideologically in that private gain is seen as social progress and symbolic of the general good, despite the fact many members of the population are left behind (1987: 19). This idea resonates with the development SRP in terms of asking *who* benefits from redevelopment strategies. As I will make clear in Chapter 4, the development process in Philadelphia, and by extension, most cities, privileges the economic core of the city, rather than outlying neighborhoods. Similarly, the development of SRP is framed as a means to economically stimulate Center City, Philadelphia, through the possibility of hotels, restaurants, and other concessions built on the waterfront, as well as proving attractive by retaining residents and attracting new ones to the area. While this is laudable in some respects, it focuses energy on projects that most obviously improve middle and upper middle class livelihoods, and ignores peripheral communities that are certainly in greater need of economic revitalization (see Adams et al. 1991).

Central to Peattie’s research are the myriad problems associated when bureaucratic “outsiders” deploy policy on a local level. Despite the presence of an anthropologist—Peattie—in the planning process and the idealism and sensitivity of the urban planners, there was the possibility that the city would be built from an elite perspective for an imported urban dweller of similar stature, with little consideration for the needs of the native underclasses. According to Peattie, the problem with urban design, is that design is envisioned as executed—as a final outcome—not by the process by which it must come into existence. This perspective ignores the reality of the present, a present that involves many particularistic and ignoble concerns. As the author elegantly reminds us, “the people living at the site were in the present; the city was in the future” (1987: 3).

Peattie relates the various interests involved in the planning of the city and their points-of-view, especially those of the urban designers and economists. According to the author, urban designers mediate between the technical and the human. They seek to fulfill human needs, such as the creation of an

interesting urban visual experience; facilitate the social adjustment required of urban dwellers in the wake of developing a new city with new industries; bring about a sense of urban unity; and foster pride in and loyalty to the city. They implement their vision through a particular kind of “top-down professional activity called *design*” (1987: 51). Although the central focus of planning Ciudad Guayana was the stimulation of economic growth through industrial development, the designers approached the project in a much more idealistic way placing special emphasis on amenity and urbanity. Their commitment to designing a city center as crown jewel was both an outcome of their belief in building community and attracting the elite through a kind of urban promotion. Peattie reminds us that the designers were also committed to providing for lower income people, however, “lower-income” housing meant accommodation of a standard that made them inaccessible to most of the population (1987: 160). The designers seemed more interested in theorizing and imagining the city in sketches and building plans than actually visiting the site.

Peattie’s research brings into relief important issues surrounding the development of SRP and its public art process. Design, by its very nature a “top-down” profession, has the propensity to operate in a vacuum—divorced from the community “benefiting” from or “receiving” the design. In the case of SRP, the community making decisions on public art represented just one aspect of the Philadelphia community—by and large, the arts community and the vision of a non-profit development corporation lead by a resident of the SRP neighborhood, John Randolph. While Randolph, the executive director of the SRDC, Julie Courtney, coordinator of the public art selection process, and three other public art advisory committee members, including myself, lived in close proximity to the park and can be viewed as *de facto* members of the community based on this fact, no other proximity-based community members were involved, for the most part. As Peattie underscores on numerous occasions, the most significant flaw of the urban design process is its disregard for the reality of people’s lives on the ground. Despite the fact Randolph lived *on the site*, he never felt compelled to determine the opinions of other people in the neighborhood during the public art process. While John Collins, the landscape architect for SRP, has a long history of involvement with the park dating back to the 1960s, and has been involved with local residents in both the design of the park and public art selection during the late 1970s and late 1980s, he has not been active in bringing the local community into the development process since that time. Since SRDC has led

the recent phase of the development of the park, the community has become less involved in all aspects of its design. Like Ciudad Guayana's planners, it would appear that the SRDC envisions a user community of the future, without taking into consideration what current users and residents desire and how space is used in the present tense and by whom. The intended users of the future park seem to materialize from nowhere—who are they and where are they from? In the case of SRP, it would appear that the ideal future park user is an outsider—a tourist or a new resident of Philadelphia.

While Peattie provides us with an ethnographic case study regarding the social production of space, most thinkers fail to spend time “on the ground” conducting ethnography and more time theorizing the idea of space itself. Thus, much ink has been spilled on the peripheralization of space in social theory. The overemphasis on history ignores geography and the social production of the built environment. Groundbreaking work by theorists such as Michel Foucault (1975 and 1986), Henri Lefebvre (1974, 1979 and 1991), Paul Rabinow (1989), James Holston (1989), Edward Soja (1995), and David Harvey (1985 and 1989), among others, have put space on the map as a locus for social investigation. Their work is at least partially responsible for the kindling of interest within anthropology for studies of the built environment. The consideration of space as an issue important to understanding the city, or more generally, society, is in itself an important shift in social theory. Since the 19th century, the notion of space has been relegated to a minor position of importance. History, not space, has been seen as the critical driver of social transformation (Soja 1995). While Marxism is often blamed for an overemphasis on history, the spatial imagination has been suppressed by more mainstream and status quo theorists in disciplines such as urban studies and even geography, where one might think space would indeed be the place. Postmodernists rally around Michel Foucault as the thinker who put space back on the map, but it is actually a French Marxist, Henri Lefebvre, who has done more than any other 20th century thinker in forging a sophisticated argument for the social production of space. Geographers like Edward Soja and David Harvey have played important roles in bringing Lefebvre's ideas to an Anglo-American audience, and have tailored Lefebvre's ideas to their own theoretical ends. While much of this work is important, I will only briefly investigate Lefebvre since he has influenced recent directions in the anthropology of the built environment.

Lefebvre's position on space is both difficult to summarize and locate in any one specific work. However, Lefebvre begins to more clearly articulate a theory of space and social reproduction in *The Survival of Capitalism* (originally published in French in 1973; translated in 1976) and then in *The Production of Space* (French edition 1974; English 1991). In these works, Lefebvre argued that the very survival of capitalism depended on a mystified spatiality, obscured by ideology and illusion. The spaces of capitalism tend to eclipse all other spaces through a geography of uneven development marked by homogenization, fragmentation and hierarchization. Such spaces are, however, highly contradictory, and it is through proper analysis that their oppressive nature can be revealed, enabling us to see what is hidden behind the spatial veil (Soja 1995: 50).

Lefebvre's theoretical goal was to integrate mental space—how we conceive and construct space intellectually through discourse and representation, in general—into its social and physical contexts. He argues that the mental, physical and social dimensions of space should not be isolated and attempts to frame a unitary theory of space. In his synthesis of the three spatial dimensions, Lefebvre was inspired by both physics, where space, time and energy are interlinked; and by Surrealism, which attempted a synthesis of the psychological and social worlds of human beings. Lefebvre strove to overcome the dichotomy of real and mental space by introducing the concept of social space—where space is both lived and produced. It is the spatial production process, he argues, that should be the object of interest, rather than “things” in space. Yet, Lefebvre's dialectical understanding of space as both a social process *and* a social product, make process and product inseparable. Space *is* society; it does not simply reflect it.

According to Lefebvre, space cannot be simply reduced to a location or to the social relations of property ownership. Space equals a physical location, a piece of real estate, and simultaneously an existential freedom and mental expression. Lefebvre has distanced himself from more orthodox Marxists in that he views space as both a means and a force of production. For Marxists, the means of production consist of two classes of objects: 1) the objects of labor or raw materials; 2) the means of labor, or the tools used in production. According to political economists, the built environment, which space constitutes, falls into the latter category as a means of production. Thus, buildings, roads, stores, harbors, land, among the aspects of human created geography, are relegated to mere tools in the production of commodities. For

Lefebvre, space must be considered as one element of the productive forces in society, considered alongside of technology, human knowledge, and labor power as contributing to our productive potential. As a productive force, space confers a position in the economic structure by *generating* economic power. Space is thus not simply an epiphenomena of the economic base, it is a part of the economic base (Gottdiener 1985: 122-123). In the Lefebvrian socio-spatial dialectic, space both shapes and is shaped by larger social and economic forces in a complex and often contradictory fashion. According to Lefebvre, “space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations but it is also producing and produced by social relations” (Lefebvre 1991: 286).

For Lefebvre, the spatial order controls the inherent contradictions of capitalism for the benefit of the dominant interests in society. Capitalism, therefore, as a mode of production has survived in part through its use of space as a reinforcer of those relations which are necessary for its survival. According to Mark Gottdiener’s interpretation of Lefebvre:

The question of control over spatial relations and design represents the same revolutionary importance to society as the struggle over the control of the other means of production, because both ownership relations and relations of material externalization—that is, the production of space—are united in the property relations which form the core of the capitalist mode of production (1985: 125).

While Lefebvre’s notion of social-spatial reproduction outlined above is indispensable to the anthropology of the built environment, it fails to offer an ethnographic approach in order to ascertain how the lived experience of social actors intersects with the socially produced and constructed built environment. For something to be socially constructed and produced means human beings are involved every step of the way; however, much of Lefebvre’s contributions, as well as those mentioned previously in passing, discuss social phenomena abstractly, rarely addressing the agency of individuals or groups. Not only is agency rarely accounted for, the details of how spatial structures influence human behavior or how behavior influences the experience, utilization, and allocation of space are seldom investigated. Simply stated, any anthropological approach to the built environment must pay careful attention to how that environment is produced, constructed, and experienced by individuals on the ground.

Setha Low, perhaps more than any other anthropologist, has vocalized the need for the anthropology of the built environment to engage the issue of social production. In the article she co-authored with Denise Lawrence, “The Built Environment and Spatial Form,” they concluded:

The most promising new direction for anthropologists lies in the area of social production theories. These approaches seek to place their understanding of built forms within the larger context of society’s institutions and its history. As an object of study, the building becomes a point of spatial articulation for the intersection of multiple forces of economy, society, and culture.

Further, the meaning of the built environment as revealed through its metaphorical connections and ritual practices constitutes an important but still incompletely explored dimension. The analysis and interpretation of building decisions cannot be understood apart from social and economic institutional forces that continuously influence actors, nor can the interpretation of symbolic meaning be divorced from these forces or history (Lawrence and Low quoted in Low 1999: 111).

Low’s strength as a theorist lies in her ability to precisely define her terms, as well as synthesizing the materialist and the symbolic aspects of the built environment—a synthesis indebted to Lefebvre.

Acknowledging social theory’s tendency to obfuscate rather than elucidate, Low meticulously defines her terms such as *spatialize*, *social production of space*, and *social construction of space*, clarifying the more difficult aspects of Lefebvre’s writing, while integrating human agency into the issue of social space.

Spatialize, according to Low, means to physically and conceptually locate social relations and social practice in space. The *social production of space* includes all those factors, including the social, economic, ideological, and technical, that come together and create a material setting. The materialist emphasis of social production assists in clearly defining the historical emergence and political and economic formation of urban space. *Social construction* denotes the phenomenological and symbolic experience of space as mediated by social processes such as exchange, conflict, and control. “Thus, the social construction of space is the actual transformation of space—through people’s social exchanges, memories, images, and daily use of the material setting—into scenes and actions that convey symbolic meaning” (Low 1999: 112).

According to Low,

An effective anthropological theory of the spatialization of culture and human experience must therefore integrate the perspectives of social production and social construction of space, both contextualizing the forces that produce it and showing people as social agents constructing their own realities and meanings. But it must also reflect both these perspectives in the experience and daily life of public-space users (Low 1999: 112).

Low examines the social production and construction of space in two plazas in San Jose, Costa Rica, Parque Central and Plaza de la Cultura, through historical research, which explains the social production of space, and ethnography, which accounts for the social construction of space. The two spaces were socially produced—planned, built, designed, and maintained—in two different historical contexts, and thus, reflect the constraints imposed by the respective era’s political objectives and availability of resources. The differences in the plazas’ material and symbolic construction have created two very different places that are distinct from a design standpoint, as well as the way people control, experience, and think about them (1999: 119). In summary, an important aspect of the sociospatial analysis of the two plazas is the highlighting of “visible” vs. “invisible” behavior in public space. Many of the illegal activities such as prostitution, drug dealing, and gambling were tolerated within the confines of Parque Central, because dense foliage and trees provided cover, and, thus, clandestine activities were rendered invisible to the cultural gaze. With the development of the Plaza de la Cultura as the new cultural center, these activities were “exposed” by modern landscape architecture and open design creating an atmosphere characterized by ambivalence, fear, and increasing social sanctions (1999: 135). Low writes,

It seems that when faced with the invisible-made-visible in public space, the state reacts with increased social controls; if this strategy does not work, the state abandons the space, building in its stead a new one where ‘culture’ can be represented in a more pristine form (1999:135).

Low raises the specter of public space under lockdown, and ponders whether the public spaces in San Jose will become like those in New York City, where guard dogs keep out the homeless, benches are “bum-proofed” to prevent sleeping, and ledges are mounted with spikes to prevent sitting. Will public spaces become so contested that they become uncomfortable places? (1999: 135).

Low’s analysis illuminates issues that are relevant to my study of the development of SRP. SRDC’s claim that the developed park will “transform an abandoned, trash-filled section of the city’s riverfront into a scenic riverine esplanade” (SRDC 1995: 5) does not address how the new design elements will interface with the illicit activity that occurs in this section of the park—specifically gay cruising and alleged drug transactions. It is too early to tell how these secret activities, hidden from view (usually) by the thick vegetation that parallels the riverfront, will be affected by the construction of the park, but one can imagine that some form of social contest might ensue. For example, members of the gay community who

use the already-developed section of SRP organized protests when a curfew was enforced and arrests were made a number of years ago in an effort to deter cruising in SRP. This will be examined in detail in Chapter 5. At times, individuals have taken matters into their own hands. As one informant explained to me, local residents have removed bushes in areas of the already-developed section of the park in order to deter alleged gay trysting in camouflaged areas. A group of informants explained their hopes that a developed park would create more open spaces that would limit cruising. Another informant hinted that a local neighborhood association that constructed a fenced dog run to keep dogs from trampling the grass in the park and prevent them from running wild had an ulterior motive of annexing an area that was used by gay men for clandestine sex. This sentiment is also indicated on a website devoted to gay cruising. According to the author:

Towards the back of the park is a lovely willow tree in a circular area that, at night, edges back into darkness. In the darkness is a fence that separates the park from the railroad tracks before the Schuylkill River. This is where most of the cruising used to take place. This year the area around the willow has been fenced in and is now a dog-poo park! The fence also blocks any access to the darkness by the fence. Thanks, guys (Correspondent 1999).

Low's perspective is perhaps the best theoretical model for understanding development and the public art process in SRP. She borrows theories on the social production of space, which emphasize the materialist aspect of the built environment, emphasizes the role that human agents have in constructing space, and integrates fieldwork as the chief method in understanding issues of space. As an advisory committee member responsible for the selection of public art in SRP, I was a player in the social production of a particular space. This experience serves as a point of entry for understanding the larger context of spatial production, which I will relate in forthcoming chapters, as well as the perspectives of park users and neighborhood residents regarding the social construction of the park. Since the outcome of the park is highly speculative, both in terms of public art and development in general, the social production and construction of the space is a work in progress. However, the park has a thirty-year history and is used extensively by many people, despite that development is incomplete. Thus, through my fieldwork experience on the public art advisory committee, along with interviews and historical and contemporary research, I can reveal the social production and construction of SRP, while also presenting a tentative narrative regarding the park's current and future status in terms of these categories.

While ethnography is the primary mode of inquiry at the disposal of the anthropologist in the study of the built environment and the social production of space, discourse analysis, a method in which to examine the key ideas and terms by which people validate their understandings of the world, can be utilized as well (Rotenberg 1993: xiv). Discourse analysis provides researchers with the means to focus on a subset of experiences within the larger social context, allowing us to “break up the unwieldy idea of culture into smaller, definable units” (Rotenberg 1993: xiv). Each set of units relates to a particular group of people, such as “conquistadores, urban planners, commercial developers, gardeners, or neighborhood residents.” Rotenberg continues,

As people participate in the discourse, they act on their understandings to disproportionately shape to their purposes the urban places they control. These places then enter the historical development of spatial meaning as artifacts, preserving forever after the moment when meaning was given concrete form in space (1993:xiv).

In the case of SRP, it is difficult, if not impossible, to analyze public art and urban design if the construction has yet to begin. However, we can still study the process by which public art and public space are created, including the language used to describe that process, as well as the language used to describe the site. Urban anthropologist Gary McDonogh has examined how the notion of empty space reveals much about the creation of cultural categories; indeed, such terms as “empty” or “vacant,” when applied to urban places, are cues for the anthropological investigation of space, not indicators that we should look elsewhere for spaces that contain built forms. Similar terms have been applied to sections of SRP—underutilized, urban hinterland, seedy—the areas cruised by gay men or places where African American men fish on sunny afternoons. McDonogh argues that urban spaces labeled as “empty” suggest conflict. He claims that empty space evokes certain feelings in people and in order to reveal the “real” meaning of space, we must deconstruct the terms used to describe it: “we must recognize and explore empty places as culturally created and socially meaningful zones rich in interest for our analysis of the city” (McDonogh 1993: 13). Such spaces “do not define a vacuum, or absence of urbaness, so much as they mark zones of intense competition: the interstices of the city” (1993: 13). His argument hinges on the application of the Whorfian hypothesis to urban discourse—the language used to describe a space prescribes certain attitudes and behaviors towards it. McDonogh suggests four possible meanings for emptiness: the place of memory of where a landmark once stood; the place of disuse by marginals; the boundary between the behaviorally

acceptable and unacceptable; and the intentionally fallow ground of future land speculation and development.

Henri Lefebvre has probably been the most influential thinker to study discourse as way of understanding the social production of space, but it is David Harvey's elucidation of Lefebvre's discourse analysis that is perhaps most relevant. Lefebvre relates spatial practices to "representations of space" (discourse) and to kinds of spaces ("representational spaces")—the triad of the lived, perceived, and conceived (Cooper 1999: 377-78). Despite Harvey's criticism of Lefebvre as a spatial separatist—one who isolates space as a separate structure with its own laws, rather than understanding space as an expression of larger social processes—Harvey still borrows heavily from Lefebvre. Harvey constructs a grid of spatial practices based on Lefebvre's lived, perceived and conceived spaces (see Figure 4). Down the left side of the grid, Harvey incorporates three dimensions of spatial practices which Lefebvre identified in his work *The Production of Space*. Here, they are explained in detail:

1. *Material and spatial practices* refers to the physical and material flows, transfers, and interactions that occur in and across space.
2. Representations of space include all of the signs and significations, codes and knowledge that allow material practices to be talked about, whether in terms of everyday speech or arcane and academic jargon such as the language associated with engineering, architecture, geography, urban planning, sociology, etc.
3. *Spaces of representation* are mental inventions (codes, signs, spatial discourses, utopian plans, imaginary landscapes, and even material constructs such as museums, aesthetic environments, artworks, etc.) that imagine new meanings for spatial practices (Harvey 1989: 218-219).

Harvey interprets Lefebvre's three dimensions (the lived, perceived, and conceived) as the experienced, the perceived, and the imagined. The dialectical relations between the three categories engender tension, and it is this tension that plays itself out in space, which offers itself to be read as a history of spatial practices. Lefebvre's spaces of representation (item #3) are not mere epiphenomena of more important material and spatial practices (item #1), but have the potential to act as a material productive force, as well as the ability to affect the representation of space (item #2). The productive power of the urban symbolic landscape is convincingly argued by Sharon Zukin and will be discussed later. Across the top of the grid, Harvey includes four other aspects of spatial practice drawn from more conventional understandings:

1. *Accessibility and distanciation* refers to the friction of distance in human affairs.
2. *Appropriation of space* examines the way space is occupied by objects (streets, buildings, etc.), activities (how land is used), individuals, classes, genders, subcultures, etc.
3. *Domination of space* reflects how individuals or powerful groups dominate the organization and production of space through legal or extra-legal means.
4. *Production of space* examines how new systems of land use, transport and communications, territorial organization, etc. (actual or imagined) are produced, and how new modes of representation (information technology, computer mapping, design) arise (Harvey 1989: 221-222).

	Accessibility and distanciation	Appropriation and use of space	Domination and control of space	Production of space
Material spatial practices (experience)	Flows of goods, money, people, labor power, information; transport and communication systems; market and urban hierarchies	Land uses and built environments; social spaces and other 'turf' designations; social networks of communication and mutual aid	Private property in land; state and administrative divisions of labor; exclusive communities and neighborhoods; exclusionary zoning and other forms of social control (policing and surveillance)	Production of physical infrastructures (transport and communications; built environments; land clearance, etc.); territorial organization of social infrastructures (formal and informal)
Representations of space (perception)	Social, psychological and physical measures of distance; map-making; theories of the friction of distance (location theory, etc.)	Personal space; mental maps of occupied space; spatial hierarchies; symbolic representation of space	Forbidden spaces; territorial imperatives including: community, regional, cultural, nationalistic, geopolitical; hierarchies	New systems of mapping, visual representation, communication, etc.; new artistic and architectural discourses; semiotics
Spaces of representation (imagination)	Attraction/Repulsion; distance/desire; access/denial	Familiarity; hearth and home; open places; places of popular spectacle (streets, squares, markets); iconography and graffiti; advertising	Unfamiliarity; spaces of fear; property and possession; monumentality and constructed spaces of ritual; symbolic barriers and symbolic capital; construction of tradition; spaces of repression	Utopian plans; imaginary landscapes; science fiction ontologies and space; artists' sketches; mythologies of space and place; poetics of space; spaces of desire

Figure 4. David Harvey's grid of spatial practices (Harvey 1989: 223).

Harvey's grid may seem very confusing on the page of a book, yet its usefulness becomes apparent when we implement it in the "real" space of the contemporary city. It is an indispensable guide for understanding the ways in which space is created, represented, co-opted, and utilized by different social actors over time. The grid can assist us in understanding the different interests and strategies that come together in creating SRP, in contemporary Philadelphia. How can the grid assist us in understanding the fact that a development firm, Dranoff Properties, recently purchased the old National Publishing Company building at 24th and Locust Streets (in close proximity to SRP) and transformed it into a luxury apartment building? If we view the construction of luxury lofts in a formerly industrial space as an aspect of "domination and control of space," located on the top portion of the grid, we can gain further insight into the issue by utilizing the three domains of spatial practices, featured on the left margin. In terms of "real" material spatial practices, the new apartments are a form of exclusive community and exclusionary zoning practices. These are luxury quarters, and do not aspire to even mixed income status. In terms of "representations of space," how is this domination of space in the form of a luxury apartment building announced? When construction and renovation was just started in the summer of 1998, the building spoke loudly and announced itself as exclusionary through a billboard which stated "Coming Soon: Luxury Apartments." Finally, using the final category on the left side of the grid, "spaces of representation," we can address how a luxury apartment building carved from the former spaces of industry ushers in a new representational space in the postindustrial city. With the change in use value, the building takes on a different symbolic value; a space once associated with work now becomes a space associated with a particular kind of residential lifestyle. The transition from a space of production to one of consumption, underscores a new symbolic economy that represents the city as ascendant (Zukin 1995 and 1996).

The Landscape of Consumption

As new kinds of spaces unfold before us, intellectuals seek out ways in which to make sense of them by creating *representations of space*, following Harvey's grid of spatial practices. Here, the main concerns are the discourses that develop to discuss the *production of space*. This section, then, considers how thinkers represent contemporary urban spaces, illuminating the development prospect for SRP. These representations often form scathing critiques of the postindustrial city. Sharon Zukin, in her book *The*

Cultures of Cities (1995) and the essay “Space and Symbols in an Age of Decline” (1996), discusses how in an age of diminished urban industry, cities now depend on a “symbolic economy”—the production and consumption of art, gourmet food, fashion, music, and tourism (and the spaces required for each)—for sustenance. As Zukin reminds us, images and symbols play increasingly important roles in an economy that relies more on an “aesthetic urge” than an industrial one. Public art plays an important role within the symbolic economy. If the public nature of the landscape of consumption must be investigated, so must the art located within its boundaries—especially since it is often labeled “public art.” Chapter 3 explores public art critically, paying close attention to its urban context. Christine Boyer argues that history has become an empty sign in the postindustrial city and is used as a marketing tool to promote spectacle—“scenographic” spaces devoid of any concept of place. Boyer criticizes the simulated historic districts that sell an experience of the past easily digested by tourists in need of saccharine historical fixes. Boyer is important for an understanding of the development of SRP because she shows how contemporary development schemes often focus on reviving former sites of industry for leisure-based, consumer activities. R. Timothy Sieber locates waterfront redevelopment projects, such as SRP, within postindustrial urban space, and is particularly interested in how formerly industrial working class areas become sites for middle and upper class leisure. These thinkers investigate the differential access social classes have in what Zukin calls the “landscape of consumption.” What kind of public is beckoned to visit or inhabit the postindustrial city?

In the introduction of this chapter, I related development scenarios for SRP articulated by city boosters with the intention of showing how contributions by Zukin, Boyer, and Sieber provide context for understanding the development of a postindustrial landscape. Here, I provide a quotation from the development prospectus published by the SRDC that suffices as further “evidence” of the resonance of these thinkers in shedding light on the development of SRP. According to SRDC,

Throughout the nation, developed waterfronts and green space accessible to the public are becoming vital elements in our vision of a more livable urban environment. River parks in particular add to the texture of a cityscape with the excitement of water sports, the elegance of riverside dining and the evocative reminders of the most historic of transportation routes. With the passing of the Industrial Age, the concept of city has undergone a compelling change, from a place dominated by smoke stacks and cramped living accommodations to a place characterized more by its livability than its density. In this new urban setting, open spaces, parks and restored landscapes are redefining the shape and function of our cities.

Today in Philadelphia, there is an exciting resurgence of energy. It is visible throughout the City in the completion of such new projects as the new Convention Center, the Vine Street Expressway and the transformation of Broad Street into the Avenue of the Arts. A host of other initiatives, including the completion of SRP, currently addresses issues of transportation, recreation, a cleaner environment, cultural enhancement and tourism (SRDC 1995: 1).

In the following section, I intend to explain how Zukin, Boyer, and Sieber envision specific issues within the postindustrial city and how each contributes to understanding the context for the development of SRP. Although this section is meant to be more about postindustrial development than about public art, I will address the issue of public art where applicable.

Sharon Zukin argues that in the postindustrial city, images and the production of space take center stage. She builds on Baudrillard's idea of capitalist image production. According to Baudrillard (1981), commodity production is obsolete because capitalism is now concerned with the production of signs, images, and sign systems rather than commodities themselves. Zukin applies this idea to the postindustrial city, articulating a relationship between images and the production of space. Declining urban industrial bases, fiscal crises, and the burgeoning of services are fertile ground for the growth of what she terms the symbolic economy. The symbolic economy overshadows and gives new meaning to the traditional material economy of cities. Cultural production and innovation displace material production.

Zukin argues that

the symbolic economy features two parallel production systems that are crucial to a city's material life: the *production of space*, with its synergy of capital investment and cultural meanings, and the *production of symbols*, which construct both a currency of commercial exchange and a language of social identity (1995: 23-24, emphasis hers).

As Sharon Zukin remarks, "the word culture has become an abstraction for any economic activity that does not create material products like steel, cars, or computers" (Zukin 1995: 12). Culture, thus, refers to what Bourdieu calls "symbolic capital"—the array of luxury goods and services which attest to the taste and distinction of the owner (1984). Taste culture, which includes tourism, museum exhibitions, art, gourmet food, and the notion of "lifestyle," and the marketing and advertising strategies attached to each, plays an increasingly important role in the consumer economy. Urban growth entrepreneurs use the power of images to sell a city as world class; to frame and define the nature of urban parks, shopping areas, and streets; to manipulate impressions; and to imply who should be in that space, and who should not. Museums, parks,

architecture, urban design, and public art have long been used along these lines by the urban elite. What is new, according to Zukin, is a recent “symbiosis of image and product” (1995: 8). The arts and visual images are now used as never before to sell goods and services.

Zukin is interested in two important issues: the differential access social groups have in “real” space as well as symbolic spaces. She writes: “To ask ‘Whose City?’ suggests more than a politics of occupation; it also asks who has a right to inhabit the dominant image of the city” (Zukin 1996: 43). Zukin is highly aware of the importance of Marxist political economy, but willing to engage in issues of representation and cultural production (again, “culture” refers to the culture of taste). The material reproduction of society depends on the material reproduction of space—land, labor, and capital are prime factors in this process of reproduction. Yet, the production of space depends on symbolic considerations: what and who should and should not be visible; concepts of order and disorder; and an interplay between aesthetics and function. As cities have developed service economies, they have “both propagated and been taken hostage by an aesthetic urge” (Zukin 1996: 44).

With the disappearance of local manufacturing, culture (in the parlance explained previously) is increasingly the business of cities. The consumption of art, gourmet food, fashion, music, and tourism is the armature on which the city’s symbolic economy rests. Art, or at least an aestheticizing impulse (historic preservation, for example), is a chief player in the postindustrial symbolic economy. That some economic redevelopment plans have focused on museums, such as the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, in North Adams, or on districts devoted to art, Philadelphia’s Avenue of the Arts, for example, underscores the relevance of Zukin’s argument. Public art is inextricably tied to redevelopment and both must be linked to Zukin’s aestheticizing impulse that grips contemporary cities. It seems increasingly obvious, Zukin maintains, that the symbolic economy of images and representation have real economic power.

Zukin inverts the Marxist idea of base and superstructure: in the postindustrial economy, arts and the culture of taste produces goods and services. One of the axioms of Marxism is that only economic surpluses can generate artistic activities. Today, the presence and marketing strategies of cultural institutions establish competitive advantages over other cities for attracting business. According to Zukin,

in the postindustrial economy, the building of art museums suggests the vitality of the financial sector and waterfront development suggests the possibility for the expansion of the professional class (Zukin 1995: 12). In the summer of 1996, Philadelphia used the Cezanne exhibition as a vehicle for tourism by marketing tour packages (including over night stays at the finest hotels and lunches at exquisite restaurants such as Le Bec Fin) with tickets to the art exhibition. Those willing to spend the extra money and buy their tickets in a package were entitled to VIP treatment at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Visitors who had purchased these special packages were permitted to enter the exhibition at any time, while all other ticket holders had to wait in long lines. Clever marketing of urban cultural offerings can mean big business and Cezanne offered the right mix of attractive symbolic capital. The ad copy, which read “Paris, London, and now Philadelphia,” capitalized on the fact that Philadelphia was the only American venue for the Cezanne tour, emphasizing the status of Philadelphia as an international city. In postindustrial Philadelphia, tourism is an important industry, as the half a billion dollar Convention Center testifies, and the arts an important magnet.

Zukin argues that recent public art projects have aided in precipitating the redevelopment of urban space (Zukin 1995: 17-19). In New York City, temporary public art installations along 42nd Street served as interim artistic outposts in vacant peep show and pornographic movie houses vacated by the state’s right of eminent domain during the real estate recession of the early 1990s, before Disney moved in. According to Zukin, the installations drew so much favorable attention from both a general and contemporary art audience that major corporate interests took notice. Disney renovated and opened the New Amsterdam Theater and adjacent Disney Store in May 1997. The idea that art legitimizes the co-option of public space will be addressed more thoroughly in the following chapter. In terms of SRP, public art can be viewed as a means of economic revitalization, as well. Contemporary art, including public art, is increasingly seen as a magnet for cultural tourism, as one way of attracting outsiders to urban areas where they will hopefully spend money. Public art in SRP is conceived as a kind of crown jewel, infusing the site with a sense of uniqueness that is required to attract people to a true “destination” park. According to the goals of the SRP public art plan, it is hoped that public art will “enhance the quality of life in the City and provide incentives for economic development” (SRDC 1997: 2).

A recent *New York Times* article from November 1997 adds further resonance to Zukin's argument. The piece outlines the efforts of using the arts as an urban development tool. According to the article, the bricks-and-mortar model for arts-as-urban-development is Lincoln Center, New York City, which has influenced new projects such as Philadelphia's Avenue of the Arts, a jazz museum in Kansas City, and the New Jersey Center for the Performing Arts in Newark. One expert was quoted as estimating that there were between \$4 and \$5 billion spent on capital projects for the arts between 1986-96. However, these mega-projects are only one side of the story. According to the author,

Beyond the big-ticket building projects are myriad other efforts in which cities have imposed designated taxes on hotel rooms and amusements, offered incentives to developers and aggressively leveraged property taxes to raise money. They have created arts districts, financed arts festivals and promoted regularly scheduled cultural events. Often they have invested large amounts of public money in museums, concert halls, and theaters to create tourist destinations, burnish regional reputations and stimulate blighted neighborhoods (Weber 1997).

An important theme that surfaces in Zukin's *The Cultures of Cities*, is the blurring of the distinction between urban public and private/commercial space, and the loss of public stewardship to the control of private interests (1995: 24-31). For example, due to the withdrawal of government support of public spaces, such as Bryant Park in New York, such areas are placed under the control of private organizations in the form of nonprofit corporations and special tax assessment districts (in New York, they are referred to as Business Improvement Districts [BIDs]; in Philadelphia the Center City District, oversees Center City, and the University District, oversees West Philadelphia). Bastions of safe, middle-class public culture are created, establishing a model of what Zukin calls "pacification by cappuccino" (1995: 28).

The impact of the BID district has yet to be seen in SRP. Recent state legislation has approved the possible implementation of neighborhood improvement districts in Philadelphia. Unlike the BID, which uses taxes collected from businesses, the neighborhood improvement district allows a self-appointed board of directors to assess and tax residential properties in an effort to "better" neighborhoods through raising funds for amenities such as street lighting, and other forms of civic beautification, including public art and park improvements (Brenson 2000). The Center City Residents Associations fears that the Schuylkill River Development Council (SRDC) might initiate such a tax initiative to pay for development in the park. How this will effect SRP is still not known, although SRDC has been vocal in its desire to utilize some form of

the BID model to maintain and secure the park in the future. One reason to develop private concessions in the park is to utilize taxes collected from the businesses to maintain SRP once it is developed. Since the administering organization that oversees SRP, the Fairmount Park Commission, can barely maintain the existing portion of the park (in fact, they hardly maintain the park at all; a non-profit volunteer organization, the Friends of Schuylkill Park, pay for most of the maintenance through fundraising, as well as organizing volunteers to provide hands-on assistance), businesses, if and when developed along the waterfront, could possibly pay for maintenance. Corporate interests in the park, such as the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, and the Philadelphia Energy Corporation, might contribute to some variation on the BID idea, as well (Randolph 2000). As John Randolph, the director of SRDC, has explained to me, he would like the park to be operated like a mall, that is, maintained and patrolled by private firms. It may be the only option available as public funding is increasingly difficult to come by (Randolph 1996a and 2000).

Zukin's study of the symbolic economy presented in *The Cultures of Cities* focuses on five ethnographic case studies: Disney World; the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art; the intersection of the arts, redevelopment, and urban space in contemporary New York City; artist and immigrant labor in New York restaurants; and class, ethnic, and spatial differentiation of the shopping experience in New York. As an urban sociologist, Zukin is highly conscious of the role that fieldwork must play in her understanding of cities and reflexively insinuates herself into her academic work. As a city dweller all her life, Zukin has always been comfortable, indeed, has enjoyed participating in the urban experience as a kind of a critical flaneur—a Walter Benjamin-like figure strolling the streets, both engaging in consumption and, yet, highly conscious of its social context. What Zukin does is reconcile the materialist and symbolic production of urban space and imagery through personal experience and keen observation, offering an account that is grounded in “reality,” albeit one filtered through her own theoretical, ethnic, and gendered perspective.

Using a strategy similar to Sharon Zukin's, Christine Boyer investigates the intersection of redevelopment and historic preservation in contemporary cities in *The City of Collective Memory* (1994). Yet, unlike Zukin, Boyer is more interested in representation for its own sake, rather than coming to terms

with economic shifts that precipitate changes in the way public space and urban landscapes evolve or understanding the actors who inhabit them. She argues that an obsession with history is a sign of postmodernism. One aspect of postmodernism in the city, according to Boyer, is the idea that aesthetics and history, indeed images in and of themselves, ameliorates the conflicts of 1960s urbanism, such as race riots, for example. In the postmodern city, images mask inequitable economic development with a kind of aesthetic veneer. According to Boyer, the postmodern city's obsession with history is linked to the crises of the 1960s which signaled for many the breakdown of the social order. The postmodern return to history in the 1970s and 80s can be viewed as an attempt by politicians and planners to "regain a centered world, a concrete system on which moral, political, social and economic foundations could stand" (Boyer 1994: 408). Boyer continues:

A past connected to the present across the gaping maw of modernism, visual memories sweetened and mystified by the haze of time and codified as fashionable styles and images—these could be manipulated to release the tensions that social change and political protests, uneven economic and urban development had wrought, and instead these styles and images could be used to recapture a mood of grandeur, importance, heroism, and action that appeared to have been lost forever (Boyer 1994: 408).

Boyer notes that the once industrial edges of our cities—railroads and waterfronts—are now being reclaimed and redeveloped for tourism and consumption. According to Boyer, former industrial sites and wholesale markets are now recycled as "gigantic image spectacles to enhance the art of consumption" as new "theaters of late capitalism," and "monumental tourist and shopping containers" (1994:43). Examples abound: Old French Market in New Orleans, Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco, Quincy Market in Boston, Inner Harbor in Baltimore, and South Street Seaport in New York. These places owe their origins to the realization that wholesale produce and meat markets, characterized by grime and boisterousness, return less revenue than Victorian building facades, reconstructed market stalls and trendy shops and restaurants. Increasingly, once industrial cities revalue and recycle their old market district, Main Street, and/or waterfront, producing homogeneous spaces that look much alike nation-wide. Small arts-and-crafts businesses often serve as pioneers, but soon trendier and higher priced merchants move in. According to Boyer, "Cultural centers were built, theatrical backdrops rearranged, special regulatory zoning and historic district status was granted, historic signs and descriptive labels prescribed, and guided tours and educational programs developed" (Boyer 1994: 425).

A nostalgia for the past at least partially informs the plan to develop SRP. SRDC sees a developed SRP as a way of returning to a kind of golden age before the industrial revolution, which fouled the water of the Schuylkill River and cluttered the riverbanks with the built environment of industry. John Randolph, director of SRDC, during one of our public art planning meetings reminded the advisory committee that the development of SRP would provide recreational access to the lower Schuylkill (the portion of the river that parallels the proposed park) for the first time in over 100 years (Randolph 1996c). According to SRDC, developing a former industrial riverfront will restore the “harmony between nature and the urban landscape lost during the industrial revolution” and will “help redefine the concept of the livable city” (SRDC 1995: 5). As tourism officials explained at the “Spotlight on the Schuylkill” conference, one opportunity that the Schuylkill River offers tourists is a glimpse of by-gone industrial sites and buildings, available to be seen on a guided boat tour of the lower portion of the river. One of the ironies of the postmodern urban moment is the presentation of industry as a form of cultural tourism. In an era marked by deindustrialization, new avenues are explored as the city, once the workhorse of industry, seeks to redefine itself. A proposed park built on an old industrial site offers tours of industrial relics in an effort to revitalize an unstable economy. The ghost of industry is used as an economic development tool. Nostalgia does not only generally inform the vision of developing SRP, it is also a way to market place in a tourist economy in order to receive funding from the state. As I will explain in Chapter 5, in developing SRP, SRDC has received a Heritage Park grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The Heritage Park Program seeks to “strengthen economic opportunities through heritage tourism in Pennsylvania” (DCNR: 1997). The marketing and interpretation of industrial history is the core of the program.

While Zukin attempts to explain the reasons for the new, postmodern landscapes of consumption, Boyer’s form of analysis takes many issues for granted. Boyer’s armchair theorizing creates a problem of point of view. The omniscient tone of her writing style begs the question of *who* are the inhabitants of these “scenographic” landscapes, *what* circumstances have created such spaces in the very first place, and *how* do we (and *how* does Boyer) go about explaining them. While it may be perfectly reasonable to conclude that something is wrong in “allowing the private sector to plan and design our public space,” (1994: 475) she does little to explain who the public and private sector are, or their historically ambiguous and overlapping

relationship (see Chapter 4 for details regarding the public and private sector in the redevelopment process and Sharon Zukin, in this chapter, on business improvement districts).

Boyer does provide us with examples of privatized, sanitized, urban spectacular landscapes, as I mentioned above. Two examples in particular, South Street Seaport and Battery Park City, New York, are explained in the context of political and economic decisions. However, her analysis—a fusion of postmodern and critical theory—obfuscates the “real” city of subjective experience for a kaleidoscopic, ever-shifting place, ascertained by the omniscient, yet fragmented lens of her conceptual framework. The city, as Boyer argues (and, despite attempts to particularize place, Boyer’s city is still The City), is in a constant state of change. Change is emphasized in postmodern argot through a variety of word choices: “doubling,” “inversion,” “re-presentation,” “chaos,” “fragmented,” “decomposed.” The root cause of her fragmentary description is her theoretical lens, not the place on which she is focusing. There are many reasons why the landscape looks the way it does. If Boyer would have chosen to examine the reasons cities look as they do, the image she creates might be a lot less fragmented. In the end, she perpetuates the very confusion that she seeks to explain. Thus, for her own work to transcend the problems she sees in the urban landscape, she must come to terms with the generating factors and not simply discuss the reflected images.

The urban anthropologist R. Timothy Sieber situates waterfront development within postindustrial landscapes (Sieber 1991 and 1993). Like Zukin, Sieber is interested in how changes in the economy create new urban symbolic landscapes, why consumer-leisure landscapes often spring forth in former industrial areas, the homogeneity of the new landscapes, and the exclusive vision on which such landscapes are based. Sieber, echoing Boyer, argues that the new waterfronts tend to all look alike. Nearly all waterfront developments include mixed-use office and upper-income residential development, upscale retail services, festival marketplaces, leisure areas, and public amenities. This observation is isomorphic with Boyer’s argument that the new consumer landscapes are “scenographic” spaces, which lack a conception of place. Sieber attributes this *not* to the strategies of successful and standardized design and *not* to uniformity in public policy affecting waterfront redevelopment (like Adams et al., 1991, Sieber notes that waterfront redevelopment, like redevelopment generally, is driven by private investment). He argues that their sameness is the result of the ascendancy of the service economy and the new urban professional class, who

either control or are the target group for redevelopment. According to Sieber: “Standard redevelopment models appear, and enjoy sustained marketability in most cases, because they address the needs, values, and aspirations of these new populations—few of whom are long-term urban residents—that increasingly occupy the downtown areas” (Sieber 1991: 121).

In an argument at least partially indebted to Ernst Mandel (1975), Sieber sees three trends that promote the revitalization of waterfronts: changes in cargo-handling and transportation, making ports increasingly obsolete; overall deindustrialization; and the increased presence of financial and service corporations in cities (Sieber 1991: 122). Cities are no longer conceived as places of labor, but instead as “the site for more directed professional and white color organizational activity. The overall urban ambience is one of play, choice, and festival, not work and compulsion” (1991: 132).

The gentrification that often focuses on waterfronts is a response to the consumption and leisure needs of the urban professionals who have been enticed back to the city (Sieber 1991: 124). But enticement can indeed be fleeting, and manifested simply as a visit—a touristic encounter with the urban. Not only are waterfronts redeveloped with the aim of satisfying the leisure demands of professionals, but waterfront redevelopment is a key player in a time when tourism is in and of itself an important industry within the consumer economy. Philadelphia has taken recent steps in marketing itself as a magnet for tourists and conventioners, with the construction of the Convention Center, hotels, and cultural events marketed as “weekend getaways” such as the Cezanne exhibition hotel tour packages. The development of SRP, in the eyes of some people, should be developed as a tourist destination.

According to Sieber, as water is used less and less as a source of economic livelihood in cities, the emphasis changes from water within the context of work, to water within the context of leisure and aesthetics. While waterfronts were once the domain of dockworkers, sailors, and numerous industrial activities, they are now home to more bourgeois interests. This arises out of the transformation in the public culture of postindustrial cities, a public culture “that serves the new constituencies now inhabiting and visiting redeveloped towns: urban professionals, suburban commuters and tourists” (Sieber 1993:185). The professional class is the ultimate beneficiary of waterfront redevelopment, as luxury residential and retail development suggest. The types of leisure that waterfronts engender follow middle class prescriptions:

quiet viewing of water, walking, bicycling, skating, and jogging. Forms of waterfront leisure traditional among working class people, such as swimming, powerboating, collectivized socializing, and fishing are considered disorderly and dangerous (Sieber 1993:188-189). Sieber's argument is especially important because he shows that even seemingly "neutral" aspects of urban life, like recreation, reveal who the intended users of public spaces are.

As will be explained in Chapter 5, the history of SRP's development follows the general pattern related by Sieber, above. A former site of industrial activity, the banks of the Schuylkill River are to be developed for recreation and leisure, following the middle class prescriptions Sieber discusses: jogging, skating, quiet contemplation of water, restaurant dining, etc. A targeted audience for the developed park are outsiders—tourists and new residents of Center City, Philadelphia, the latter who might decide to live in the SRP neighborhood because of the developed park. However, Sieber portrays the middle class sensibility as overly monolithic. Middle class status does not necessarily denote agreement with a leisure-based development strategy. In my interviews with middle class residents in the SRP area, many articulated a disdain for the development scheme, despite claims that development would increase property values and create a better quality of life. As I will argue, some residents see development of SRP as an encroachment on the privacy of their residential life. Attracting outsiders to the park may boost the economy of Philadelphia, but might prove invasive to local residents living near the park.

The ideas of Zukin, Boyer, and Sieber are very much relevant in providing important context in understanding postindustrial Philadelphia and the strategies it implements in restructuring its economy in order to survive. Most recent major construction projects are all directed toward providing services, leisure opportunities, and residences to middle and upper echelon service workers and tourists. While this will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 4, in summary, Philadelphia is undertaking a building boom, converting former finance and industrial buildings into hotels and condominiums, an urban entertainment center on Penn's Landing on the Delaware River, a new visitors center and Liberty Bell pavilion in Independence National Historical Park, the bulkheading in SRP, as well as plans for the park's development, among many others. As Adams, et al. remind us, such development projects have occurred in the absence of industrial growth and signify new ways in which urban centers generate income by

attracting both outside visitors, as well as encouraging suburbanites, who may work in the city, to reside there, as well. Tourism plays an important role in Philadelphia's postindustrial economy, and marketing strategies, including the pairing of museum exhibitions and hotel stays at special rates, often focus on a balance between art and leisure.

The ideas presented by these thinkers are also relevant to SRP, although, as I have stressed, the outcome of the development of the park is still highly speculative. SRDC's plan for the development of the park includes the creation of a riverfront esplanade for walking, biking, skating and jogging, landscape design and public gathering areas, public art, and the creation of private businesses, including bike, skate, and boat rentals. Larger facilities have been proposed as well, including a marina for boat launching and mooring, floating restaurants, and even a hotel and entertainment/leisure facility. A hotel and entertainment center was proposed by a developer in the mid-1980s that featured a combined Ferris wheel and cocktail lounge, a tropical garden, and other landscapes of consumption—a kind of adult theme park. In the mid-1990s, the manager of Wilburger's Ski Shops, a Philadelphia area business, proposed an entertainment center that was less of a Disney inspired affair. It would include an ice skating rink, coffee shops, and a martini and cigar bar. The reasoning behind this facility is that in order for the park to continually attract people year round, indoor activities must be offered. SRDC has since scaled back this idea to a proposal for a multi-use facility including a marina, restaurant, and other concessions. However, it again must be emphasized that not only are development plans speculative, but some Center City residents have begun to be vocal in their dislike of developing the park as a tourist destination. An examination of the different perspectives of neighborhood residents regarding development in the park will be presented in Chapter 5.

Although there is a growing body of literature on how social control and segregation is integrated in the built environment of postindustrial urban landscapes, it is much too early to speculate how and if such practices would be utilized in SRP. Since the urban renewal of the 1960s, the distinctions between public and private sectors, long imagined as discrete entities, have become increasingly blurry as they merge together to facilitate redevelopment (Adams et al. 1991) (see Chapter 4 for a detailed summary of this merger in Philadelphia's post-World War II redevelopment). A marked consequence of this merger is the privatization of public space and the use of surveillance methods and technologies, as well as architecture, in an effort to

maintain order within spaces (Boyer 1994, Davis 1992, Harvey 1989, Deutsche 1996a, Sorkin 1992, Zukin 1995). In summary, this literature argues that a litany of spatial practices—including video surveillance in shopping malls and parks; the “sanitized” redevelopment of 42nd Street, New York, by Disney Corporation; gated communities with “armed response” signs warning trespassers that private security patrol the area; fortress design strategies in redeveloped downtowns that protect office workers from the homeless and immigrant poor outside—conspire to separate classes and ethnicities. While such ideas are significant, the fact that a development plan in SRP has yet to be finalized or realized makes their relevance difficult to gauge. Suffice it to say that this literature offers an important contribution to the study of the built environment, further exploring how power is interwoven within the social production of space.

The ideological function of “public” manifests itself in array of spatial strategies, from parks which offer clearly defined class-based leisure activities that are attractive to only certain segments of the population, to public art that signifies and sanctifies space as “public,” despite the fact that only certain segments of the population are taken into consideration in the production of space. Chapter 3 seeks to answer a number of questions that are raised by the literature examined above: How is public art implicated in the production space and how does it often mask the social relations of contemporary cities in this process of production rather than examining them, as the most generous interpretation of the term “public art” would imply? What is a “public” and how is one constituted? Locating the fruition of public art as it is practiced in contemporary American cities within 1960s urban renewal, public art will thereby be contextualized within broader urban processes and the “public” in “public art” theorized.