Toward a Rhetoric of Hybrid-Space Walking

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This paper examines how mobile technologies and Web 2.0 applications are changing the ways their users are organizing and experiencing city space. Adopting de Certeau's rhetoric of walking as a framework, this paper argues that mobile technologies with geolocation awareness combined with mapping mashups value map-space and location awareness rather than the city space as practiced place. Users lose the sensory experience and presence of walking in the streets; they become linkers of locations rather than walkers of spaces. As mobile technologies change our sense of being and doing, we may be losing a part of "the practice of everyday life" worth rescuing. Finally, this paper considers the *flâneur* as a rhetorical maneuver that restores the subject position of the walker, who is fully present within physical space. The *flâneur* becomes a rhetorical strategy for rethinking the digital network activities and digital cartographies enabled by mobile technologies. **Keywords:** walking, flâneur, mobile technologies, hybrid space, sociability, location awareness

Introduction

Cities are now home to half of the world's 6.6 billion humans, and by 2030, nearly five billion people will live in cities (Ash, Jasny, Roberts, Stone, & Sugden, 2008, p. 739). Mitchell (2001), in his novel *Ghostwritten: A Novel in Nine Parts*, describes how metropolises are spreading out and building up beyond immediate comprehension:

> Twenty million people live and work in Tokyo. It's so big that nobody really knows where it stops. It's long since filled up the plain, and now it's creeping up the mountains to the west and reclaiming land from the bay in the east. The city never stops rewriting itself. In the time one street guide is produced, it's already become out of date. It's a tall city, and deep one, as well as a spread-out one.

Castells (2000) describes these metropolises as mega-cities—nodes in the global economy, dominated by processes of information networking, which he calls the space of flows. Castells suggests that although mega-cities are now connected to a global economy, they are locally disconnected, both physically and socially, because "within each city, within each area, processes of segregation and segmentation take place, in a pattern of endless variation" (p. 439). Mitchell captures this in the above passage by imagining that as soon as a street guide is printed, it is already out of date. The speed of city growth crystallizes what Manovich (2001) refers to as the basic condition of the new information society: the over-abundance of information. "By the end of the 20th century, the problem was no longer how to create a new media object such as an image; the new problem was how to find an object that already exists

somewhere" (p. 35). Although Manovich is referring to the organization of information, particularly in a database, his insight describes equally well the mega-city as a space of flows, as information processes. Whether databases or mega-cities, the question remains: how do we organize the information we already have? Restating this question with a slight, but important variation: how do we *experience* the information we already have? Putting the questions together: how do we organize and experience the *city* in which we move?

To address these questions, we must increasingly look at the affordances of mobile technologies as interfaces to interact with these city spaces. As cities expand so do mobile technology networks and the number of users. Indeed, in 2007, 3.3 billion people had cell phones—equivalent to half the global population (Vikri, 2007). Many countries have over 100% cell phone penetration, for people have multiple phones or SIM cards (Farley, 2005). Eighty-four percent of Americans have them, and these users exchange two billion text messages per day; in addition, 40 million Americans use mobile devices to access the Internet (Saletan, 2008, ¶ 6). Regarding these numbers, Saletan remarks, "The world inside the phone becomes more vivid and engaging every day. It wants your ears, eyes, thumbs—all of you" (¶ 6). Mobile technologies draw users into a virtual world wherein they feel they move; yet, they can continue to move simultaneously in their physical surroundings, thus creating a new kind of space.

De Souza e Silva (2006) refers to these new spaces as hybrid spaces: "mobile spaces, created by the constant movement of users who carry portable devices continuously connected to the Internet, and to other users" (p. 262). De Souza e Silva argues that the last phrase, "to other users," reinforces the idea that mobile technologies are social-enabling technologies. As more users connect to the Internet via mobile devices, programmers and users are adapting desktop PC web applications to mobile devices, thus making the mobile web a more robust, vivid, and engaging experience. Hardey (2007) notes that Web 2.0 applications, such as blogs and mapping mashups, are becoming an progressively more popular way to reimagine and experience the metropolis (p. 867). Hardey argues that Web 2.0 applications combined with mobile technologies and with geolocation awareness allow users to create mashups of physical and virtual spaces. That is, users have mapped Web 2.0 applications onto the physical infrastructure of the city, generating "what can be thought of as a 'synergistic relationship' linking individuals to data and localities occupied or traversed by users" (p. 868). Hardey insists that Web 2.0 applications and geolocated mobile technologies allow users to create a "new cartography" of the cities they inhabit. In so doing, these users counteract the overabundance of information, thus organizing and experiencing the informational mega-city in new ways. However, Hardey does not interrogate sufficiently what we may be losing in this "synergistic relationship" and "new cartography." When users translate the physical world into virtual mapping mashups, and then use these mashups to organize and experience city space, we should ask what is being gained and lost in the translation. Hardey addresses the former, but not the latter. I will adopt de Certeau's (1984) "rhetoric of walking" to show

that as mobile technologies change our sense of being and doing, we may be losing a part of "the practice of everyday life" worth rescuing.

I will begin by presenting de Certeau's "rhetoric of walking." I will then discuss more in-depth Hardey's (2007) "synergistic relationship" and "new cartography." In light of de Certeau's rhetoric of walking and mobile technologies, I will argue that Web 2.0 applications, specifically mapping mashups, could remove users from the sensory experience of city space. Furthermore, I will argue that these mashups, as a "new cartography," favor location awareness to the detriment of space as practiced place. In giving added presence to locations, these mashups devalue the space between locations; in the process, users are more likely to replace their subjective experiences of city space with the objective experience of location awareness. Finally, to counteract what may be lost, I will consider a concept seemingly as old as the modern city itself—the *flâneur*. Charles Baudelaire's *flâneur* is a man (for Baudelaire, it was always a man) of the streets, specifically of Paris in the 19th century. I depict the *flâneur* as a rhetorical maneuver that restores the subject position of the "walker," who is fully present within physical city space. The *flâneur* becomes a rhetorical strategy for rethinking the digital network activities and digital cartographies enabled by mobile technologies.

The City & A Rhetoric of Walking

We live in world marked by personal mobilities enhanced by technologies that alter spatial and social relations. Kellerman (2006) refers to such technologies as *space-transcending technologies*, such as the automobile, telephone, Internet, and mobile communication devices. Kellerman argues that such technologies "reorganize time as a means to overcome space . . . [and] space is reorganized by the time it takes to move form one place to others . . ." (p. 72). Spatially and socially, these technologies bring about a *speeding-up* of the world. Furthermore, Urry (2007) states that these technologies intricately connect modes of travel and communication that produce new fluidities (p. 8). Because we now have constant access to information that flows at the speed of light, Kellerman (2006) posits the "*death of distance* (Cairncross, 1997), side by side with the emergence of *virtual space* (Dodge & Kitchin, 2001), as well as that of the *space of flows* (Castells, 1989)" (p. 74). Cities have become networks of information processes, constantly expanding into and filling up space. Given the socio-spatial implications of these *space transcending technologies*, it might seem odd to focus on walking—the oldest and slowest mode of personal mobility. However, Jensen (2006) argues, "We still need to pay attention to the ways that interaction is facilitated in everyday life, as this is what makes up the new globalized world" (p. 144). Walking is a fundamental human experience, and as such, our primary means of viewing, interpreting, and, as will become more defined, interfacing with cities.

To see all of a city at one time, we need a bird's eye view. De Certeau (1984) begins his chapter "Walking in the City" by looking down from the 110th floor of the

World Trade Center. From this view, "the spectator can read in [Manhattan, NY] a universe that is constantly exploding," transforming the city into a text that lies before one's eyes (pp. 91-92). Yet, de Certeau calls this view and the text it produces "the fiction that creates readers, makes the complexity of the city readable, and immobilizes its opaque mobility in a transparent text" (p. 92). In other words, this view constructs a city that is nothing more than a representation, an optical artifact, a facsimile, a simulacrum, a picture "whose condition of possibility is an oblivion and a misunderstanding of practices" (p. 93). For de Certeau, the bird's eye view does not reveal, but rather obscures the city because it does not account for actual spatial practices, like walking: the elementary form of city experience. He refers to *Wandersmänner*, "whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban 'text' they write without being able to read it . . . [making] use of spaces that cannot be seen" (p. 93). De Certeau argues that seeing, organizing, and experiencing the city occurs at the street level, through walking. Walkers, with their intertwining paths, give shape to space, and thus write the text of the city.

To write a text of the city, walkers must articulate space. De Certeau limns a "rhetoric of walking" in which "styles of action" function as "ways of operating" that "constitute the innumerable practices by means of which users reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production" (p. xiv). That is, de Certeau considers walking as a speech act: rather than using language, walkers use spaces to articulate utterances. As a speech act, walking performs three "enunciative" functions: walking appropriates space, turns that space into place, and presumes social interaction with others (pp. 97-98). In this way, walkers produce "turns of phrases" that turn "space" into "practiced place"—a locus of social interaction. De Certeau notes that although "spatial order organizes an ensemble of possibilities," the walker "actualizes some of these possibilities" (p. 98). Though a wall may block the walker from going further, she invents new paths, new turns of phrases that transform or abandon spatial elements. Walking turns a space into an argumentative performance and interaction that "affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses, respects, etc. the trajectories it 'speaks'" (p. 99). In a sense, de Certeau considers city space as a blank page on which walking composes a text. If "streets are the space left over between buildings" (Solnit, 2000, p. 175), then walkers, by writing a text, spatialize the city, turning it into practiced place—a dense, dynamic, heterogeneous flow of bodies and languages emerging from everyday practices. Because walking privileges improvisation, the feeling out of space, de Certeau argues that walking as enunciatory operations are of an unlimited diversity and cannot be reduced to their graphic trails (p. 99).

Walking cannot be reduced to graphic trails because walking relies upon *style*, "an individual's fundamental way of being in the world" (de Certeau, 1984, p. 100). Although streets have names and numbers available to all, the walker gives streets diverse meanings. Similarly, Dourish and Bell (2007) note that rather than street names, some cities rely on sociospatial directions, or location markers that are the "concrete manifestations of social relationships, historical events, and institutional memories" (p. 417). Using de Certeau's rhetoric of walking to respond to Dourish and

Bell is to point out that walkers bring these location markers to life: "They become liberated spaces that can be occupied" (de Certeau, 1984, p. 105). By diversifying the space, walkers write stories and memories onto the place: "*Here,* there used to be a bakery" and "You *see*, here there used to be" (emphasis in original, p. 108). Because walking articulates space and place, Solnit (2000) points out one critical implication, what she calls a "frightening possibility," of de Certeau's rhetoric of walking: "That if the city is a language spoken by walkers, then a postpedestrian city not only has fallen silent but risks becoming a dead language, one whose colloquial phrases, jokes, and curses will vanish, even if its formal grammar survives" (p. 213). Solnit emphasizes that the major threat for to urban walkers has been the automobile and automobility, as noted by Guy DeBord in the 1950s, Marshall McLuhan in the 1960s, and Jean Christophe Bailly in the 1990s. Whereas these cultural and media theorists have seen automobility as a threat to the urban setting, I direct attention to mobile communication technologies. Although these mobile communication technologies do not pose a threat the way automobility did, and perhaps, still does, these technologies do and will continue to alter the language of the streets. We should consider how these technologies change the rhetoric of walking into one of hybrid-space walking by understanding how they are organizing the experience of the city, and thus the practice of everyday life.

Mapping Mashups: The City & Mobile Technologies

As described at the outset, cities are expanding more rapidly than ever before, and an overabundance of information has come to characterize city life. Even with an overabundance of information, it seems that information cannot keep pace with city expansion. As the passage from Mitchell (2001) states, "The city never stops rewriting itself. In the time one street guide is produced, it's already become out of date." Nevertheless, information overload is not a new phenomenon. Simmel (1903/2002) emphasizes how the anonymous crowds of urban life produce an intellectual culture and sensual over-stimulation that, in turn, create a blasé attitude in individuals. Furthermore, Simmel states that city life relies upon a money economy that favors punctuality, calculability, and exactness. And this money economy comes to subsume the individual into a network of flows in which the individual "becomes a single cog as over against the vast overwhelming organization of things and forces" (Simmel, 1903/2002, p. 18). Consequently, Simmel claims that urban life produces and imposes an objective rather than subjective experience. For Simmel, these characteristics—intellectual culture, over-stimulation, blasé attitude, money economy, and objective existence—come to define urban life: "It is obviously only the obverse of this freedom [created by a blasé attitude] that, under certain circumstances, one never feels as lonely and as deserted as in this metropolitan crush of persons" (Simmel, 1903/2002, p. 16). Jensen (2006) refers to Simmel's description of city life as "loneliness in togetherness" (p. 147). Mobile technologies, however, give users the potential to turn the nameless faces in the crowd into a social network.

Cities have become spaces of flows, networks of information processes. If urbanites are to navigate these cities, it seems they must increasingly rely upon mobile technologies. Simmel, too, notes this extended trust in networks and systems (Jensen, 2006). Although Simmel considers these networks to be another form of objective existence, urbanites, it seems, are making the networks work for them, rather than they for the networks. Here, again, Simmel (1903/2002) provides insight into this development: "A person does not end with the limits of his physical body or with the area to which his physical activity is immediately confined but embraces, rather, the totality of meaningful effects which emanates from him temporally and spatially" (p. 17). With current mobile communication devices, individuals can extend their presence beyond their immediate physical location. Indeed, mobile phone users exist in two places simultaneously: their physical location and a digital world of conversations and information. Meyrowitz (2005) states that even though experience is local, "the people and things that we sense are not exclusively local. . . . We may be mentally outside, even as we are physically inside" (p. 2). Because mobile phone users occupy two places simultaneously, de Souza e Silva (2006) argues that these technologies create hybrid spaces—a merging of physical and digital spaces through social practices. Indeed, de Souza e Silva "regards space as a concept produced and embedded by social practices, in which support infrastructure is composed of a network of mobile technologies" (p. 271). If a network of mobile technologies composes the infrastructure of urban space, then this infrastructure becomes how users experience city life (Dourish & Bell, 2007). Put simply, mobile technologies change the organization and experience of urban life; they change our ways of doing and being and, in particular, our ways of walking. Thus, we need to understand how people are using these technologies to move in and through the city as hybrid space.

As more users begin to access the Internet via their mobile devices, companies, programmers, and users are adapting Internet applications to create a more robust mobile web. Hardey (2007) notes that Web 2.0 applications are becoming increasingly popular. Web 2.0 applications, such as blogs, podcasts, wikis, and mashups, are inherently social because they allow users to generate web content while also providing ways for users to connect with each other. Because they have an inherent social quality, Web 2.0 applications seem to be ideal programs to access via mobile technologies that are also inherently social. Hardey, drawing upon Graham and Marvin (2001), states that Web 2.0 resources allow users to create and publish "'new spatial imaginaries' that are needed to understand the mobile and heterogeneous life of the city" (Hardey, 2007, p. 871). Users are organizing and experiencing new spatial relations within cities by using Web 2.0 resources to overlay the physical architecture of the city with digital information. In so doing, Hardey argues that they generate "what can be thought of as a 'synergistic relationship' linking individuals to data and localities occupied or traversed by users" (p. 868). Urbanites are creating mashups that combine a base map, available from web services like Google Maps, and any number of transparent layers that contain geo-coded, or located, objects (p. 875). Hardey refers to these mashups as a "new cartography" (p. 875). For example, a mashup

might locate popular cafés within a city or available public restrooms: "This affords images of the neighborhood and its situation within a conurbation in ways that have not been commonly available previously" (p. 876). If a user has a Global Positioning System (GPS) enabled device, she will always know exactly where she is within the city and in the relation to the nearest café; such a user ostensibly will never be lost in the city.

According to Hardey, users should not only never be lost again, but also be able to plan their path through the city. Hardey (2007) affirms, "Locality matters in the new world of Web 2.0 and resources are emerging that situate the user in a particular location so that the information is tailored to his/her spatial needs" (p. 878). He refers to one service, Loki that claims, "You'll always know exactly where you are," and so the city will never be "strange" (p. 878). Furthermore, through GPS or location-aware mobile phones, like the iPhone or other smart phones, friends can provide automatic updates of each other's location and activities. Another service, Socialight, promises "A Screen Where Everyone Knows Your Name" (White, 2007). Given that these claims, Hardey correctly asserts that locality matters and that "Web 2.0 resources are becoming part of the constituents of the world occupied by city dwellers that is continually reproduced in material and representational terms" (p. 879). City dwellers seemingly have an information resource that can keep pace with cities that never stop filling up space, that never stop rewriting themselves.

Because users can generate and update information almost instantaneously, they can ostensibly produce guides that never become outmoded. Nevertheless, Hardey (2007) overstates his case for a "synergistic relationship" and a "new cartography." Referring to mapping mashups of both the London Underground and New York City, Hardey writes that users can plan their journeys and collect information:

> This indicates how visualizations of complex urban structures, which have previously been rendered understandable through abstract designs, are now being remapped in ways that provide not only new levels of information but the actual contours of the city. . . . Indeed it is possible to undertake a virtual walk along various streets in New York as images of the city unfold as if the user were driving down them. (p. 877)

This passage, particularly the phrases "actual contours of the city," "virtual walk," and "images of the city unfold as if the user were," suggest that these Web 2.0 mobile mashups produce or capture a perfect translation of the city and the experience of city space. It seems we no longer have to walk down New York's streets to experience space; rather, we can follow a virtual tour created by another user. These mashups are good ways to find locations within the city, but they cannot reproduce or replace the experience of the city. Google Maps' Street View is great for seeing what a city might look like, but it cannot match the physical experience of being and doing in the streets. These mashups provide a bird's eye view of the city. As de Certeau argues, the problem with a bird's eye view is that it produces a simulacrum of the city because it ignores spatial practices, like walking.

HybridSpace Walking

Societies have always created maps, or simulated versions of physical space, as a way of understanding the world. All maps are rhetorical: some locations are chosen, while others are left out. Some details are given additional presence, while others fade into the background. In so doing, maps construct social knowledge and experience. No map can ever be complete. This fact, however, does not prevent Baudrillard from imagining one that is. Baudrillard (1983) cites Jorge Luis Borges' tale, which is itself an elaboration of a Lewis Carroll story, of a map that is so detailed "that it ends up exactly covering the territory" (p. 1). The map first simulates the territory, and then replaces and precedes it: "Henceforth, it is the map that precedes the territory—PRECESSION OF SIMULACRA—it is the map that engenders the territory" (p. 2). Successive reproductions, or simulacra, of the map refer only to the map and no longer to the territory. Baudrillard deems this the third-order of simulacra in which the signs of the real are substituted for the real itself—hyperreality. Although Baudrillard takes mapping and maps to their extreme possibility, his insights provide a useful entry into what is potentially lost in using Web 2.0 mashups, namely the full sensory experience of walking. Because Web 2.0 mashups rely on sophisticated mapping technology, because users can generate and upload data to them instantaneously, they seem as if they can keep pace with the city itself, "that it ends up exactly covering the territory." This is what de Certeau imagines when at the top of the World Trade Center; the city presents itself as a complete text, a totalizing map. Similarly, Hardey (2007) refers to the "actual contours" and the realistic unfolding images of a virtual walk down New York's streets. However, as de Certeau argues, the streets are spatialized and made inhabitable by everyday practices, such as walking that affirms, tries out, and transgresses space. What is potentially lost with these mobile technologies is that users will stop walking the streets as performative utterance, and begin to refer only to the maps themselves. Rather than exploring space, users may begin to rely upon mashups to explore the space—the map precedes the territory. The city becomes a *desert of the real* (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 2). In effect, what is not on the map cannot be found, and what cannot be found does not exist.

There is some evidence that these mashups become more real than real, Baudrillard's hyperreality. Saletan (2008) refers to a study that used brain scans to show that the blood flow of drivers who talk on their cell phone shifts from "the brain's spatial management to language processing areas. It's the picture of the mind being sucked from one world into another" (¶ 8). Saletan notes that cell-phone-related road accidents exceed 1,000 per state, and "six years ago, when only half of all Americans had cell phones, the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis linked them to 2,600 driving fatalities and 330,000 injuries per year. And that was before the texting boom" (¶ 9). Drivers, relying upon Global Positioning System (GPS) devices, have driven into rivers and trees and onto railroad tracks, crashing into trains, because their GPS mistook it for a road (¶ 10). Saletan concludes, "Today, we're so enslaved to mobile devices that we rely on them even to translate the physical world. . . . [Drivers]

trusted the dashboard, not the windshield" (¶ 10). Similarly, Manovich (2001) refers to screens as aggressive, "rendering nonexistent whatever is outside its frame" (p. 96). The digital space of the GPS's screen becomes more real than the view framed by our windshields. The maps precedes, constructs the territory.

If the mobile mapping mashups begin to precede the space, then locality, as Hardey notes, becomes even more important. However, what is lost in the emphasis on locality is a sense of space as practiced place. When a user accesses a mobile mashup, such as Loki, while walking the streets, it seems more likely that the desired location becomes visible whereas the social interactions of these spaces become obscured. Consider a recent comic strip (Nitrozac & Snoggy, 2008). Setting aside the politically incorrect possibilities, this comic illustrates how mobile technologies and Web 2.0 resources emphasize location over space as practiced place. Here, the lead character takes of advantage of Google's new Voice Search service for the iPhone. The user requests Google to search for a toy store, and soon he arrives at the toy store (we might presume Google Maps assisted him with this as well). All goes well until he requests a "Fruitcake" just as a burly biker strolls past. The biker takes offense and leaves the iPhone user searching for a medic. The iPhone user is tied to location; however, because he favors location at the expense of space, he no longer shares the same practiced place with the biker. As a mobile phone user walking the streets, he no longer spatializes, but rather becomes localized. These mobile mashups, this new cartography, though a useful resource, cannot replicate the "actual contours of the city" because walkers produce the contours of the city by speaking the language of the streets.

Another way to conceive the map preceding the city space is through Bolter and Grusin's double logic of remediation—immediacy and hypermediacy. Bolter and Grusin (1999) explain that the logic of immediacy "dictates the medium itself should disappear" (pp. 5-6). They suggest that immediacy works well in "nonimmersive digital graphics—that is, in two- and three-dimensional images projected on to traditional computer, film, or television screens" (p. 23) that provide a unified visual space. Hypermediacy, in contrast, calls attention to the medium itself as a heterogeneous space: "The logic of hypermediacy multiplies the signs of mediation and in this way tries to reproduce the rich sensorium of human experience" (p. 34). By reducing city space to two-dimensional dots, or locations, on a two-dimensional plane, mashups strive towards immediacy by constructing a unified visual city space. They become both immersive and nonimmersive. They are immersive in that they purportedly totalize city space with a map that precedes the territory; yet, they are nonimmersive because they cannot replicate "the rich sensorium of human experience." Walking, however, provides hypermediacy by drawing attention to the medium itself—the streets. The streets become a space of articulation wherein walkers' individual styles and turns of phrases draw attention to the streets as practiced place.

To be sure, not all mobile technology applications lack hypermediacy. Location-based mobile gaming (LBMG), for example, draws attention to the medium itself. De Souza e Silva (2006) argues LBMGs create hybrid spaces that not only expand users'

social connections, but also change their perception of physical space (p. 271). She describes players who rediscovered their city:

> By transforming the city space into the game board—or by taking the game of out the computer screen—the familiar space of the city is transformed into a new and unexpected environment. It is as if the games creates an imaginary playful layer that merges with the city space, connecting people who previously did not know one another via mobile technologies according to their movement in physical spaces (pp. 271-272).

These games convert city streets into game boards that can be explored, and through multiplayer functionality, they bring friends and strangers alike into hybrid spaces of sociability. I agree with de Souza e Silva's claim that these technologies connect people to their physical environment and social relations. However, I wonder what the effects are of redrawing city space as game space; mobile gaming may draw more attention to the game than to the city space. Thus, as players become immersed in and absorbed by the game, they may no longer be immersed in the practiced place of the streets. In a curious way, even though LBMGs connect players to physical space and social relations, they elide space and limit social contact. That is, a game's objectives may draw more attention to location than to space, just like mashups.

Mapping mashups present to the user an ostensibly totalizing database of the city. As databases, these maps use a nonhierarchical network of locations. As noted earlier, location becomes the most important unit of information. Consequently, what is lost, both rhetorically and physically, is the space between locations. These maps, therefore, reinforce networking logic in which only the end-points matter and the paths between do not. As such, these mapped locations act as hybrid hyperlinks. Manovich (2001) argues that hyperlinking is the primary network logic of the World Wide Web (WWW). Hyperlinks are inherently interactive. The mere sight of a hyperlink requires a response, a click, a yes or no; however, the link itself is not meant to be read in depth, but rather to be followed instantaneously. The WWW has enabled us to move around at the speed of our thinking, or perhaps we think at the speed of our linking. Likewise, standing on the street looking at a screen that displays a mashup requires a response from the user. The map allows the user to be at a desired location before she ever takes a step, and street space fades to the background. This experience, however, gives users a false sense of traveling, of having been where they desired to go.

Hyperlinks and mapping mashups seem to offer users an individual and interactive experience of databases and city spaces. However, Manovich (2001) refers to the logic of hyperlinking as the myth of interactivity:

> Now interactive computer media asks us instead to click on an image in order to go to another image. Before, we would read a sentence of a story or a line of a poem and think of other lines, images, memories. Now interactive media asks us to click on a highlighted sentence to go to another sentence. In short, we are asked to follow

pre-programmed, objectively existing associations. Put differently, in what can be read as an updated version of French philosopher Louis Althusser's concept of "interpellation," we are asked to mistake the structure of somebody's else mind for our own. (p. 61)

Similarly, mapping mashups and games construct for users pre-programmed objectively existing locations at the expense of subjective experience. The immediacy of hyperlinking and of mashups encourages users to look *through* rather than to look *at* city space. These mobile technologies interpellate users not as walkers, but rather as linkers.

The linking of one location with the next devalues the path between locations. Just as we can follow our way through hyperlinks without knowing how we arrived, de Certeau (1984) argues that although we can map locations and paths, these points and lines can only refer to themselves. That is, they miss what has happened on the path itself: "Surveys of routes miss what was: the act itself of passing by" (p. 97). De Certeau further explains:

> The operation of walking, wandering, or "window shopping," that is, the activity of passers-by, is transformed into points that draw a totalizing and reversible line on the map. They allow us to grasp only a relic set in the nowhen of a surface of projection. . . . The trace left behind is substituted for the practice. It exhibits the (voracious) property that the geographical system has of being able to transform action into legibility, but in doing so it causes a way of being in the world to be forgotten. (p. 97)

Like hyperlinks, Web 2.0 mapping resources may draw a totalizing and reversible line on the map, but in so doing, they substitute this line, this graphic trail, for the actual practice of walking. And users who follow these pre-programmed objectively existing traces, mistake their paths for that of someone else's. They no longer produce their own texts; rather, they trace those of others. Though they may map the city, they do not spatialize the city as practiced place.

Mobile technologies combined with Web 2.0 applications offer the promise of a synergistic relationship between place and people through a new cartography. As such, they seemingly overcome the over-stimulation of the city as described by Simmel. That is, they seem to combat Simmel's "loneliness in togetherness" by bringing friends and strangers into social contact. Furthermore, such mobile technologies seem to help resolve what Simmel (1903/2002) calls the source of modern life's the deepest problems: "The attempt of the individual to maintain the independence and individuality of his [sic] existence against the sovereign powers of society" (p. 11). By allowing users to know where they are in the strange space of the city, and by allowing users to locate desired destinations and friends, these mobile technologies ostensibly empower users to withstand and turn back the sovereign powers of society. Nevertheless, these mobile technologies come to exert their own sovereign power by interpellating the user in a specific location rather than in practiced place. Networks of information processes, once again, subsume the individual. Recall

Solnit's (2000) "frightening possibility": If people stop wandering the streets, the streets become a dead language, one whose colloquial phrases, jokes, and curses will vanish. The rhetoric of hybrid-space walking appears depressingly shallow, but I will consider a rhetorical strategy that may give it depth.

A Rhetorical Maneuver: The *Flâneur & Flânerie*

Manovich (2001) argues that hyperlinking reduces the field of rhetoric to a single figure, metonymy. In the case of Web 2.0 mashups, points on a map come to not only represent, but also manifest location. And location stands in for practiced place. Of the hyperlink, Manovich (2001) asserts,

> If there is a new rhetoric or aesthetic possible here, it may have less to do with the ordering of time by a writer or an orator, and more with spatial wandering. The hypertext reader is like Robinson Crusoe, walking across the sand, picking up a navigation journal, a rotten fruit, an instrument whose purpose he does not know; leaving imprints that, like computer hyperlinks, follow from one found object to another. (p. 78)

Although Manovich claims that this is a rhetoric of spatial wandering, his example of Robinson Crusoe correlates to a mobile technology user following locations on a map. Though we may follow the footprints, the act itself of passing by is absent. When mobile technology users employ mapping mashups, they are interpellated by the logic of hyperlinks, which values walking as means rather than an end in itself. In the process, walking as conscious cultural act, a way being and doing in the world, is being forgotten.

As Solnit (2000) observes, walking as a cultural act distinct from pure corporeal mobility corresponded with the rise the modern city (p 14). The epitome of walking as cultural act is Baudelaire's *flâneur*. Baudelaire (1863/1972) describes the *flâneur* as an observer and navigator of Parisian street crowds: "The crowd is his domain, just as the air is the bird's, and water that of the fish . . . his dwelling in the throng, in the ebb and flow, the bustle, the feeling and the infinite" (¶ 8). For Baudelaire, the *flâneur* represents a new way of walking that requires the individual to be fully present in the streets. As such, the *flâneur* as a man of the crowd feels at home in the streets. He observes, responds to, and records the flow of city space and of the crowds. Baudelaire writes, "All these details flood chaotically into him; and within a few minutes the poem that comes with it all is virtually composed. . . . Few men have the gift of seeing; fewer still have the power to express themselves" (¶ 9). The *flâneur* composes his poem while walking the streets and discovering their hidden spaces. The *flâneur*, like de Certeau's *Wandersmänner*, follows "the thicks and thins" of the urban text he writes. Walking becomes writing, and writing becomes walking. The *flâneur* spatializes: he writes an urban text that makes street space practiced place.

By making the streets and crowds his home, the *flâneur* appropriates space as practiced place while also establishing contact with others. *Flânerie* is an enunciative

act, a performative articulation. As such, *flânerie* is a rhetorical maneuver. Phillips (2006) defines the rhetorical maneuver as a performance in which "we choose to violate the proscriptive limits of our subject position and speak differently by drawing upon the resources of another subject position we have occupied" (p. 312). Through a rhetorical maneuver, an individual can violate the constraints of one subject position for that of another. Rhetorical maneuvers are moments of affirming, trying out, and transgressing discourse—just as the *flâneur* does with city space. When included in a rhetoric of hybrid-space walking, the *flâneur* introduces a rhetorical maneuver that presumes a different subject position—one that embraces the presence of *flânerie*, of walking the streets as practiced place. Put another way, as a rhetorical maneuver, the *flâneur* disrupts mobile technology users' subject positions as linkers by allowing them to become walkers. Unlike the iPhone user in the comic strip, the *flâneur* is aware of city space as practiced place. He would have been aware of the presence of the burly biker. *Flânerie* violates the logic of hyperlinked locations.

Mobile technologies and mapping mashups cannot capture the hidden spaces, the thicks and thins, the actual contours of city space. The mobile technologies and mashups cannot translate space that cannot be seen. The *flâneur* is an observer that observes with all his senses. Shields (1994) notes, "The *flâneur* attempts to wallow in the rush of sensate information, taking pleasure in the diversity of the stimuli of the urban environment" (p. 73). For the *flâneur*, the streets are a hypermediate medium, and walking is a hypermediate experience. Because the streets are hypermediate, because he knows the streets through experience, he can discover hidden spaces. He opens up the street space and improvises new possibilities. To improvise he consumes the streets and then constructs practiced place, a new place within which to play. When the *flâneur* imaginatively responds to the streets, he expands the possibilities that are hidden between spaces. Improvisation allows the *flâneur* to uncover the underpinning history—the streets' rhythm, energy, and force. For the *flâneur,* location does not matter; what is important are the streets themselves as an expressive medium. Shields comments, "While *flanerie* is an individual practice, it is part of a social process of inhabiting and appropriating urban space which de Certeau would have called an 'art of doing'" (p. 65). While mobile technology users seem happy just being in the streets, the *flâneur* must be doing—a being of doing (Tester, 1994, p. 5).

Although the rise of the *flâneur* corresponded to the rise of the modern city, the city as a locus of capitalism soon overwhelmed the *flâneur*. Tester (1994), drawing upon Benjamin's writings about the *flâneur*, points out that

> the rationality of capitalism and, especially, commodification and the circulations of commodities, itself defined the meaning of existence in the city so that there remained no spaces of mystery for the *flâneur* to observe. Capital imposed its own order on the metropolis as if from outside. (p. 13)

This recalls Simmel's observations about the money economy of urban life that puts trust in systems and values above all punctuality and calculability. In such a city, the

flâneur could no longer impose his own order, but rather had order imposed upon him. Similarly, mobile technologies and mapping mashups by organizing the experience of city space are imposing a new rational order on their users. Mashups seem to offer a totalizing map of city space in which ordered and fixed locations are given primary presence. By valuing location awareness, these mobile technologies and mashups introduce the logic of hyperlinking into city space. Locations become links. As such, the space between locations does not matter as much as the locations themselves. What is lost is the experience of walking the streets as practiced place. Despite subsuming to the pressures of capitalism, the *flâneur* and *flânerie* may offer a rhetorical strategy to counteract the locality of mobile technologies and mashups.

Conclusion

Perhaps the two most popular questions of mobile phone users are: where are you, and can you hear me now? These two questions reveal the importance our culture has ascribed to location awareness. Mobile technologies and Web 2.0 applications, such as mapping mashups, have enabled users to put even greater emphasis on locations and location awareness. As mobile technologies have become absorbed into the texture of our everyday lives, we need to understand how these additional textural layers change the ways in which we *practice* our everyday lives. In other words, as we continue to translate our lives into mobile technologies and software applications, we need to ask ourselves not only what we might be gaining, but also what we might be losing.

In this paper, I have attempted to answer the latter question: what might we be losing? I began by discussing de Certeau's rhetoric of walking, which I used as a framework to examine mobile technologies' effects on walking. I have suggested that mobile technologies with geolocation awareness combined with mapping mashups place an increased emphasis on maps as immediate interfaces that seemingly offer a totalizing view of city space. As such, they remove users from the sensory experience of city space as practiced place. Furthermore, what we lose with an added emphasis on location is the richness of the space between locations. I am suggesting that these mobile technologies and mashups reinforce a network logic of hyperlinking that privileges the ends rather than the paths. To counteract what we might be losing, I have argued that we should introduce the *flâneur* and *flânerie* as rhetorical maneuvers that could displace the subject positions that mobile technology users occupy as linkers with those of walkers. Whereas Castells (2000) and Manovich (2001) argue that space organizes time in the network society, the *flâneur* allows the irrelevance of time to organize space; the *flâneur* appropriates and accommodates space at the pace of his walk. As we continue to combine physical and digital environments into hybrid spaces and walk within these spaces, we should reconsider what the *flâneur* offers us as a theory of digital cartographies and network activities.

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