

Civic Spaces: Rhetoric of Pittsburgh's Parks System

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This dissertation examines civic planning initiatives for the Pittsburgh Parks System from the late nineteenth to early twenty-first centuries to illustrate how citizenship and urban identity are rhetorically figured in, with, and through green public space. Parks are often framed in popular discourse as uniquely democratic places despite the contested nature of public space, making them useful rhetorical artifacts for understanding citizenship as a social construct in everyday life. This dissertation demonstrates how urban planning narratives of industry, citizenship, and green space are socially constructed within multiplicities that have always been and continue to be intertwined in Pittsburgh's reputation as the Most Livable, Steel City. In order to make this argument, I examine discourses of parks and citizenship through the lens of urban planning found in popular newspapers, materials produced by civic organizations, and official city planning documents.

My introduction chapter situates my research in scholarship on citizenship, borders, parks, and urban planning and provides a background on the history of green space in industrial cities. In my second chapter I examine how the *Pittsburg Dispatch* covers the introduction of Schenley Park from 1889-1892, revealing how early civic leaders argued for the importance of time spent in nature to alleviate the stresses of industrialization on urban living by creating space for various citizen enactments. In chapter three I examine the Citizens Committee for City Plan of Pittsburgh (CCCCP) archival material from 1918 to 1923 to argue that the CCCCCP rhetorically linked orderly recreation and spatial arrangement of the city with transforming the general public into good citizens. Chapter four examines the Parks Master Plan, co-created by the public-private partnership

of the City of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy in the early twenty-first century. The Parks Master Plan suggests a return to a green, civic imaginary will provide a sustainable path for the future of urban development, revealing the city's complicated relationship with its violent industrial past. In my concluding chapter, I identify how rhetoric of parks played a critical role for civic leaders' narrative transformation of Pittsburgh from Steel City to Most Livable City.

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Preface

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1.0 Introduction: Parks and the Making of a Most Livable City

*We are always, inevitably, making spaces and places. The temporary cohesions of articulations of relations, the provisional and partial enclosures, the repeated practices which chisel their way into being established flows, these spatial forms mirror the necessary fixings of communication and identity. They raise the question of a politics towards them.*¹

Pittsburgh is historically grounded as a place of industrialization, even and perhaps especially against the demise of industrial production in the 1980s and its radically changed economy in the twenty-first century. Its industrial history resonates with numerous other cities in the Northeast that face their own struggles with deindustrialization. Pittsburgh's sustained industrial identity is frequently cited in political discourse as an exemplary case for understanding the American urban imaginary of the (pre-/post-) industrial working-class city, suggesting its importance in cultural memory. When President Donald J. Trump announced his decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Accord in the White House Rose Garden on July 1, 2017, he declared, "I was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris."² Trump also invoked other once thriving industrial cities, stating that "it is time to put Youngstown, Ohio, Detroit, Michigan, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania – along with many, many other locations within our great country – before Paris, France. It is time to make America great again."³ Statements such as President Trump's illustrate how the identity of a city fluctuates in context, subject to cultural

¹ Doreen Massey, *For Space* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2005), 175.

² Donald J. Trump, "Statement by President Trump on the Paris Climate Accord," *The White House*, June 1, 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/statement-president-trump-paris-climate-accord/>.

³ Trump.

changes in space and place and across and through time. The *New York Times* observed that Trump was using a “rusty metaphor,” nodding toward Pittsburgh’s complicated relationship with industry. Pittsburgh’s Mayor Bill Peduto rejected Trump’s rhetoric, emphasizing that “to some, Pittsburgh is still the 1975 Pittsburgh, a steel mill town based on heavy industry, still struggling through the post-Depression.” With this comment, Peduto drew attention to the rootedness of industrialization in public memory and its cultural entailments.⁴ He suggested that the *New York Times*’ reference to rust implies an imagery that contrasts with the modern, post-industrial Pittsburgh, a city that takes great pride in its green economy and commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Indeed, the mayor’s statement gestures to a modern-day Pittsburgh, where much has changed since the steel industry boom. In the twenty-first century, Pittsburgh is driven by medicine, banking, education, and technology. Recent efforts to revitalize its green space visually reinforce the idea that Pittsburgh is a successful postindustrial city. Indeed, public green space in Pittsburgh, most generously found in the city’s expansive parks system, was born out of and grows alongside industrialization. The transformation of Pittsburgh’s economic and environmental landscapes has contributed to one of the Steel City’s newer nicknames, a Most Livable City. While Trump posits industry to still be very much alive in Pittsburgh’s present and future, Peduto posits industrial rust to be a thing of its past, suggesting that the city’s competing industrial and green identities are not so singularly contained.

This dissertation demonstrates how throughout history, narratives of industry, citizenship, and green space are socially constructed within multiplicities that have always been and continue to be intertwined in narratives of the Most Livable, Steel City. As Doreen Massey fittingly notes,

⁴ Kim Lyons, Emily Badger, and Alan Blinder, “A Revitalized Pittsburgh Says the President Used a Rusty Metaphor,” *New York Times*, June 2, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/02/upshot/a-revitalized-pittsburgh-suggests-the-president-used-a-rusty-metaphor.html?smid=fb-nytimes&smtyp=cur&_r=1.

“rather we should, could, replace the single history with many.”⁵ In what follows, I examine how citizenship is rhetorically figured in, with, and through civic leaders’ planning for Pittsburgh’s Parks System. I argue that park rhetoric becomes a bordered and bordering apparatus in urban life for citizenship enactments. In doing so, I extend scholarly understanding of how contested notions of belonging are constructed in changing public landscapes. Parks are often framed in popular discourse as uniquely democratic spaces, making them useful rhetorical artifacts for understanding citizenship as a social construct in everyday life. Rhetoric of citizenship is found in citizens’ participation in planning for park development, is constructed in narratives of planning, and is shaped through embodied enactments in park sites. In order to make this argument, I examine discourses of parks and citizenship through the lens of urban planning found in popular newspapers, materials produced by civic organizations, and official city planning documents. From these artifacts, I identify three key moments of change in the parks system, which make up the basis of my case studies: the creation of Schenley Park as Pittsburgh’s first regional park in 1889, the first attempt at citizen driven comprehensive city planning in the early 1920s with the Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh, and efforts to restore the regional parks system at the turn of the twenty-first century led by the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy. In doing so, I interrogate the introduction of the contemporary parks system in Pittsburgh, and its role in citizen-driven public-private partnerships for urban development.

In the remainder of this introduction chapter, I provide a framework within which readers can orient themselves to the scope of my project. First, I situate my research within broader scholarly conversations of citizenship, borders, and parks to explain why parks offer a productive case for understanding how rhetoric of citizenship is configured in, with, and through public space.

⁵ Massey, *For Space*.

Second, I introduce rhetoric of urban planning, including planners and planning for public space as well as the connection between memory and urban landscapes. Third, I offer a brief background on green space in industrial cities to highlight how urban parks systems were born of the rural cemetery movement and designed to be responsive to industrial growing pains that threatened the livability of cities. Fourth I outline my process of writing from place, introducing my method and artifacts. Finally, I offer a chapter map for the remainder of this dissertation.

1.1 Socially Constructed People, Spaces, and Places

In this section I situate my research with scholarship on citizenship, borders, and parks. My work illustrates how these three areas come together to offer a critical rhetorical framework for better understanding how citizenship enactments are socially constructed within the context of urban parks.

1.1.1 Citizenship

Pittsburgh's parks development is entangled with discourses about what it means to enact citizenship and the making of place. Of particular interest for my research are the ways in which citizenship is deployed in rhetoric of parks, as well as how rhetoric of parks shape ideals of citizenship.⁶ Planning discourse describes parks as created for citizens, by citizens, and with the power and intent of shaping potential future citizens. Citizenship, however, is a much-contested

⁶ When I talk about "citizens" or "citizenship" in the following chapters, it is most often in reference to groups who use that language to describe themselves or others.

term. While it is traditionally understood as denoting the legal status of personhood, including a set of political and social rights and responsibilities, it is also tied to “symbolic and collective identity.”⁷ Margaret Somers explains that put simply, the foundation of citizenship theory is about “the right to have rights.”⁸ Rhetorical approaches that ask “what” of citizenship frequently emphasize the securitization of citizenship by encouraging more frequent and productive ways for citizens to engage in public space.⁹ By contrast, I build upon an approach that emphasizes the “how” of citizenship to critically consider citizenship as a “process” or “*mode of public engagement*.”¹⁰ Considering citizenship as a mode of engagement opens scholars to consider the ways in which citizenship can look like numerous, contradicting, or irregular imaginings of people, places, or ideas as it proceeds. It recognizes the agency involved in doing citizenship that can exceed normative expectations such as voting or serving a political office.¹¹ When examined from this critical perspective, citizenship shifts from an institutionally defined status to a managed way of being.¹² My examination of how rhetoric of parks and citizenship are linked challenges scholars to think about the relationship between citizenship and place by considering parks as sites for the production of citizens, places of and for enactment of citizenship and its exclusion, and as products of civic engagement.

Examining citizenship through enactment deemphasizes institutionally constructed notions of belonging, shaped primarily by borders, laws, or the national imaginary, to include

⁷ J. David Cisneros, “Rhetorics of Citizenship: Pitfalls and Possibilities,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 100, no. 3 (2014): 376.

⁸ Margaret R. Somers, *Genealogies of Citizenship: Markets, Statelessness, and the Right to have Rights* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 27.

⁹ Cisneros, “Rhetorics of Citizenship,” 376.

¹⁰ Robert Asen, “A Discourse Theory of Citizenship,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90, no. 2 (2004): 191.

¹¹ Asen.

¹² Asen; J. David Cisneros, “(Re)bordering the Civic Imaginary: Rhetoric, Hybridity, and Citizenship in *La Gran Marcha*,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 1 (2011).

consideration for bodily representations, rhetoric of place, visual rhetorics, social movements, and other public displays of civic belonging. A focus on enactment shifts attention from the limiting category of institutionally recognized “citizen” to that of considering enactments of citizenship that uphold, normalize, and stabilize American ideals and identities just as they may also challenge, contradict, and destabilize them.¹³ Robert Asen understands the implications of citizenship enactments to be “always conditioned by social status, relations of power, institutional factors, and material constraints.”¹⁴ David Cisneros identifies that studies of how citizenship is enacted should also consider its presence in public discourse, in citizen movements, and other agnostic forms of participation.¹⁵ Jenny Rice additionally suggests that spaces of “everyday talk” are places that can provide a way of better understanding where and how such activist work occurs.¹⁶ These “potentially unruly” acts can begin as bottom up movements that grow in scale to challenge or amplify various social, cultural, and political issues.¹⁷ Considered from these unruly modes, citizenship may critically threaten institutionally sanctioned authority.¹⁸ However, public performance can also be a powerful educative tool of hegemonic institutions for instructing potentially “unruly” bodies on practices of good citizenship, demonstrating the unpredictability of civic enactment.¹⁹ Lauren Berlant illustrates the powerful influence of participating in a national imaginary when she explains the development of the “infantile citizen,” whereby “democracies can [...] produce a special form of tyranny that makes citizens like children, infantilized, passive,

¹³ Vanessa B. Beasley, “The Rhetoric of Ideological Consensus in the United States: American Principles and American Pose in Presidential Inaugurals,” *Communication Monographs* 68, no. 2 (2001); Cisneros.

¹⁴ Asen, “A Discourse Theory,” 204.

¹⁵ Cisneros, “Rhetorics of Citizenship.”

¹⁶ Jenny Rice, *Distant Publics: Development Rhetoric and the Subject of Crisis* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012), 17.

¹⁷ Asen, “A Discourse Theory,” 195.

¹⁸ Asen.

¹⁹ Asen, 195.

and overdependent” on ruling bodies.²⁰ The consequence of such passive citizenry is that it can produce and promote an unquestionable and unchecked faith in the nation and an unwavering belief that the state is committed to serving the best interest of all of its people.

Public enactments of citizenship create visual markers with which to accentuate American values.²¹ These ritualized performances rhetorically articulate a measurement for educating potential and future citizen-subjects “to recognize themselves in relation to a larger public.”²² Rituals “invoke the past, mark the present, and affect the future” of civic culture.²³ Scholarly attention to ritualized practices is important because citizenship is powerfully maintained in acts that “bind[...] citizens together” through shared experiences.²⁴ Particularly for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such rituals, pageantries, festivals, parades, and patriotic celebrations simultaneously promoted American loyalty through mass displays of public participation and at the same time, heightened xenophobic tendencies.²⁵ To this day, fear of difference continues to be motivated in part by a fear for the dissolution of U.S. citizenship, providing a justification for the exclusion of non-citizens in pursuit of strengthening U.S. identity by dominant institutions.²⁶ Ekaterina Haskins explains that democratic citizenship relies on participation in “common experiences” that facilitate and promote trust that bridges difference.²⁷ Such “participatory forms of communication” create what Haskins describes as “popular memories,” that strengthen

²⁰ Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 27.

²¹ Leslie Hahner, *To Become an American: Immigrants and Americanization Campaigns of the Early Twentieth Century* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2017).

²² Hahner, xviii; Ronald Walter Greene, “Rhetorical Pedagogy as Postal System: Circulating Subjects Through Michael Warner’s Publics and Counterpublics,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 4 (2002): 441.

²³ Angela Ray, “The Rhetorical Ritual of Citizenship: Women’s Voting as Public Performance,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 93, no. 1 (2007).

²⁴ Ronald Beiner, *Theorizing Citizenship* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 3.

²⁵ Hahner, *To Become an American*; Ekaterina V. Haskins, *Popular Memories: Commemoration, Participatory Culture, and Democratic Citizenship* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2015).

²⁶ Cisneros, “(Re)bordering the Civic Imaginary.”

²⁷ Haskins, *Popular Memories*, 13.

democratic ideals of citizenship.²⁸ They are important not only for the generation of new citizens, but for creating a “process for cultural renewal,” which is “is maintained through the repetition of collective rituals that preserve a given unity of memory, place, and community.”²⁹ In this way, places for public gathering and the planning for such spaces, play a vital role in creating cultural renewal.

The conditions in which one understands citizenship are shaped by technologies of memory practices, such as the creation of monuments, memorials, urban planning, and public rituals, which seek to normalize and shape civic identity through “staging experiences” where people can accept or reject those constructs.³⁰ Popular representations circulated through media and institutional discourses further propagate “cultural or social imaginaries of citizenship and enable norms of civic identity and of civic engagement.”³¹ In their examination of iconic images, Robert Hariman and John Lucaites suggest that circulation reinforces dominant norms that shape public life.³² These public displays function as “technologies of national memory” used to create citizens by establishing connections between the nation and “the people.”³³ Barbara Biesecker explains that,

[...] by manufacturing and embracing a particular *kind* of American, a certain idea of what it means to be a ‘good citizen’ these popular cultural texts, best understood as technologies of national cultural transformation, promote social cohesion by rhetorically inducing differently positioned audiences [...] to disregard rather than actively to seek to dismantle the inequitable power relations that continue to structure collective life in the United States.³⁴

²⁸ Haskins, ix.

²⁹ Bradford Vivian, “‘A Timeless Now’: Memory & Repetition,” in *Framing Public Memory*, ed. Kendall R. Phillips, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 191-192. For further discussion of memory in the context of this dissertation, see the section ‘Remembering Urban Landscapes’ on page 35.

³⁰ Haskins, *Popular Memories*, 9.

³¹ Cisneros, “Rhetorics of Citizenship,” 3.

³² Robert Hariman and John Lucaites, *No Caption Needed: Iconic Photographs, Public Culture, and Liberal Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

³³ Berlant, *The Queen*, 32.

³⁴ Barbara A. Biesecker, “Remembering World War II: The Rhetoric and Politics of National Commemoration at the Turn of the 21st Century,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 4 (2002): 394.

With this cultural process of ‘subject-ification,’ dominant institutions create “good citizens,” identifiable by their ability to maintain the American imaginary.³⁵ The contexts and motivations under which people act however, differ, leaving open questions of legitimacy for inclusion and exclusion of civic participation.³⁶ The rhetorical power of narrative construction is such that it can be exploited by “political, cultural, and economic powers that be, especially during periods of crisis” in order to control access to and enactment of citizenship.³⁷ In moments where the civic imaginary is threatened, institutions of power utilize public space to claim and reclaim citizenship, illustrating “the fragility of citizenship and its relationship to an embodied, place-based identity.”³⁸ Repetition of ritual performances reinforce preconceived notions of “who counts as a citizen and what citizenship means.”³⁹ Kendall Phillips explains that, “in these repetitions we find not only an insistence that events, people or places be remembered but that they be remembered in the same way; in a repetition that serves to craft the same culture over and over again.”⁴⁰

Citizenship is linked to sense of place and “what it does,” which reflects “rhetoric’s materiality.”⁴¹ Scholars have studied a wide range of sites, including monuments, museums, memorials, art installations and exhibitions, place in protest, digital spaces, environmental spaces, borderlands, and parks, as well as spatial contexts, such as public/private, everyday acts and places, mobility, and spaces of and for encounter in pursuit of better understanding rhetoric of place and

³⁵ Aihwa Ong, “Cultural Citizenship as Subject-Making: Immigrants Negotiate Racial and Cultural Boundaries in the United States,” *Current Anthropology* 37, no. 5 (1996).; David Batstone and Eduardo Mendieta, *The Good Citizen* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

³⁶ Asen, “A Discourse Theory.”

³⁷ Haskins, *Popular Memories*, 10.

³⁸ Ross Louis, “Reclaiming a Citizen Site: Performing New Orleans in the Superdome,” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (2009): 281.

³⁹ Haskins, *Popular Memories*, 14.

⁴⁰ Kendall R. Phillips, “The Failure of Memory: Reflections on Rhetoric and Public Remembrance,” *Western Journal of Communication* 74, no. 2 (2010): 218.

⁴¹ Carole Blair, “Contemporary U.S. Memorial Sites as Exemplars of Rhetoric’s Materiality,” in *Rhetorical Bodies*, eds. Jack Selzer and Sharon Crowley (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 23.

space.⁴² The power of “spatial arrangement [...] guides, encourages, and constrains people and social action” constituting its significance for rhetorical studies.⁴³ Rake Shome explains that space is “a force that helps constitute other social relations” thus shaping the cultural, political, economic, and environmental landscapes.⁴⁴ Shome continues, “a politics of belonging and not belonging, of citizenship and noncitizen, and of legality and illegality are also negotiated through these spatial practices.”⁴⁵ As such, it is important to consider space as not just a backdrop in society; rather, space and place play active roles in shaping identity and identification that links bodies with spatial relations.⁴⁶

Ekaterina Haskins identifies that place and ritual are tied to conjuring civic identities because of both what they represent and who is represented in sites of and for participation.⁴⁷ Sense of place and its influence on sense of citizenship happens through displays and practices – visual, verbal, and material.⁴⁸ The transformation of place as a site of and for citizenship creates

⁴² Michael P. Brown, *RePlacing Citizenship: AIDS Activism and Radical Democracy* (New York: Guilford Press, 1997); Alyssa A. Samek, “Mobility, Citizenship, and ‘American Women on the Move’ in the 1977 International Women’s Year Torch Relay,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 103, no. 3 (2017); Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook, “Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Protest,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011); Dwight Conquergood, “Rethinking Ethnography: Towards a Critical Politics,” *Communication Monographs* 58, no. 2 (1991); Carole Blair, Marsha S. Jeppeson, and Enrico Pucci, Jr. “Public Memorializing in Postmodernity: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as Prototype,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77, no. 3 (1991). Carole Blair, Greg Dickinson, and Brian L. Ott. (Eds), *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010). Caitlin Frances Bruce, “River of Words as Space for Encounter: Contested Meaning in Rhetorical Convergence Zones,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 105, no. 4 (2019); Ekaterina Haskins, “Between Archive and Participation: Public Memory in a Digital Age,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (2007); E. Johanna Hartelius, “‘Leave a Message of Hope or Tribute’: Digital Memorializing as Public Deliberation,” *Argumentation and Advocacy* 47, no. 2 (2010); Kenneth S. Zagacki and Victoria J. Gallagher, “Rhetoric and Materiality in the Museum Park at the North Carolina Museum of Art,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 95, no. 2 (2009); Daniel Joseph Nadenicek, “Commemoration in the Landscape of Minnehaha: ‘A Halo of Poetic Association,’” in *Places of Commemoration: Search for Identity and Landscape Design*, ed. Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2001); Caitlin Bruce, *Painting Publics: Transnational Legal Graffiti Scene as Spaces for Encounter* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2019).

⁴³ Casey Schmitt, “Mounting Tensions: Materializing Strategies and Tactics on National Park ‘Social Trails,’” *Environmental Communication* 10, no. 4 (2016), 428.

⁴⁴ Raka Shome, “Space Matters: The Power and Practice of Space,” *Communication Theory* 13, no. 1 (2003): 40.

⁴⁵ Shome, 47.

⁴⁶ Massey *For Space*; Shome.

⁴⁷ Haskins, *Popular Memories*.

⁴⁸ Charles, E. Merriam, *The Making of Citizens* (New York: Teacher’s College Press, 1966).

conceptual and “experiential landscapes” that function rhetorically, shaping public experiences and creating common identities.⁴⁹ Gregory Clark explains, “the national imaginary teaches Americans to experience certain places in their homeland rhetorically,” influencing attachment to the nation.⁵⁰ Far from static and unchanging once created or given meaning, space is “always under construction.”⁵¹ Spatial organization is both the product and result of societal norms and values, implicating its role in shaping history, politics, and culture.⁵² Kevin Carragee argues that “how space is designed, for what purpose and in whose interest, and the degree to which space is defined as public or private” can “have striking consequences for the character of social interaction within that space, and [...] within that society.”⁵³ Once a space is created, it is subject to interpretation by those with the power to imbue it with meaning. Often, this results in the institutionalization of space, and with it, control over current and future social development.⁵⁴

Space is always already actively contested through patterns of discourse, use, and development.⁵⁵ Henri Lefebvre argues for understanding the ways in which the city is an “*oeuvre*,” where all of its citizens are expected to participate in the construction of its social, environmental, and economic landscape.⁵⁶ The power with which people have for their participation in place, however, is constrained by the regulation of public space and ways that it structures attention

⁴⁹ Greg Dickinson, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering and Forgetting: The Referent Eye/I at the Plains Indian Museum,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3, no. 1 (2006): 30.

⁵⁰ Gregory Clark, *Rhetorical Landscapes in America: Variations on a Theme from Kenneth Burke* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004), 5.

⁵¹ Massey, *For Space*, 9.

⁵² Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); Shome, “Space Matters.”

⁵³ Kevin M. Carragee, “Public Space and the Public Sphere: Boston’s City Hall Plaza as Contested Public Space,” in *The Urban Communication Reader*, ed. Gene Burd, Susan J. Drucker, and Gary Gumpert (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc., 2007), 109.

⁵⁴ David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1973).

⁵⁵ Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*; Shome, “Space Matters.”

⁵⁶ Henri Lefebvre, *Writing on Cities* (London: Blackwell, 1996), 66.

“toward some issues and away from others.”⁵⁷ Positionality impacts the creation of “memory texts,” which “can be understood as both official and counter simultaneously.”⁵⁸ Despite dominant claims for the democratizing nature of public space, as Haskins notes, it is a mistake “to regard all kinds of participation as equal.”⁵⁹ In contrast with open space, where potential for encounter with difference should be expected, public space is politicized, shaping norms for engagement, access, and invitation for participation.⁶⁰ Public space allows for “representation of the *good* that comes from *public* control and ownership, as contested and problematic as these may be.”⁶¹ Urban design thus offers a supposedly neutral means for institutions to reproduce and rewrite public spaces in efforts to constrain or open up spaces for participation.⁶² Institutionally sanctioned demonstrations such as fairs, parades, and Fourth of July celebrations seek to “display the illusion of consensus through mass participation,” making a case for investment in specific public sites as uniquely democratic and democratizing institutional spaces, despite the fact that access to participation in such spaces is highly regulated.⁶³

Institutional demand for visual displays of citizenship extends to individualized requests for civic enactment. It is well documented, however, that hegemonic standards of constituting citizenship act as a “basic mechanism for inclusion and exclusion.”⁶⁴ Cultural dimensions of

⁵⁷ Don Mitchell, *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space* (New York: Gulliford Press, 2003), 182.

⁵⁸ Thomas R. Dunn, “Remembering ‘A Great Fag’: Visualizing Public Memory and the Construction of Queer Space,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 4 (2011): 440. See also Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire,” *Representations* 26 (1989): 7-24.

⁵⁹ Haskins, *Popular Memories*, 3.

⁶⁰ Mitchell, *The Right to*.

⁶¹ Mitchell, 137.

⁶² John Ackerman and Scott Oates, “Image, Text, and Power in Architectural Design and Workplace Writing,” in *Nonacademic Writing: Social Theory and Technology*, eds. Ann Hill Duin and Craig J. Hansen, 81-122 (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996).

⁶³ David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 2.

⁶⁴ Somers, *Genealogies of Citizenship*, 21.

citizenship impact how some bodies become marked as “different,” allowing dominant institutions to justify denying non-citizen or undesirable citizens access to participate in civic venues.⁶⁵ By inviting outside groups to engage in Americanized rituals and traditions, institutions could control how such groups could also be taught “to see themselves as Americans” and at the same time, “transform the ways the public apprehended Americanism.”⁶⁶ Leslie Hahner identifies that immigrant populations in particular are frequently instructed in the American way through invitation to participate in public displays of citizenship as an institutionally sanctioned means of proving their patriotic loyalty and potential to serve as good American citizens.⁶⁷ This “visual logic” of citizenship functions to “aesthetically mark[...]”civic belonging or estrangement through public spectacle.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, not all individuals share the same access to citizenship.⁶⁹ The demands to constantly display one’s commitment to patriotism creates a “need for demonstratable proof” that a shifting system of codification makes difficult to be satisfied.⁷⁰ By establishing shifting and insatiable standards concerning citizenship, “Americanization created a paradoxical visual logic in which patriotic markers could not confirm nationalism,” necessitating its continuous performance in pursuit of approval.⁷¹

A focus on participation as the desired outcome of citizenship necessarily excludes those to whom enactment is not accessible or desirable. Michel Foucault identifies the disciplinary power of public space to include or exclude bodies.⁷² Studies of citizenship enactments cannot

⁶⁵ Greene, “Rhetorical Pedagogy.”

⁶⁶ Hahner, *To Become an American*, 179.

⁶⁷ Hahner.

⁶⁸ Hahner, xxii; Cisneros, “(Re)bordering the Civic Imaginary,” 31.

⁶⁹ Shome, “Space Matters.”

⁷⁰ Hahner, *To Become an American*, 154.

⁷¹ Hahner, 154.

⁷² Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1980). Ackerman and Oates, “Image, Text, and Power.”

ignore its connections to state surveillance and the violent exclusion and expulsion of minority and marginalized people, challenging the very desirability of citizenship in the first place.⁷³ In addition to those legally barred from access, minority and marginalized groups who may meet legal criteria for citizenship but who do not readily conform to dominant norms, face restricted and highly regulated access. Karma Chávez explains that, “no matter how well particular groups may be able to accommodate given norms through their enactment of cultural citizenship,” it is most often the case that that “some groups remain strange.”⁷⁴ This does not mean, however, that non-citizens cannot still participate in and impact public and civic life. Enactments of “cultural citizenship” include “the ways that people, regardless of legal status, maneuver in relation to existing norms.”⁷⁵ While groups with the power to create and sustain place are also those who are endowed with the power to imbue meaning that effects sense-of-place, others with less power can resist those expectations in diverse and subjective ways.⁷⁶

Critics of a discourse approach to citizenship caution that emphasis on enactment frequently forwards hegemonic or normative views of citizenship, prompting critical consideration of citizenship as the ultimate goal for civic participation.⁷⁷ Chávez warns that most rhetorical analyses of citizenship uphold the values and ideals of normative frames of citizenship.⁷⁸ Chávez argues instead for the value of breaking from that rhetorical history so that space may be opened

⁷³ Karma R. Chávez, “Beyond inclusion: Rethinking Rhetoric’s Historical Narrative,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 101, no. 1 (2015).

⁷⁴ Karma R. Chávez, “Border (In)securities: Normative and Differential Belonging in LGBTQ and Immigrant Rights Discourse,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 7, no. 2 (2010): 139.

⁷⁵ Chávez, 138.

⁷⁶ Timothy Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

⁷⁷ Kenneth Rufo and R. Jarrod Atchison, “From Circus to Fesces: The Disciplinary Politics of Citizen and Citizenship,” *The Review of Communication* 11, no. 3 (2011); Karen Tracy and Margaret Durfy, “Speaking Out in Public: Citizen Participation in Contentious School Board Meetings,” *Discourse & Communication* 1 (2007):223–49.

⁷⁸ Chávez, “Beyond inclusion.”

up for new, non-normative, non-citizen, and non-western ways of knowing that include resisting the tradition of situating subject formation “within the framework of citizenship.”⁷⁹ In her analysis of white women’s citizenship in the 1919 Prison Special, Catherine Palczewski too questions if it is even possible to make appeals to citizenship without repeating the violent exclusions on which citizenship is built.⁸⁰ Amy Brantzel goes as far as to declare that there is nothing redeemable about citizenship, arguing that “citizenship is, inherently, a normativizing project – a project that regulates and disciplines the social body in order to produce model identities and hegemonic knowledge claims.”⁸¹

1.1.2 Borders

I theorize urban parks as borderland spaces. Cities are facing increased privatization at the same time that their populations continue to grow. Urban parks are some of the few remaining public spaces, making them valuable sites for examining citizenship enactment in the city because they are often envisioned by urban planners as uniquely democratic places.⁸² Borders are frequently defined as physical spaces, territorial or juridical boundaries, however, they are also figuratively and ideologically constructed representations of and places where identity, culture, and community engage.⁸³ David Cisneros aptly notes, “borders and citizenship go hand in hand.”⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Chávez, 165.

⁸⁰ Catherine H. Palczewski, “The 1919 Prison Special: Constituting White Women’s Citizenship,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 102, no. 2 (2016).

⁸¹ Amy L. Brantzel, *Against Citizenship: The Violence of the Normative* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 5.

⁸² Shome, “Space Matters.”

⁸³ J. David Cisneros, *The Border Crossed Us: Rhetorics of Borders, Citizenship, and Latina/o Identity* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2014); Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Spinsters / aunt lute, 1987).

⁸⁴ Cisneros, 5.

As contested sites for spatial ordering, borders can be both institutionally constructed and regulated boundaries and at the same time, social constructs created through everyday use and movement. Parks are important urban places where civic performance occurs, and norms of citizenship are upheld just as they are also challenged. Unlike national borderlands, which are always already tied to legal notions of belonging, I contend that theorizing parks as borderlands usefully illustrates how citizenship is socially constructed in public spaces and everyday life.

In their foundational work on border studies, Gloria Anzaldúa explains that borderlands “are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy.”⁸⁵ Robert DeChaine suggests that borders “are bounding, ordering apparatuses, whose primary function is to designate, produce, and/or regulate the space of difference.”⁸⁶ The contentious nature of borders makes them subject to diverse interpretation, contestation, and imagination, including their being drawn and redrawn to “reshape the contours of US citizenship” through inclusion and the violent expulsion of potential citizen-subjects.⁸⁷ Cisneros notes, however, that while “rhetorical bordering oftentimes defines citizenship in retroactive ways, bounding the civic imaginary,” you can also find that “enacting citizenship itself expands and contracts the borders of belonging and draws oneself into (or others outside of) the space of citizenship.”⁸⁸ Understood this way, it becomes clear that “the border not only demarcates and divides, it also provides the possibility for contact and crossing,” suggesting

⁸⁵ Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 19.

⁸⁶ D. Robert DeChaine, “Bordering the Civic Imaginary: Alienization, Fence Logic, and the Minutemen Civil Defense Corps,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 95, no. 1 (2009): 44.

⁸⁷ Cisneros, “(Re)bordering the Civic Imaginary,” 27; Palczewski, “The 1919 Prison Special;” Alison Piepmeier, *Out in Public: Configurations of Women’s Bodies in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

⁸⁸ Cisneros, *The Border Crossed Us*, 8-9.

the importance for considering parks as complicated bordered and bordering spaces for the study of citizenship.⁸⁹

Rhetorical work on border studies largely focuses on citizenship at national borders, especially between the US and Mexico.⁹⁰ “Rhetorical bordering” has played a critical role “in defining the boundaries of civic identity in the United States,” illustrating how civic enactments at the border shape democratic life in contemporary US society.⁹¹ As DeChaine’s edited collection on the US-Mexican border demonstrates, “the border functions as a powerful site of rhetorical invention.”⁹² He points out that “a rhetorical approach to concepts [...] sheds light on the ways in which bordering produces public knowledge and ‘truth’ about people, places, social statuses, and communal allegiances.”⁹³ Tracing shifts in border rhetoric over time illustrates important changes in social practices to reveal “how people use borders to reinforce values, inculcate beliefs, mobilize attitudes, and provoke action.”⁹⁴ In *Shifting Borders*, Kent Ono and John Sloop examine the rhetoric of Proposition 187 to better understand how contemporary media representations of migration influence public perception of immigrants and immigration as they shape meanings of nation and border.⁹⁵ They identify that, “what is at stake is the power to control what is represented publicly as dominant truths. Words and images populate the mediascape, and audiences’

⁸⁹ Cisneros, 143-144; Kaitlyn Haynal Allen, “Blurred Borderlands: Sustainability and the Urban/Nature Divide at the Frick Environmental Center,” *Environmental Communication* 13, no. 8 (2019).

⁹⁰ Linda Bosniak, *The Citizen and the Alien: Dilemmas of Contemporary Membership* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Karma Chávez, *Queer Migration Politics: Activist Rhetoric and Coalitional Possibilities* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2013); Cisneros, *The Border Crossed Us*; Robert D. DeChaine, *Border Rhetorics: Citizenship and Identity on the US-Mexico Frontier* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2012); Anzaldúa; *Borderlands*; Lisa A. Flores, “Constructing Rhetorical Borders: Peons, Illegal Aliens, and Competing Narratives of Immigration,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20, no. 4 (2010); E. Johanna Hartelius, *The Rhetorics of US Immigration: Identity, Community, Otherness* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2016).

⁹¹ DeChaine, 3.

⁹² DeChaine, 1.

⁹³ DeChaine, 5.

⁹⁴ DeChaine, 6.

⁹⁵ Kent Ono and John Sloop, *Shifting Borders: Rhetoric, Immigration and Prop 187* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002).

understanding of the politics of their communities (e.g., who is in power and who is not) may be based on, among other things, how these representations appear.”⁹⁶ As Ono and Sloop further explain,

Such rhetoric *shifts* borders, changing what they mean publicly, influencing public policy, altering the ways borders affect people, and circumscribing political responses to such legislation.... Rhetoric shapes understandings of how the border functions; taken further, because of its increasingly powerful role, rhetoric at times even determines where, and what, the border is.⁹⁷

Like with hegemony, dominant institutions must constantly work to maintain influence over border rhetoric or risk losing influence over such space.⁹⁸

Recent work on border studies in environmental communication builds on Anzaldúa’s conceptualization of geography of the self, which recognizes that identity is constructed through the layering of self and communities we belong to, including both human and more-than-human.⁹⁹ Carlos Tarin posits that “borderland ecological consciousness” can “radically transform the social, linguistic, and cultural divides between nonhuman nature and human culture” by recognizing that “we are not apart from nature and ecosystems, but rather, actively embedded within them.”¹⁰⁰ Tarin, Sarah Upton, and Stacey Sowards’ move to establish an “environmental nepantlisma” in studying ecocultural identity “complicate[s] the culture-nature dualism by articulating how identities are imbricated simultaneously by nature and culture, albeit in ways that are sometimes conflicted and tensional.”¹⁰¹ They argue that “the border provides a unique lens for understanding

⁹⁶ Ono and Sloop, 2.

⁹⁷ Ono and Sloop, 5.

⁹⁸ Raymie McKerrow, “Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis,” *Communication Monographs* 56, no. 2 (1989).

⁹⁹ Carlos Tarin, “Fronteras Tóxicas: Toward a Borderland Ecological Consciousness,” in *This Bridge We Call Communication: Anzaldúan Approaches to Theory, Method, and Praxis*, eds. Leandra Hinojosa Hernández and Robert Gutierrez-Perez (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2019), 31-49; Allen, “Blurred Borderlands,” Carlos A. Tarin, Sarah D. Upton, and Stacey K. Sowards, “Borderland Ecocultural Identities,” in *Routledge Handbook of Ecocultural Identity*, eds. Tema Milstein and José Castro-Sotomayor, (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2020).

¹⁰⁰ Tarin, “Fronteras Tóxicas,” 32, 36.

¹⁰¹ Tarin, Upton, and Sowards, “Borderland Ecocultural Identities,” 54.

how seemingly oppositional tensions can conflict and converge in order to (re)create a transformational praxis that we argue is uniquely grounded in ecocultural identities produced in bordered contexts.”¹⁰² As such, “ecocultural identities for border residents, crossers, inhabitants – human and more-than-human – are constituted and complicated by a variety of tensions that must be negotiated” through bridging borders and blurring dualisms.¹⁰³

Urban parks have historically been characterized by their definitive borders that separate nature from culture, however, contemporary rhetoric of park systems challenges such rigidity of borders.¹⁰⁴ Park advocates, conservancies, employees, and even material site design, argue instead for an understanding that far from being bordered off from one another, nature and culture borderlands are blurred, with nature readily found throughout the city, not just in designated green spaces.¹⁰⁵ Anthropogenic changes too result in the locating of culture in nature. My examination of Pittsburgh’s Frick Environmental Center illustrates that ecocultural spaces can productively blur dualisms of urban and nature borderlands through symbolic and material practices.¹⁰⁶ Tarin explains that “as a physical environment, [...] borders are incapable of creating or maintaining distinctions; air, water, and soil permeate the border region in ways that exceed language, meaning, or culture.”¹⁰⁷ This bares particular relevance for my dissertation as parks were designed not only to combat moral corruption in the city, but also as physically responsive sites to counteract industrialization. Whereas popular discourse often framed the city as a failed site for nature, parks were rhetorically figured as “lungs of the city.”¹⁰⁸ Closer consideration of the physical

¹⁰² Tarin, Upton, and Sowards, 53.

¹⁰³ Tarin, Upton, and Sowards, 53.

¹⁰⁴ Galen Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982).

¹⁰⁵ Allen, “Blurred Borderlands.”

¹⁰⁶ Allen.

¹⁰⁷ Tarin, “Fronteras Toxicas,” 32.

¹⁰⁸ Cranz.

environment, however, illustrates the problematic nature of such a metaphor that refuses the permeability of borders. Horrific air and water pollution weren't only found in "urban" space; they were readily found across urban park borders as well. Likewise, parks as lungs of the city could only do so much to counteract the harmful environmental effects of industrial pollution.

My theorizing of park rhetoric illustrates how citizenship is not only enacted *in* places like parks, but also *through* them, tapping into prior meanings associated with nature places as inherently civil and civilizing environments. Popular cultural artifacts like parks "define audiences as citizens, uphold norms of political representation and institutional transparency, and promote the general welfare."¹⁰⁹ Civic participation relies on access to public space.¹¹⁰ A new kind of urbanism ushered in by neoliberalism has led some to question whether we've reached the end of public space.¹¹¹ However, such criticism often engages in nostalgic idealism of the past, ignoring the fact that all throughout history, "public spaces [...] were anything but inclusive."¹¹² Unlike distinctions that separate borders of nature and culture, parks are rhetorically constructed as border-less spaces for public engagement, where contestation, negotiation, and debates over belonging are said to be put aside. Such discourse understands park space as uniquely separate spaces from the city outside their borders, where democratic engagement is not accessible in the same ways as in the civilizing influence of nature. History reveals, however, that certain bodies that best fit dominant ideals of nation or cultural identity are invited for participation, while those who do not fit are often denied access to participate in public space. This becomes complicated

¹⁰⁹ Hariman and Lucaites, *No Caption Needed*, 26.

¹¹⁰ Harvey, *Social Justice*; Mitchell, *The Right to*, 2003; Edward W. Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Mary E. Triece, "Constructing the Antiracial City: City Planning and Antiracism in the 21st Century," *Western Journal of Communication* 82, no. 5 (2018).

¹¹¹ Michael Sorkin, *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992).

¹¹² Mitchell, *The Right to*, 142.

when considered alongside discourse that reveals how parks are rhetorically figured as *uniquely* democratic “spaces for encounter,” which Caitlin Bruce explains “enables urban citizens to bridge differences and create ways for living together more sustainably.”¹¹³ Even the most well-intentioned public spaces face limitations in facilitating effectual interaction for democratic urban citizenship.

Cities are tense ecological spaces for navigating binary oppositions, making them ideal places for the study of rhetoric and resilience.¹¹⁴ As urban scholars have noted, “the right to *inhabit* the city – by different people and different groups – had always to be struggled for.”¹¹⁵ David Harvey explains, “the right to the city is [...] far more than a right of individual or group access to the resources that the city embodies: it is a right to change and reinvent the city more after our hearts’ desire.”¹¹⁶ While parks are often touted as naturally equitable sites, no space is inherently democratic; people must always struggle to shape the spaces they inhabit, including “the shape of the city, the terms of access to the public realm, and even the rights of citizenship.”¹¹⁷ Don Mitchell explains that the problem with hailing public space as being inherently democratic lies in the fact that public space “demands a certain disorder and unpredictability to function *as* a democratic public space, and yet democracy theory posits that a certain order and rationality are vital to the success of democratic discourse.”¹¹⁸ While parks may provide spaces where people *can* encounter difference, they also communicate institutional desires that circumscribe public rights to the city. They are more often rhetorically constructed as spaces for the dissipation of difference through the

¹¹³ Bruce, *Painting Publics*, 2; Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design*.

¹¹⁴ Meredith A. Johnson and Nathan R. Johnson, “The Resilience of Sensation in Urban Planning,” *Poroi* 15, no. 1 (2020): 7.

¹¹⁵ Mitchell, *The Right to*, 18.

¹¹⁶ David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (New York: Verso, 2013), 4.

¹¹⁷ Mitchell, *The Right to*, 18.

¹¹⁸ Mitchell, *The Right to*, 130.

elevation of class and promotion of dominant cultural values that foreclose possibilities for counter-normative behaviors or ideas. Physical design, institutional power, or social differences result in individuals choosing not to or being denied access to such possibilities for engagement across borders, material and symbolic. Both “the production of and access to public space” are struggled over as people endeavor to endow them with meanings that serve different and often diametrically opposed interests.¹¹⁹

Public parks created new bordered and bordering spaces in cities that necessarily contributed to (re)producing and (re)distributing bodies, reflecting how imagined communities are materially spatialized.¹²⁰ Struggles over meaning-making of the “built environment, history, and culture” cannot be understood separate from their place in relation to the “much more contested terrain of race, gender, and class, set against long-term economic and environmental problems, especially in the large cities of the United States.”¹²¹ Politics of representation in the city are drawn along juxtapositions of difference.¹²² Periods where cities experience high rates of immigration are ripe for studies of difference in urban borders. Official zoning regulations that promote the establishment of neighborhoods becoming inhabited one ethnicity or another, seen in the topical development of places such as “Little Italy” or “Chinatown,” are no accident.¹²³ The consequences of this practice influence how certain spaces become known as safe sites for settlement of immigrants and refugees while others allow for white enclaves to form, both reflecting the cultural

¹¹⁹ Harvey, *Rebel Cities*, 73.

¹²⁰ Shome, “Space Matters,” 2003.

¹²¹ Delores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 6.

¹²² Myria Georgiou, “Cities of Difference: Cultural Juxtapositions and Urban Politics of Representation,” *International Journal of Cultural and Media Politics* 2, no. 3 (2006).

¹²³ Kathleen Neils Conzen, “Immigrants, Immigrant Neighborhoods, and Ethnic Identity: Historical Issues,” *Journal of American History* 66, no. 3 (1979); Tarry Hum, *Making a Global Immigrant Neighborhood: Brooklyn’s Sunset Park* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2014); Min Zhou, *Chinatown: The Socioeconomic Potential of an Urban Enclave* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992).

formations of the city through processes of globalization.¹²⁴ Such establishments reveal how national borders become replicated across urban landscapes. Class-based construction of place as well, such gated communities or Pittsburgh's historic "millionaire's row" in the East End, further speak to the ways in which borders are intentionally drawn to define belonging along lines of difference.¹²⁵ A closer examination of the geographic locations of parks in cities, the neighborhoods they border, the transitions from private to public space, and the planning for the production of place all illustrate how politically charged parks are. Discourses about the design, construction, imagining, planning, and restoration of Pittsburgh's parks system illustrate how parks become constructed as bordering spaces that influence public understanding of urban identity and citizenship, where differences that otherwise define the culture of urban living are said to dissipate.

Delores Hayden explains that in urban landscapes, "public space can help to nurture this more profound, subtle, and inclusive sense of what it means to be an American."¹²⁶ Whereas it has been generally accepted that cities rely on clear markers of difference such as race, class, ethnicity, or gender that become normalized, parks are frequently characterized in institutional discourse as uniquely democratizing spaces where social difference is rendered neutral once visitors cross over into park land.¹²⁷ As such, parks play important roles in the spatial performance of citizenship, acting as places both for and of protest, patriotism, and community togetherness. As clearly bordered geographical cityscapes and at the same time praised as symbolic border-less sites that

¹²⁴ Michael Reibel, "Classification Approaches in Neighborhood Research: Introduction and Review," *Urban Geography* 32, no. 3 (2011); Neil Smith, "New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy," *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002); Sharon Zukin, *The Culture of Cities* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 1995).

¹²⁵ Greg Dickinson, *Suburban Dreams: Imagining and Building the Good Life* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2015).

¹²⁶ Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 9.

¹²⁷ Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design*.

do not engage in distinctions of “us” and “them,” urban parks are somewhat paradoxical. Tarin aptly points out, “border(land)s are spaces that are fraught with tension, contradiction, permeability, and possibility,” which I hope to further illustrate in this dissertation.¹²⁸ As I demonstrate in the following chapters, parks have always been contested sites of belonging, presenting, at once, as simultaneously bordered, borderless, and bordering places.

Borders are highly contested sites. Rhetorically speaking, “border symbolism constitutes a powerful form of social sense-making – a public doxa, or structure of belief, that informs cultural values, shapes public attitudes, and prescribes individual and collective actions.”¹²⁹ DeChaine explains that “the doxastic, world-making function of the border signals its preeminence as a rhetorical mode of enactment. That is to say, borders are produced, defined, managed, contested, and altered through human symbolic practices.”¹³⁰ Raka Shome, too, reminds us that, “space is always already actively contested.”¹³¹ Shome argues for the centrality of space in considering cultural communication, explaining that space “functions as a technology – a means and a medium – of power that is socially constructed through material relations that enable the communication of specific politics.”¹³² In contested sites such as borderlands, public memory becomes materially (re)articulated and (re)constructed to reflect competing cultural ideals.¹³³ When considered materially, such “created space” replaces “*effective space*” in shaping geographic organization.¹³⁴ Particularly in times “when we cannot find a habitable place,” Edward S. Casey observes that “we

¹²⁸ Carlos Tarin, “Fronteras Toxicas,” 32.

¹²⁹ DeChaine, *Border Rhetorics*, 2.

¹³⁰ DeChaine, *Border Rhetorics*, 2.

¹³¹ Shome, “Space Matters,” 40.

¹³² Shome, 40.

¹³³ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, *Places of Public Memory*.

¹³⁴ Harvey, *Social Justice*, 309.

must set about *making or building such a place* to ensure stable inhabitation that allows us to dwell “*somewhere in particular*.”¹³⁵

Finally, it is important to remember that those “who call upon the figure of the border in specific ways in order to do specific things” ensure that border rhetoric is always “invested in power.”¹³⁶ Borders, citizenship, identity, and the “conditions of their articulation” constitute and enable US civic imaginary through social symbolic constructions that create thresholds to citizenship, which some bodies are purposely excluded from.¹³⁷ Anzaldúa reminds us that “the only ‘legitimate’ inhabitants” of borderlands “are those in power.”¹³⁸ However, borders are not a predetermined given; rather, they are constructed and maintained through “dynamic rhetorical enactments.”¹³⁹ As such, scholars should consider how “the analytical turn from borders to bordering” shapes shifting meanings of subjectivity and belonging.¹⁴⁰ DeChaine further argues that, “the effects of rhetorical bordering are not ‘merely’ symbolic; they have real consequences for those toward whom their influence is directed,” who becomes designated “citizen” or “alien,” “us” or “them.”¹⁴¹ In the case of parks, material and symbolic construction similarly engages in rhetorical bordering practices for understanding urban citizenship.

¹³⁵ Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 109.

¹³⁶ DeChaine, *Border Rhetorics*, 1-2.

¹³⁷ Bosniak, *The Citizen and the Alien*; Cisneros, “Rhetorics of Citizenship;” DeChaine, *Border Rhetorics*, 1.

¹³⁸ Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*, 25.

¹³⁹ DeChaine, *Border Rhetorics*, 3.

¹⁴⁰ DeChaine, 3.

¹⁴¹ DeChaine, 14, 3.

1.1.3 Parks

Parks are inherently paradoxical spaces. In them nature is preserved, but as Cronon notes, “none of these natures are natural.”¹⁴² Parks are highly manipulated sites, carefully planned, curated, and managed to encourage and discourage particular civic enactments. Parks provide dwelling sites for community just as they also exclude. They are sites for protest and tradition. They provide spaces for the installation of monuments, memorials, and public art that help constitute public culture.¹⁴³ They are manifestations of sustainability and democracy and at the same time facilitate gentrification. Because of these paradoxical happenings, I find that like Candice Rai’s study of a contested empty lot in Chicago dubbed “Wilson’s Yard,” urban parks are sites “overflowing with contested ideas about democracy, citizenship, and social justice.”¹⁴⁴ Parks provide important “space[s] of attention” where visitors are invited to participate in what is understood to be a uniquely democratic urban experience.¹⁴⁵ In their study of iconic photographs, Robert Hariman and John Lucaites reveal how visibility of public culture shapes liberal democratic formations. They identify spaces like parks to be characterized by “prominent modes of display” that “soon blend into the background of ordinary perception.”¹⁴⁶ Gary Gumpert and Susan Drucker recognize the communicative function of parks in their work on communicative cities, arguing that in providing relief from density and sprawl, parks provide possibilities for interaction between and across community members, public space for celebration and other communal activities, and

¹⁴² William Cronon, *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1996).

¹⁴³ Hariman and Lucaites, *No Caption Needed*; Zagacki and Gallagher, “Rhetoric and Materiality.”

¹⁴⁴ Candice Rai, *Democracy’s Lot: Rhetoric, Publics, and the Places of Invention* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2016), 6.

¹⁴⁵ Zagacki and Gallagher, “Rhetoric and Materiality,” 180.

¹⁴⁶ Hariman and Lucaites, *No Caption Needed*, 25.

spaces to congregate and play.¹⁴⁷ Parks exemplify regional “identity and character,” that help “foster attachment to place,” and a “sense of ‘place’” making them grounding sites for understanding the self and others.¹⁴⁸ As rhetoric of parks change over time, it becomes clear how they become containers of “natural and human history” that are sustained “in the landscape itself” and “through those meanings and through the interactions between the people brought in contact with them through the park.”¹⁴⁹ In their study of the Draper Museum of Natural History, Eric Aoki, Greg Dickinson, and Brian Ott examine how our connection with nature is shaped by concepts like stewardship, which potentially urges visitors to see the earth’s resources as their own to use and control.¹⁵⁰ Margaret LaWare finds that “by providing a space of contact with the natural world and with natural history,” however, “parks can create a space of care and concern for the multiple facets and features of that natural space, including flora and fauna. Parks can frame interactions between community members in a very broad sense, incorporating wildlife within that context of ‘community.’”¹⁵¹

While parks provide valuable civic spaces for public engagement, they do not necessarily entail equitable access for all. Public space is regulated, policed, and managed for the inclusion of desired bodies and exclusion of others, making public sites not only potentially unwelcoming, but dangerous for those who do not meet dominant expectations for place. In writing the first full-scale

¹⁴⁷ Gary Gumpert and Susan J. Drucker, “Communicative Cities,” *International Communication Gazette* 70, nos. 3-4 (2008).

¹⁴⁸ Peter Calthorpe, *Urbanism in the Age of Climate Change* (Washington: Island Press, 2011), 57; Margaret R. LaWare, “Defining a ‘Livable City’: Parks, Suburbanization, and the Shaping of Community Identity and Ecological Responsibility” in *Communicative Cities in the 21st Century: The Urban Communication Reader III*, eds. Matthew D. Matsaganis, Victoria J. Gallagher, and Susan J. Drucker, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2013), 13, 18.

¹⁴⁹ LaWare, 18.

¹⁵⁰ Eric Aoki, Greg Dickinson, and Brian L. Ott, “The Master Naturalist Imagined: Directed Movement and Simulations at the Draper Museum of Natural History,” in *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials*, eds. Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian L. Ott. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 238.

¹⁵¹ LaWare, “Defining a ‘Livable City,’” 18.

history of Central Park, Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar find that while the park's creation was envisioned by planners to provide a welcoming and open public space, it is marked by a lengthy history of complex debates over conflicting visions of park use, management, and the meaning of "public" in a democratic society.¹⁵² Like New York City, Pittsburgh planners too have had to consider such debates in the context of unique needs of the urban environment. Rosenzweig and Blackmar explain that the distinctive character of parks is largely defined in and through "patterns of use."¹⁵³ They argue that "the people who claim access to this public space constitute the cultural public."¹⁵⁴ LaWare's study of two distinct parks located in Ames, Iowa reveals how the meaning of parks can be found by examining the ways in which the public engages with them. She argues that "how different groups of the public use these spaces reflect back on the character of the larger community itself, including its identity and its priorities, as these are defined over time by local interests and exigencies."¹⁵⁵ In their comparative study of Detroit's Hart Plaza and Chicago's Millennium Park, Victoria Gallagher, Kenneth Zagacki, and Kelly Norris Martin examine how encountering park spaces can promote particular rhetorical enactments by visitors that prompt "a shift from a state of self-awareness [...] to a state of being aware of one's participation in a larger space."¹⁵⁶ They determine that by creating "encounters between constructed material spaces and visitors," parks can shape how visitors understand "their role as citizens of the city" who "cannot help but to affect – and be affected by – others who inhabit the

¹⁵² Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar, *The Park and the People: A History of Central Park* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 6.

¹⁵³ Rosenzweig and Blackmar.

¹⁵⁴ Rosenzweig and Blackmar, 6.

¹⁵⁵ LaWare, "Defining a 'Livable City,'" 18.

¹⁵⁶ Victoria J. Gallagher, Kenneth Zagacki, and Kelly N. Martin, "Communicative Spaces and Rhetorical Enactments: How and Why Urban Parks Enhance (or Fail to Enhance) Public Life," in *Communicative Cities in the 21st Century*, eds. Matthew D. Matsaganis, Victoria J. Gallagher, and Susan J. Drucker (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2013), 37; Zagacki and Gallagher, "Rhetoric and Materiality."

same city spaces, but who are at that very moment exist outside the immediate park area,” suggesting the fluidity of borders.¹⁵⁷

As the physical and symbolic landscape of parks change over time, they become “public memory repositories of their transmutations” that reflect changing needs, values, and beliefs of their constituents.¹⁵⁸ Across decades of changing use and landscape, parks endure as significant markers of identity for national, local, and individual interests. Mark T. Vail’s examination of Memphis citizens who opposed efforts to renaming the (Nathan Bedford) Forrest Park reveals how parks can function as controversial sites of political control over a city’s historical narrative and modern identity.¹⁵⁹ In parks, the natural environment is rhetorically manipulated to reflect power differentials and construct borders of belonging. In their study of how “urban spaces contain competing desires, uses, definitions, images, and narratives,” Gallagher and LaWare emphasize the need to examine the “discourses, materialities, and experiences” that shape such sites.¹⁶⁰ In their examination of National Parks, Lynn Ross-Bryant argues for the significance of studying the history of parks to better understand how culture changes over time.¹⁶¹ They explain that “the park idea [...] creates a space that celebrates values that conflict with other American values, but in this place they can be held together.”¹⁶² Challenging how the public thinks about park spaces, Danielle Endres, Samantha Senda-Cook, and Brian Cozen’s examination of the international PARK(ing) Day event considers the tactical deployment of park installations in metered parking spaces as

¹⁵⁷ Gallagher, Zagicki, and Martin, 38, 37, 38.

¹⁵⁸ Mark T. Vail, “Reconstructing the Lost Cause in the Memphis City Parks Renaming Controversy,” *Western Journal of Communication* 76, no. 4 (2012): 421.

¹⁵⁹ Vail.

¹⁶⁰ Margaret R. LaWare and Victoria J. Gallagher, “The Power of Agency: Urban Communication and the Rhetoric of Public Art,” in *The Urban Communication Reader*, eds. Gene Burd, Susan J. Drucker, and Gary Gumpert (New York: Hampton Press, 2007), 162.

¹⁶¹ Lynn Ross-Bryant, “Ken Burns and American Mythology in *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*” *Environmental Communication* 4, no. 4 (2010).

¹⁶² Ross-Bryant, 476.

temporary disruptions to the possibilities for place and space in the urban environment.¹⁶³ Even something as mundane as walking can “bring chaos and contingency to the urban planners’ panoptic fantasies.”¹⁶⁴

1.2 Rhetoric of Urban Planning

*The made world is drawn, talked, and written into existence as much as it is physically fabricated.*¹⁶⁵

Rhetoric of urban planning impacts production of space and place. Studies of place play an ever-increasing role in critical rhetorical studies by providing a way to examine tropes such as “‘center,’ ‘periphery,’ ‘location,’ ‘dislocation,’ ‘displacement,’ ‘decentering,’ ‘recentering,’ ‘borders,’ and ‘in-between.’”¹⁶⁶ In my analysis of planning documents and other planning ephemera, I consider place as both an object and as a way of looking.¹⁶⁷ Henri Lefebvre recognizes the significance of both material and symbolic spaces and places, including written text such as planning documents as powerfully linked to representation. Lefebvre differentiates between “spatial practice,” “representations of space,” and “representational spaces” as different ways with

¹⁶³ Danielle Endres, Samantha Senda-Cook, and Brian Cozen, “Not Just a Place to Park your Car: PARK(ing) Day as Spatial Argument,” *Argumentation and Advocacy* 50, no. 3 (2014).

¹⁶⁴ Greg Dickinson, “Space, Place, and the Textures of Rhetorical Criticism,” *Western Journal of Communication* 84, no. 3 (2020): 301; Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

¹⁶⁵ Peter Meadway, “Virtual and Material Buildings: Construction and Constructivism in Architecture and Writing,” *Written Communication* 13, no. 4 (1996): 479.

¹⁶⁶ Shome, “Space Matters,” 39-40.

¹⁶⁷ Cresswell, *Place*. When I talk about planning documents, I am referencing both formal and informally produced documents and texts that I argue together play vital roles in the construction of place.

which to understand place and space.¹⁶⁸ Writing is informed by normative “spatial practices” that lend to continuity and cohesion of their design as informative and persuasive artifacts. It offers “representations of space” that frequently reflect legibility of dominant ordering. Planning documents are also “representational spaces,” with which the future of place and space, and those who engage with them, come to be coded and envisioned. In this section, I first examine how space is produced, specifically focusing on the language and artifacts used and produced by those who impact planning processes. I then examine how memory of place is embedded in planning practices.

1.2.1 Planners and Planning for Public Space

It is important to consider the numerous discussions, debates, and documents produced when planning for the production of public space. Mitchell recognizes that planning for public space often suffers from a lack of representation from the very groups and individuals that spaces are designed for. The visibility of such groups and individuals is crucial when considering the right to the city.¹⁶⁹ Official city planning documents are socially produced spatial representations that serve specific interests, making them infused with power. The rhetorical study of and about the language of place reveals “processes of world-making” that bare significant material consequences for the communities tied to those places.¹⁷⁰ Places do not “have meanings that are natural and obvious,” rather, they are endowed with meaning both discursively and materially.¹⁷¹ Critical

¹⁶⁸ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 33.

¹⁶⁹ Mitchell, *The Right to*, 2003.

¹⁷⁰ Yi-Fu Tuan, “Language and the Making of Place: A Narrative-Descriptive Approach” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 81, no. 1 (1991): 685.

¹⁷¹ Cresswell, *Place*, 27.

attention to the production of space and place brings to light the power of planning as a resource for change.¹⁷²

Urban planning is an inherently rhetorical process that seeks to “persuade specific audiences in specific contexts to accept proposed explanations, embrace inspired visions, undertake recommended actions, and so on” that are constructed through a series of persuasive exchanges.¹⁷³ Public discourse helps to explain how “places are assigned meanings, as well as what kinds of meanings those places help to create.”¹⁷⁴ Consideration for the “discourses about place” can reveal how people and institutions imagine themselves and their relationship to others.¹⁷⁵ Edward Casey explains that “the cultivation of built places” plays a powerful role in facilitating an ethic of localized care.¹⁷⁶ Concepts of place also “inform identity construction.”¹⁷⁷ Institutionally commissioned planning documents and blueprints, as well as public forums, debates, and discussions, together shape possibilities for imagining, creating, and sustaining place.

Planning conceptually for space fails, however, to fully capture the materiality of place. My focus on discourses of urban planning and place-making critically considers not just “what a text means but, more generally, what it does,” and significantly, with the understanding that a text’s intended purpose does not always translate to what it actually does.¹⁷⁸ Massey explains that, “it is an old association; over and over we tame the spatial into the textual and the conceptual; into

¹⁷² Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1991); Hayden, *The Power of Place*.

¹⁷³ David Fleming, *City of Rhetoric: Revitalizing the Public Sphere in Metropolitan America* (New York: SUNY Press, 2008); James A. Throgmorton, *Planning as Persuasive Storytelling: The Rhetorical Construction of Chicago’s Electric Future* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 39; Mary E. Triage, “Constructing the Antiracial City.”

¹⁷⁴ Rice, *Distant Publics*, 10-11.

¹⁷⁵ Rice, 18.

¹⁷⁶ Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 175.

¹⁷⁷ Theresa Ann Donofrio, “Ground Zero and Place-Making Authority: The Conservative Metaphors in 9/11 Families’ ‘Take Back the Memorial’ Rhetoric,” *Western Journal of Communication* 74, no. 2 (2010): 153.

¹⁷⁸ Blair, “Contemporary U.S. Memorial Sites,” 23; Zagacki and Gallagher, “Rhetoric and Materiality.”

representation.”¹⁷⁹ Attempts to restore place suggest that place is capable of returning to a previous state, however, the “continuous becoming” of things means that no environment can ever be restored exactly as it once was.¹⁸⁰ Carole Blair highlights that “the link between reproduction of a text and memory is substantial. It seems uncontroversial to suggest that a text and its reproduction constitute different objects or events, yet it is relatively rare that we *practice* a distinction between original and copy, or among different kinds of copies (transcriptions, translations, etc.).”¹⁸¹ Attention to this distinction between planning for place and its limitations is critical when considering the power of planning discourses.

Language can be used to both build and destroy the social and material landscape.¹⁸² Yi-Fu Tuan argues for the importance of giving attention to how “the telling itself [...] has the power to endow a site with vibrant meaning.”¹⁸³ As they observe, “public places [...] are made and sustained by language.”¹⁸⁴ Although “speech alone cannot materially transform nature,” it can quite powerfully direct public attention.¹⁸⁵ Similarly, “the creation of texts about places” are “actually a part of the larger creation of place itself.”¹⁸⁶ Planning documents, media forums, and newspaper editorials are vital tools used in the “act of representing” and shaping place.¹⁸⁷ Planning documents carry “potential for producing social effects” through the impact they have on producing material and symbolic social forces as public “democratic” sites.¹⁸⁸ They constitute a

¹⁷⁹ Massey, *For Space*, 20.

¹⁸⁰ Massey, 21.

¹⁸¹ Blair, “Contemporary U.S. Memorial Sites,” 38.

¹⁸² Yi-Fu Tuan, “Language and the Making of Place.”

¹⁸³ Tuan, 686.

¹⁸⁴ Tuan, 694.

¹⁸⁵ Tuan, 685.

¹⁸⁶ Powell, Douglas Reichert. *Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in the American Landscape* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 28.

¹⁸⁷ Powell, 28.

¹⁸⁸ Rai, *Democracy's Lot*, 6.

“rhetorical force” used in “everyday life to get things done.”¹⁸⁹ As a textual and visual media, such representations “can mediate between world and concept,” affecting the material world through the creation of a “new physical reality” that may or may not match the intended expectations of such planning discourses.¹⁹⁰ Early urban planners such as civic visionary Lewis Mumford believed that careful urban planning and technological advances could create balanced living environments in outlining possibilities for utopian visions of city life.¹⁹¹ Powell explains that “the planner’s region is [...] not an objective description of the natural and demographic features of a particular site, but a language of possibility and an argument for work toward that vision of the best (or at least a better) possible version of that place.”¹⁹² Like Powell, I too consider how material landscapes “can be the product of rhetorical and discursive practices” in my examination of “the ways ideas about place and region are expressed or implied” in rhetoric of planning for Pittsburgh’s Park System.¹⁹³

The regulation of public space is also an exercise of power in the regulation of people, made possible through attempts to purify space through the establishment of predetermined meanings for what constitutes desired and acceptable understanding and use of place.¹⁹⁴ David Harvey reminds audiences to be critical of in whose image space is created.¹⁹⁵ City officials, architects, and urban planners are authoritative figures hold the power to “control and contour how contested public sites are rhetorically and materially remembered, forgotten, and reconstituted over time,” bearing significant implications for local communities.¹⁹⁶ Timothy Cresswell explains that

¹⁸⁹ Rai, 5.

¹⁹⁰ Meadway, “Virtual and Material Buildings,” 474.

¹⁹¹ Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (New York: Open Road Media, 2016).

¹⁹² Powell, *Critical Regionalism*, 24.

¹⁹³ Powell, 28.

¹⁹⁴ Cresswell, *Place*; Mitchell, *The Right to*.

¹⁹⁵ Harvey, *Social Justice*, 310.

¹⁹⁶ Vail, “Reconstructing the Lost Cause,” 422.

because “places are never finished but always the result of processes and practices,” it is useful to study place “in terms of the ‘dominant institutional projects.’”¹⁹⁷ Planning documents are not merely detached representations of space, rather, their rhetorical positions are shaped by the subjective values and desires of those who contribute to the very concrete shaping of place.¹⁹⁸

Planning processes involve complex symbolic representations that combine the past, present, and future from multiple perspectives and imaginaries.¹⁹⁹ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott explain that, “groups tell their pasts to themselves and others,” in part, as a means of “understanding, valorizing, justifying, excusing, or subverting conditions or beliefs of their current moment.”²⁰⁰ Planning risks standardization of imagined citizens when appealing to the needs of potential publics.²⁰¹ From a strategic planning point, the degree to which “subjects can be treated as standardized units” heightens the power of planners, even amongst the most well-intended.²⁰² As such, the rhetorical objective of planning and design is in constructing a document that envisions ideal spaces for shaping the ideal social environment.²⁰³ James Throgmorton argues that the subjectivity of planning is a reason for planners to “embrace the idea that planning is scientific *and* political, technical *and* persuasive,” when envisioning the places they will shape.²⁰⁴ To craft compelling narratives, they must include storytellers, stories, characters, and audiences when imagining the future of intentional spaces and places. The “imagined” communities of planning

¹⁹⁷ Cresswell, *Place*, 37.

¹⁹⁸ Meadway, “Virtual and Material Buildings;” Dorina Pojani and Dominic Stead, “Urban Planning and Design as Verbal and Visual Rhetoric,” *Journal of Urban Planning* 20, no. 5 (2015); Trice, “Constructing the Antiracial City.”

¹⁹⁹ Pojani and Stead.

²⁰⁰ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, *Places of Public Memory*, 6.

²⁰¹ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like the State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999).

²⁰² Scott, 346.

²⁰³ James A. Throgmorton, “Planning as Persuasive Storytelling in a Global-Scale Web of Relationships,” *Planning Theory* 2, no. 2 (2003).

²⁰⁴ Throgmorton, *Planning as Persuasive Storytelling*, 5.

documents are significant rhetorical artifacts understood through, in, and as, tied to specific imagined geographic regions.²⁰⁵

1.2.2 Remembering Urban Landscapes

Urban planning artifacts reflect competing interpretations of place, space, and memory. Lefebvre notes that, “as a source and as a resource, nature obsesses us [...] via the filter of memory.”²⁰⁶ Planning is rhetorically constructed discursively, seen in decisions about what to preserve, or what a place represents, as well as physically, when memory places undergo change (intended or otherwise) responsive to planning initiatives. Such rhetorical artifacts provide insight as to how different bodies and institutions envision their own relationship to those places. Planning can reflect both institutional and vernacular discourses, with memory of “how things once were” and “how things could be” invoked in competing decisions about construction of place and space. John Bodnar’s inquiry into American commemoration in the twentieth century explores how beliefs and ideas about the past help publics make sense of the present and plan for the future.²⁰⁷ For Bodnar, public memory functions rhetorically by creating “an argument about the interpretation of reality.”²⁰⁸ In their study of museums and memorials, Carole Blair, Greg Dickinson, and Brian Ott define public memory as, “activated by present concerns, issues, or anxieties,” narrated by “shared identities, constructing senses of communal belonging,” “animated by affect,” “partial, partisan, and thus often contested, relying “on material and/or symbolic

²⁰⁵ LaWare and Gallagher, “The Power of Agency,” 162.

²⁰⁶ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 30.

²⁰⁷ John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

²⁰⁸ Bodnar, 14.

supports,” and rooted in history.²⁰⁹ Similar to rhetorical texts like public monuments, I argue that public parks can speak to “a deep need for attachment that can be met only in a real place, where the imagined community actually materializes and the existence of the nation is confirmed in a simple but powerful way.”²¹⁰ Public memory is “invented” insofar as it reflects limitations of the ways in which “public memories are constructed of rhetorical resources.”²¹¹ Pittsburgh’s parks system was responsive to concern for the increasingly harmful consequences of industrialization. They were envisioned as sites for community-building across difference. As natural sites, they were intended to create good moral citizens who would resist the temptations of urban vice. That this rootedness of nature with morality and citizenship in public memory continues to bare significance to this day demonstrate parks’ potential for shaping urban imaginaries.

In contrast with memory studies of sites such as monuments, memorials, or museums, E. Cram’s examination of “landscape memory” productively “challenges approaches to criticism that favor discrete public memory places rather than *diffuse senses of place memory*.”²¹² While discrete public memory is tied to carefully bordered sites, diffuse memories create a “texture” that emphasizes the complexity of the ways in which regional consciousness is selected, contested, and necessarily multiple in public memory.²¹³ Cram further explains that “landscape memory and senses of place are created through shared and contested memories of a place and its publics.”²¹⁴

²⁰⁹ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, *Places of Public Memory*, 6.

²¹⁰ Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 4.

²¹¹ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, *Places of Public Memory*, 13.

²¹² E. Cram, “Violent Inheritance: Landscape Memory, Materiality, and Queer Feelings in the Rocky Mountain West” (doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, 2015), 9. Cram’s forthcoming book *Violent Inheritance: Sexuality, Land, and the Making of the North American West* is under contract with University of California Press; See also Kristan Poirot and Shevaun E. Watson, “Memories of Freedom and White Resilience: Place, Tourism, and Urban Slavery,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 45, no. 2 (2015) and Kristan Poirot, “Gendered Geographies of Memory: Place, Violence, and Exigency at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 18, no. 4 (2015).

²¹³ Cram, 9.

²¹⁴ Cram, 9.

Such tensions are illustrated in ritualistic performative practices of commemoration just as they are also seen in counter-narratives like protest or everyday acts of resistance. Clark's examination of the rhetorical power of landscapes reveals how "national culture is wielded not only by public discourse, but also by *public experiences*."²¹⁵ Lefebvre explains that, "the power of a landscape does not derive from the fact that it offers itself as spectacle, but rather from the fact that, as mirror and mirage, it presents any susceptible viewer with an image at once true and false of the creative capacity which the subject (or Ego) is able, during a moment of marvelous self-description, to claim as his own."²¹⁶ Engagement with rhetorical landscapes expands the scope of carefully bordered memory places to include consideration for their surrounding environments as more than mere backdrop, but rather, as critical sensorial, affective, and experiential components that symbolize and shape connectivity with regional or national identity as well.²¹⁷ Dickinson explains that rhetorical landscapes "evoke a whole range of emotion-laden memories while providing the possibility for *bodily* participation in the evocation of the memory" by drawing together "a wide range of cultural and historical resources."²¹⁸ Mitchell cautions that when considering public experiences, one should also be wary of how the "disneyfying" of place and space creates "landscapes in which every interaction is carefully planned."²¹⁹

Landscape memory is especially useful when considering how rhetoric of parks impacts planning decisions because parks house numerous competing memory places and their various publics within diffuse park space, while at the same time, serving as discrete memory places as a

²¹⁵ Clark, *Rhetorical Landscapes*, 4.

²¹⁶ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 189.

²¹⁷ Clark, *Rhetorical Landscapes*; Dickinson, Greg, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki, "Spaces of Remembering and Forgetting."

²¹⁸ Greg Dickinson, "Memories for Sale: Nostalgia and the Construction of Identity in Old Pasadena," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 83, no. 1 (1997): 4.

²¹⁹ Mitchell, *The Right to*, 139-140.

whole. As Samantha Senda-Cook points out, “landscape is a powerful term that points to both the physical places and our ways of seeing places, our ways of representing them, and our ways of interacting with them,” suggesting the value in studying the relationship between urban planning documents and discourses and/as landscape.²²⁰ My examination of Pittsburgh’s Parks System enables scholars to better understand how collective and public identity is constructed and maintained in and through the ways that public space brings aspects of the past to bear on the present and future.²²¹ The numerous and conflicting ways that the past becomes deployed serves as a reminder that “rhetoric has material force beyond the goals, intentions, and motivations of its producers.”²²² Parks are highly manipulated spaces, “natural landscapes interwoven with urban development,” which act as repository sites of and for public memory, seen in landscaping decisions, pathway design, public art installations, conservatories, educational facilities, monuments and memorials, ritualistic celebrations, protests, human and more-than-human dwelling, and countless other ways that the land is both used to communicate and becomes inherently communicative itself.²²³ These sites all exhibit differing levels of ephemerality, lending to the usefulness in considering diffuse senses of place. Blair notes that “even the bare materiality of a [...] site does not guarantee that it is the same text on a cloudy day as on a sunny one, on a crowded day as when almost deserted, at dawn as at midday.”²²⁴ Danielle Endres and Senda-Cook’s consideration of “place-as-rhetoric” in protests argues that “the very place in which a protest occurs is a rhetorical performance that is part of the message of the movement.”²²⁵ From

²²⁰ Samantha Senda-Cook, “Materializing Tensions: How Maps and Trails Mediate Nature,” *Environmental Communication* 7, no. 3 (2013): 357.

²²¹ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, *Places of Public Memory*.

²²² Blair, “Contemporary U.S. Memorial Sites,” 22.

²²³ Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 63.

²²⁴ Blair, “Contemporary U.S. Memorial Sites,” 39.

²²⁵ Endres and Senda-Cook, “Location Matters,” 258-259.

this perspective, the various physical and embodied materiality of a place contribute to the communicative qualities of a phenomena or event under consideration. Endres and Senda-Cook's embodied study of materiality in protest further reveals how "place itself is rhetorical."²²⁶

Particularly in urban environments, natural and human-made elements shape and reflect cultural landscapes.²²⁷ My examination of park planning discourses reveal how and why certain design choices came about and what cultural systems they are rooted in. Cultural artifacts, such as maps, brochures, safety or educational signs, and blueprints "reflect social constructions of places and thus shape how we experience landscapes."²²⁸ The images, ideals, and symbols used in planning for public space impact "the ability of various groups to represent themselves."²²⁹ Planning enables spaces to be "*reconfigured*," changing both aesthetics and patterns of use.²³⁰ In addition to textual representations of people and place, planning documents offer visual representations of imagined material transformation. Maps, for example, transform space by imagining new possibilities for engagement via representations by those in power.²³¹ As rhetorical artifacts, planning documents, texts, narratives, and place are constructed by selective memories that materially contour the environment, revealing "how the past becomes deployed by particular bodies and publics situated in time and space."²³²

The preservation of historic sites is an inherently political and cultural process. Especially in commemoration, "public memories are always partial" and "this partiality tends to impact those with historically less power in society."²³³ As one tries to retrieve the memory of specific past

²²⁶ Endres and Senda-Cook, 266.

²²⁷ Allen, Blurred Borderlands;" Hayden, *The Power of Place*; Tuan, "Language and the."

²²⁸ Senda-Cook, "Materializing Tensions," 358.

²²⁹ Mitchell, *The Right to*, 34-35.

²³⁰ Ackerman and Oates, "Image, Text, and Power," 83.

²³¹ Scott, *Seeing Like*; Senda-Cook, "Materializing Tensions."

²³² Cram, "Violent Inheritance," 10.

²³³ Kitsch, "Regional Citizenship," 139.

experiences, they end up shaping and contouring the possibilities of remembrance in their attempts at recall. “Decisions about what to remember and protect” necessarily entail select, partial, and often contradictory decisions about memory and commemoration in place-making.²³⁴ This is unsurprising, as “inevitably, every act of memory carries with it a dimension of betrayal, forgetting, and absence.”²³⁵ Kendall Phillips explains that, “at the heart of this aporia is not the pairing of memory and forgetting but, rather, the pairing of memory and misremembering, or remembering differently.”²³⁶ Dave Tell notes that while memories may be “‘contained’ in a ‘storehouse,’” the actual process of remembering cannot be reduced simply to a “logic of retrieval.”²³⁷ As such, attempts to recall and recount the past are inextricably tied to selective (mis)remembering.

City plans do more than provide a blueprint for urban design; they may also contribute to the construction of “antiracial discourses” that are amplified in a neoliberal context.²³⁸ In their study of contemporary Cleveland urban planning documents, Mary Triece identifies that, “as a rhetorical strategy, selective forgetting serves as a handmaiden to present-day neoliberal policies that suggest or assume market infallibility and fairness and as such is an exercise of power that whitewashes the ways past racist practices continue to enable present-day White privilege.”²³⁹ Such an “urban imaginary” ends up as a container filled with “traces of the past, erasures, losses, heterotopias.”²⁴⁰ Even efforts that try to account for local history do not always illustrate the

²³⁴ Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 13.

²³⁵ Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 4.

²³⁶ Kendall R. Phillips, “The Failure of Memory,” 217.

²³⁷ Dave Tell, “Beyond Mnemotechnics: Confession and Memory in Augustine,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 39, no. 3 (2006), 243.

²³⁸ Triece, “Constructing the Antiracial City,” 625.

²³⁹ Triece, 623.

²⁴⁰ Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 7.

“multiple vectors of race, gender, technology, ecology, or social justice [...] that all converge on this historical moment at this geographical site.”²⁴¹ Although planners may not go out of their way to “ignore the past’s influence on the present-day urban landscape,” Triage identifies that they can “nonetheless represent[...] a partial and whitewashed glimpse into the past.”²⁴² By providing a necessarily selective and incomplete account of the past, a planning document can “selectively ‘forget[...],’ or omits racist and profit-driven processes that create the city landscape residents see in the 21st century.”²⁴³ Triage explains, “omission is characteristic of a neoliberal racialization that provides space for race but not the more complicated, controversial fact of racism.”²⁴⁴ This selective account of remembering the past engages in exclusionary storytelling that leaves out the hegemonic systems and structures of urban design that shape the racialization of the city. Rai further illustrates this point, identifying that human-made design can naturalize a number of urban conditions, including poverty, shame, and disenfranchisement.²⁴⁵ As Cresswell explains, “class, gender, and race have so often been treated as if they happen on the head of a pin. Well they don’t – they happen in space and place.”²⁴⁶ The aesthetics and effect of urban design reflect the power of institutional control over the visibility and invisibility of inhabitants that becomes amplified by decisions about the limits of space and place.²⁴⁷ Urban design frequently distributes various social classes across available space to create the illusion of publicness, however, more often create separate spaces that reflect the ideology of peoples and institutions in power.²⁴⁸ Similarly, urban

²⁴¹ Powell, *Critical Regionalism*, 19.

²⁴² Triage, “Constructing the Antiracial,” 621.

²⁴³ Triage, 621.

²⁴⁴ Triage 622.

²⁴⁵ Rai, *Democracy’s Lot*, xi.

²⁴⁶ Cresswell, *Place*, 27.

²⁴⁷ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 1989); Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*; Mitchell, *The Right to*; Zukin, *The Culture of Cities*.

²⁴⁸ Mitchell; Harvey, *Social Justice*.

planning reflects tensions between history and futurity. Particularly in “times of rapid change or insecurity [...] a tremendous desire for the past” becomes a coping mechanism that seeks to preserve what once was.²⁴⁹ Senda-Cook notes that in contrast with drawing upon nostalgic memories of the past as a means of coping with uncertain times, “memories of a violent past have and continue to shape the material space” creating a catalyst for their preservation and transformation looking to the future.²⁵⁰

Built urban spaces are made up of material traces of the past that endure in the present. Scholarly consideration of urban space as a palimpsest makes clear how certain places can carry both nostalgic and violent memories that compete for attention. As the use and design of these spaces change across time, cities become “veritable palimpsest[s] of social forms constructed in the images of reciprocity, redistribution, and market exchange.”²⁵¹ While palimpsests are frequently tied to written practice, they can be productively applied to the unfolding of place figurations to better understand urban environments as “lived spaces that shape collective imaginaries.”²⁵² Andreas Huyssen explains,

Many of the most compelling projects to nurture and to secure public memory involve interventions in urban space. This is only natural, because cities remain the main battleground on which societies articulate their sense of time past and time present. [...] Cities, after all, are palimpsests of history, incarnations of time in stone, sites of memory extending both in time and space.²⁵³

A critical approach to regional studies encourages understanding “places and their cultural artifacts as dense palimpsests of broader forces” demonstrating the value in considering rhetoric of urban

²⁴⁹ Dickinson, “Memories for Sale,” 1.

²⁵⁰ Samantha Senda-Cook, “Long Memories: Material Rhetoric as Evidence of Memory and a Potential Future,” *Western Journal of Communication* 84, no. 4 (2020): 422.

²⁵¹ Harvey, *Social Justice*, 245.

²⁵² Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 7.

²⁵³ Huyssen, 101.

planning as a mode for understanding place.²⁵⁴ The case studies of my chapters scale key moments of change that are animated in planners' imaginings of the city's parks system, highlighting how Pittsburgh's regional transformations build veritable palimpsests.

Delores Hayden argues that the vernacular landscape of urban planning "is the story of how places are planned, designed, built, inhabited, appropriated, celebrated, despoiled, and discarded" through the intertwining of "cultural identity, social history, and urban design."²⁵⁵ Urban centers are often restructured when institutions address "perceived social conditions" in need of change.²⁵⁶ The communicative practices that influence the construction of space can sustain, shape, or reshape communities through erasure or transformation of the past in the present when planning for the future of place and people.²⁵⁷ Public-focused initiatives such as housing projects or recreation facilities reflect those institutional "concern[s] for the problem of community" and the "need to encourage civic coherence and commitment by developing facilities for inculcating an appropriate urban way of life in neighborhoods."²⁵⁸ These choices are rationalized by the belief that better citizens can in fact be made through careful urban planning. Oftentimes, such planning decisions are reflective of a neoliberal ideology of urban reform that relies on steadfast urban order that capitalizes on "the fears of the bourgeoisie."²⁵⁹ Harvey explains that the disproportionate "distribution of wealth and power are indelibly etched into the spatial

²⁵⁴ Powell, *Critical Regionalism*, 19.

²⁵⁵ Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 15.

²⁵⁶ Mary Domenico, "Civic identity in Changing Cityscapes: Material Rhetorical Obscurity at Denver's Lindset-Flanigan Courthouse," *Western Journal of Communication* 84, no. 4 (2020): 458; Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1999).

²⁵⁷ Janis L. Edwards, "Locating Nihonmachi: Urban Erasure, Memory, and Visibility," in *Communicative Cities in the 21st Century: The Urban Communication Reader III*, ed. Matthew D. Matsaganis, Victoria J. Gallagher, and Susan J. Drucker (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2013), 175-198.

²⁵⁸ Robert B. Fairbanks, *Making Better Citizens: Housing Reform and the Community Development Strategy in Cincinnati 1890-1960* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 1.

²⁵⁹ Mitchell, *The Right to*, 9.

forms of our cities,” where the privatization and surveillance of public space increase the fortification and fragmentation of the city.²⁶⁰ This is further driven by the need of capital to find new ways of creating profitable space in the neoliberal city, demonstrating Marx’s argument for capitalism’s dependence on surplus value.²⁶¹ The constant need for new and greater neoliberal access to capital “puts increasing pressure on the natural environment to yield up the necessary raw materials and absorb the inevitable wastes.”²⁶² Capitalists with the greatest means dominate the market, increasing their power to shape and consume public space. Wendy Brown explains how in this way, capitalism dissolves democracy by obliterating working class sovereignty and strengthening the power and grip of wealthy capitalists over laborers and consumers.²⁶³ To cultivate a space that is socially just, then, necessitates establishing a “different kind of order,” that is instead built “on the needs of the poorest and most marginalized residents.”²⁶⁴

1.3 Industrial Cities, Livable Parks

Geographic shifts from rural to urban, farm to factory, are among the most jarring transformations experienced in US national landscape. The rising popularity of city living brought with it unprecedented demands to quickly establish new standards of living that account for public health, happiness, and wellbeing that were linked to the “spatial growth of cities.”²⁶⁵ The rate at

²⁶⁰ Harvey, *Rebel Cities*, 2013, 15.

²⁶¹ Harvey; Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume I* trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 2004).

²⁶² Harvey, 6.

²⁶³ Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism’s Stealth Revolution* (Brooklyn: Zone Books, 2015).

²⁶⁴ Mitchell, *The Right to, 9.*

²⁶⁵ David Schuyler, *The New Urban Landscape: The Redefinition of City Form in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 2.

which cities and their people experienced change was so rapid that for many inhabitants it was “traumatic.”²⁶⁶ Increasing pressures of industrialism demanded that the American landscape be redefined.²⁶⁷ New access to “vice,” overcrowding, large surges of immigration, abusive and unhealthy labor conditions, and an industrial capitalist system that introduced mass production and distribution of resources, all radically transformed economic, social, environmental, and political culture. This new early American industrial development in cities challenged public ideology of what America meant, “and this ideological debate was often phrased in terms of the American landscape.”²⁶⁸

Social theorists like Lefebvre frequently regard urban landscapes as spaces where “nature is emptied out,” however, environmental movements for the preservation and reintegration of nature in urban landscapes have existed since the rise of cities.²⁶⁹ America’s ties to the desirable “pastoral ideal” date back to decades before industrial cities began flourishing, suggesting the embeddedness of the pastoral with American identity and a desire to preserve ties with an idyllic rural past.²⁷⁰ The machine-in-the-garden or factory-in-the-forest imaginary soon gave way to a national landscape characterized by a close proximity of, but clearly demarcated divide where, “instead of a continuous middle landscape, America would be defined as a counterpoint of art and nature, city and country.”²⁷¹ As the shift from farm-to-factory gained momentum in the nineteenth century, cities came to characterize the progressive American landscape, fundamentally changing

²⁶⁶ Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), 140.

²⁶⁷ Thomas Bender, *Toward an Urban Vision: Ideas and Institutions in Nineteenth Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).

²⁶⁸ Bender, 73.

²⁶⁹ Dorothee Brantz and Sonja Dümpelmann, *Greening the City: Urban Landscapes in the Twentieth Century* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 1.

²⁷⁰ Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), 3; Bender, *Toward an Urban Vision*.

²⁷¹ Bender, 79.

the American experience. The rise of factories intensified urban inhabitants' calls for "the integration of natural elements" into cities.²⁷² Urban developers and industrialists saw this call for the integration of green spaces as a profitable opportunity while socialists and reformers saw green space as vital to the health and fabric of urban community.²⁷³ Debates over the connections between nature and culture speak to varying ideals of urban life.²⁷⁴ Urban life became known for its hurried, dirty, congested, and corrupt influences and "the scenic associations of the pastoral or domesticated landscape became more and more logistical as correctives to the changing environment of the city."²⁷⁵ Rather than blending urban and nature, clearly defined and bordered spaces that provided urban environments with access to nature were believed to satisfy the need for virtuous pastoral space that would counteract urban moral threats and provide a solid foundation where good citizenship could thrive.

In his study of the redefinition of nineteenth century American cities, David Schuyler explains that "the first physical expression of the evolving definition of urban form and culture in antebellum America was the development of rural cemeteries."²⁷⁶ The rural cemetery movement, popular from the 1830s to 1860s, provided urban landscapes with naturalistic scenery previously missing within cities.²⁷⁷ To combat undesirable urban influences, the rural cemetery was said to inspire "melancholy pleasure" that would have a pleasing moral influence on its visitors.²⁷⁸ One prominent urban landscape designer and architect at the time, A.J. Downing, noted that, "in the absence of great public parks, such as we must surely one day have in America, our rural

²⁷² Brantz and Dümpelmann, 2.

²⁷³ Brantz and Dümpelmann.

²⁷⁴ James L. Machor, *Pastoral Cities: Urban Ideals and the Symbolic Landscape of America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).

²⁷⁵ Bender, *Toward an Urban Vision*; Schuyler, *The New Urban Landscape*, 4.

²⁷⁶ Schuyler, 37.

²⁷⁷ Bender, *Toward an Urban Vision*; Schuyler.

²⁷⁸ Schuyler, 52.

cemeteries are doing a great deal to enlarge and educate the popular taste in rural embellishment.”²⁷⁹ He concluded that the “plain enough” nature of the rural cemetery visitors was evidence of “how much our citizens, of all classes, would enjoy public parks on a similar scale.”²⁸⁰ These sentiments were echoed by Frederick Law Olmsted as proof of the potential for introducing urban parks as pleasure grounds fitting for urban inhabitants of diverse economic backgrounds, and especially their potential for influencing civic growth of poorer citizens. Other early architectural landscapes and urban planning pioneers similarly believed in the power of landscape design to combat immorality and bring out “the highest potential of civilization in America” through increased opportunities for recreation in nature.²⁸¹

Eventually cemeteries came under criticism by civic leaders for “the disrepair of existing churchyards, the belief that urban cemeteries endangered public health, the insatiable demand for city land that often resulted in the desecration of older cemeteries, and acknowledgement of the psychological impact of scenery,” resulting in their relocation to the countryside, far outside city borders.²⁸² Building on the popularity of rural cemeteries, emerging urban park ideology saw natural scenery as antidotal to the ills of urban life and “thus the public park would evolve as part of the continuing redefinition of urban form in culture in nineteenth-century America.”²⁸³ In his 1859 text, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, Downing described the establishment of urban parks like New York’s Central Park as “one of those grand improvements in civilization, the importance and necessity of which was so apparent, that it has

²⁷⁹ “Downing’s Essays,” in Schuyler, 55.

²⁸⁰ “Downing’s Essays,” in Schuyler, 55.

²⁸¹ Schuyler, 6.

²⁸² Schuyler, 41.

²⁸³ Schuyler, 59.

since been universally adopted, and may be fairly considered now one of our institutions.”²⁸⁴ Whereas cemeteries were somewhat privatized spaces, urban parks were designed as intentionally public spaces, “available not only to the wealthy and middle class but to all citizens, a natural landscape standing within and in sharp contrast to the rectangularity of the urban environment. The park – the country within the city – would be, in Calvert Vaux’s words, ‘the big art work of the republic.’”²⁸⁵

Frederick Law Olmsted quickly realized that Central Park alone was not equipped to serve as a public landscape capable of “refining and civilizing a city.”²⁸⁶ It was not located near enough those who he believed needed it the most, such as those without private property or who were threatened by urban vice, making clear to Olmsted that no matter how grand, a single park would always struggle to overcome issues of access. Interlinked urban park systems offered planners a solution for extending the benefits of parks to all urban inhabitants. With the necessity of parks as spaces to provide public access to nature, expansive park systems became a critical ingredient in urban planners developing “a new urban form.”²⁸⁷ As early park theorists pondered what form these new public recreational grounds should take, Schuyler explains how “the somewhat undefined concept of park evolved and took on an American expression” that resembled a naturalistic landscape, designed to shut out the urban environment so that it might best meet the physical, psychological, and social needs for citizens.²⁸⁸ Importantly, a strong parks system did more than connect park spaces; it played a vital role in comprehensive city planning that promoted

²⁸⁴ A.J. Downing, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (New York: A.O. Moore & Co. Agricultural Book Publishers, 1859), 51.

²⁸⁵ Schuyler, *The New Urban Landscape*, 56. Calvert Vaux was an architect, landscape designer, and senior-partner to Frederick Law Olmstead. The two of them were co-designers of what would become New York’s Central Park.

²⁸⁶ Schuyler, 5.

²⁸⁷ Schuyler, 126.

²⁸⁸ Schuyler, 4-5.

improvements in public transportation to enable expansive urban sprawl. The further city limits reached, the more city dwellers became disconnected from the country, the greater the case could be made for the need for urban parks.

My examination of Pittsburgh's urban parks system reveals how rhetoric of parks has evolved from an emphasis on providing citizens with spaces that would benefit public health, moral clarity, and opportunities for recreation, to parks as key infrastructural components in comprehensive city planning that "promised to recast city form and naturalize the urban environment."²⁸⁹ The early parks movement was supported by progressive social reform efforts that saw the inclusion of parks in comprehensive city plans as vital for civilizing the urban landscape and inhabitants. Parks and greenways were incorporated into the fabric of early urban planning and development; not so coincidentally, many of the earliest landscape architects also served as pioneers of city planning.²⁹⁰ Rhetoric of sanitary science shaped new recreation and reformist ideals that promoted the civilizing and humanizing influence of parks.²⁹¹ Healthful benefits of increased time spent out of urban squalor and in naturally designed spaces were understood to be responsive to disease and epidemics; they offered opportunities for wholesome recreation in spacious landscapes as an escape from overcrowding, corruption, and disease frequently associated with urban space. Rhetoric of parks as "lungs of the city" reinforced their necessity for creating healthy urban environments and inhabitants. In short, civic reformers used rhetoric of parks to argue tangible proof for the livability of cities. While "the general public may never have consciously appreciated the 'healing influence' of city parks," by the end of the

²⁸⁹ Schuyler, 182.

²⁹⁰ Brantz and Dümpelmann, *Greening the City*, 4.

²⁹¹ Martin V. Melosi, *The Sanitary City: Environmental Services in Urban America from Colonial Times to the Present* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008).

nineteenth century “nature lovers convinced city planners to mount a park movement of national proportions,” signaling that great cities needed great parks to have great citizens.²⁹² The agrarian myth of the powerful connectivity between environment and moral citizenship remains heavily rooted well into the twentieth and twenty-first century city planning initiatives.²⁹³

1.4 Writing from Place: Method and Artifacts

This dissertation takes a critical rhetorical approach to understanding how citizenship is entangled with rhetoric of park planning. Critical rhetoric can help demystify discourses of power used to maintain elite privilege and open up new possibilities for effecting social change.²⁹⁴ Candice Rai explains that “rhetoric is emplaced, embodied, and embedded in the places and practices [...] of everyday life.”²⁹⁵ In turn, it “organizes itself around the relationship of discourses, events, objects, and practices to ideas about what it means to be ‘public.’”²⁹⁶ Rhetoric provides a way of “understanding, evaluating, and intervening in [...] human activities” like the imagination, creation, transformation, or restoration of public space, as well as the discursive practices that shape such activities in the first place.²⁹⁷ In *Distant Publics*, Jenny Rice examines “the habits and practices of the people who can and do affect [...] location,” preferring “to examine how people imagine themselves in relation to (and as part of) those publics that populate, change, and undergo

²⁹² Peter Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), 70.

²⁹³ Ross Singer, Stephanie Houston Grey, and Jeff Motter, *Rooted Resistance: Agrarian Myth in Modern America* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2020).

²⁹⁴ McKerrow, “Critical Rhetoric.”

²⁹⁵ Rai, *Democracy's Lot*, 6.

²⁹⁶ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, *Places of Public Memory*, 2-3.

²⁹⁷ Blair, Dickinson, Ott, 3.

the effects of material places.”²⁹⁸ Drawing from Rice’s “publics approach” to place, which “understands publics and their discourse as the best site for making interventions into material spaces,” my research focuses on rhetoric surrounding dominant institutional projects that impact the parks to articulate how citizenship is constructed in, with, and through parks rhetoric.²⁹⁹ In line with Cisneros, I argue in favor for “studying borders and citizenship as they are created and contended through public discourse.”³⁰⁰

My critical rhetorical approach to urban parks reveals the tensions present in civic leaders’ consideration of parks as sites for civic engagement. This perspective becomes legible through a consideration of varied symbolic and material regional representations, performances, and discourses by civic leaders that envision Pittsburgh’s past, present, and future as understood in, with, and through parks. My examination of dominant institutional projects reveals that Pittsburgh’s Parks System becomes rhetorically configured as a regional asset in rhetoric of urban change. Douglas Powell argues that a region is:

[...] a rhetoric that connects specific local sites to a variety of other kinds of place constructions of various scales and motives. Critical regionalism is a way of making this inherent connectivity deliberate, conscious, and visible, a methodology for creating a new kind of regional representation that is not only inquisitive about the possibilities for drawing together new configurations of politics and culture, but is always conscious about its own locatedness as a critical practice.³⁰¹

These configurations may include consideration for everyday practices and talk, media production, memorialization, or encounters with particular architectural formations of network.³⁰² When applied to park borders, regional destabilization visualizes contested dualisms such as

²⁹⁸ Rice, *Distant Publics*, 13.

²⁹⁹ Rice, 7.

³⁰⁰ Cisneros, *The Border Crossed Us*.

³⁰¹ Powell, *Critical Regionalism*, 28; see also Dave Tell, “The Meanings of Kansas: Rhetoric, Regions, and Counter Regions,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (2012).

³⁰² Powell, 18.

nature/culture, urban/rural, and work/play. For Pittsburgh in particular, it reveals how parks were rhetorically manipulated in response to changing regional identities especially as they pertain to processes of how industry and change were envisioned in social, political, and environmental landscapes. Civic leaders, then, can point to the parks system as a beneficial asset for addressing broader regional concerns for citizenship, tourism, urban livability, and more.

Regional rhetorics are often reflective of uncritical, nostalgic tendencies toward memory of place rooted in the “good ole days.”³⁰³ Carly S. Woods, Joshua P. Ewalt, and Sarah J. Baker explain that, “in the broadest sense, regionalism is concerned with the rhetorical practices that constitute regional agendas and identities.”³⁰⁴ Doreen Massey notes that “in today’s discussion of permeable borders,” one also finds “nostalgia for a time when borders were impermeable and spatial distinctions were static,” despite the fact that such histories exist only in the imagined conjurings of memory.³⁰⁵ To avoid this tendency toward nostalgia, a critical approach to regionalism promotes “a disruption of narrative” that enables the potential for “developing regional interventions,” thus creating new places of public memory.³⁰⁶ Methodologically speaking, “instead of asking whether a particular version of region is valid or invalid, authentic or not, this new regional scholarship asks whose interests are served by a given version of a region.”³⁰⁷ Recent work by Sara R. Kitsch has suggested that scholars consider the potential value of nostalgia for using region as a rhetorical resource in her examination of how “regional citizenship” enabled

³⁰³ Woods, Ewalt, and Baker, 344.

³⁰⁴ Carly S. Woods, Joshua P. Ewalt, Sara J. Baker, “A Matter of Regionalism: Remembering Brandon Teena and Willa Cather at the Nebraska History Museum,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 99, no. 3 (2013): 344.

³⁰⁵ Massey, *For Space*, 65.

³⁰⁶ Jenny Rice, “From Architectonic to Tectonics: Introducing Regional Rhetorics,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (2012): 203; Woods, Ewalt, and Baker, 358.

³⁰⁷ Rice, 203.

Lady Bird Johnson to advocate for Civil Rights in support of her husband's reelection campaign in the South.³⁰⁸

I began this project with exploratory archival research to discover where and what civic discourse about Pittsburgh's Parks System are preserved. I visited local sites including the University of Pittsburgh's Archives and Special Collections, Carnegie Library's Special Collections, the Heinz History Center, and utilized the Library of Congress's Chronicling America historic American newspaper database. My archival materials included newspapers, letters, photographs, meeting notes, newsletters, planning documents, maps, drawings, postcards, and more. I surveyed contemporary comprehensive planning documents for the city created through partnerships between the citizen-driven Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and City of Pittsburgh. I also conducted numerous site visits to the city's four historic regional parks: Frick Park, Highland Park, Riverview Park, and Schenley Park, which allowed me to better familiarize myself with the parks' spatial, material, and affective qualities and geographic locations. Casey Schmitt highlights the significance of considering the "physical layout" of sites when conducting "rhetorical analysis of parks, preserves, and other biophysical locations [...] in order to recognize and articulate key tensions that might otherwise go unnoticed or only vaguely articulated."³⁰⁹ While not all of these artifacts went on to play a central role in my analysis, they have each brought me closer in constructing a sharper picture of Pittsburgh's Parks System. As I poured through fragments from across collections and places, I noted the prominence of citizenship as a rhetorical mode in planning parks. This observation narrowed the scope of my analysis to considering three significant projects in the development of Pittsburgh's Parks System, which make up the case

³⁰⁸ Sara R. Kitsch, "Regional Citizenship as a Rhetorical Resource and the 1964 Lady Bird Special," *Southern Communication Journal* 85, no. 2 (2020): 114.

³⁰⁹ Schmitt, "Mounting Tensions," 428.

studies of my following three chapters. First, I examine the creation of Schenley Park by analyzing discourse about “Schenley Park” found primarily in the popular *Pittsburg Dispatch* via the Library of Congress digital archives. Second, I utilize the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh’s Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials to examine the Citizens Committee for City Plan of Pittsburgh. Third, I draw primarily from the formal planning documents for the contemporary Parks Master Plan, co-created by the City of Pittsburgh and citizen-led Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy. These three content chapters reveal how planning for Pittsburgh’s Parks System is tied to efforts of civic leaders to redefine regional identity through rhetoric of parks and citizenship.

1.5 Chapter Map

The three core chapters of my dissertation build chronologically upon one another to illustrate how change to Pittsburgh’s Parks System is envisioned in place and space by civic leaders across time. They are framed by an introductory chapter at the front end to provide a grounding theoretical framework for unpacking the language of urban planning from a rhetorical perspective, specifically looking at the intersection of citizenship, borders, and parks. The conclusion serves to bring together the language of planning across time to provide a clearer understanding of how rhetoric of parks both shapes and reflects citizen enactments.

Chapter 2 examines early public debates, discussions, and commentary about the introduction of Schenley Park published in newspapers from 1889-1892, focusing primarily on those found in the republican-leaning *Pittsburg Dispatch*. These discourses illustrate how early civic leaders made a case for nature in Pittsburgh’s urban rebirth, arguing that parks were responsive to the increasing stresses of industrialization on urban living. New public traditions

held on park grounds like the grand Fourth of July Celebrations sought to persuade publics of the effectiveness of parks for facilitating patriotic infused mingling of class. Public programming like weekly open-air free music concerts further reinforced civic leaders' aspirations of illustrating the cultural superiority of the elite so that morally compromised laborers and immigrants might become better citizens. My research identifies how Schenley Park also became a controversial site for elite enactments of citizenship, seen in debates over philanthropic giving. Schenley Park became a playground of sorts where wealthy elite could freely spend their money by investing in public institutions designed to benefit all urban inhabitants. These public gifts were rarely accepted whole-heartedly, as newspaper announcements, speeches, and commentary illustrate how commemoration of wealth faced criticism by other wealthy citizens as well as members of labor communities.

In Chapter 3, I examine materials produced by the Citizens Committee for City Plan of Pittsburgh, including meeting notes, early planning drafts, finished master plans, and their monthly public newsletter, *Progress*. This 1920s group was created and run by a select group of prominent business leaders in Pittsburgh who saw as their civic duty a need to create a scientific, citizen-driven comprehensive plan. I argue that the CCCPP's civic leadership rhetorically linked orderly spatial arrangement of the city with the transformation of the public into good citizens. The CCCPP used public outreach initiatives as a core strategy for organizing and gave special attention to their work with the Junior Citizens Committee. They believed that only careful scientific planning for urban reform could unite the city's fragmented social, physical, and economic infrastructure. Their sub-committee on Recreation was tasked with creating a plan for parks and playgrounds. They conceptualized a new open space system that would be capable of responding to pressures of urban growth. A strong recreation system promised to provide economic security by making the city a

more livable place for new businesses to settle. It aspired to address issues of equitable development. Importantly, rhetoric of planning for comprehensive urban reform proved to be about planning for citizenship. Organized sports and recreation created an opportunity for surveillance of potential citizen-subjects like children and immigrants, so that they could better assimilate Americanized cultural ideals of the good citizen as someone who is a team player, contributes economically, and is morally sound.

Chapter 4 picks up at the turn of the twenty-first century, following decades of a deprioritized urban parks system that paralleled deindustrialization in the Steel City. A group of concerned citizens, united under a new ethic of stewardship for the environment, established the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and formed a private-public partnership with the City of Pittsburgh. I examine the creation of their Parks Master Plan, laid out across two institutionally sanctioned planning documents and designed to span 20 years of parks improvement projects. I argue that the Parks Master Plan reveals a complicated relationship with Pittsburgh's violent industrial past when it suggests that a return to a green, civic urban imagery will provide a sustainable path for the future of urban parks development. I examine discourses of this inherited "legacy of care" to reveal how the concerned citizens who create the master plan understand good civic leadership. I find that it is rooted in an industrial nostalgia that emphasizes the need for the city to find what has been lost in the declining parks system. These principles become guiding factors in how the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and City of Pittsburgh envision the future city. Unlike historic parks planning that emphasized the value of parks as bordered city spaces, the future city embraces a green web made possible by an open space system, where the city's historic regional parks act as flagships for a new vision of nature in the city.

Each of these chapters identifies a significant historical moment whereby concerned citizens take initiative in attempting to transform the urban landscape through changing the Pittsburgh Parks System. In my concluding chapter, I identify how across these chapters, rhetoric of parks contains narratives of concerned citizens, imagined citizens, and an understanding of how public green space shapes possibilities for citizenship enactments. I argue that parks offer visual evidence of Pittsburgh's transformation from Steel City to Most Livable City. Pittsburgh's Parks System also played a critical role in providing a rhetorical space for civic leaders to address tensions of urban progress and preservation in the planning. In these ways, parks offer scholars a useful heuristic for examining urban citizenship as a social construct that is both responsive to and reflective of changing ideologies, landscapes, citizenship, and belonging in the city.

2.0 Pittsburgh's Breathing Spot: The Introduction of Schenley Park

In a practical, philanthropic sense, 1889 will be distinctively marked in the history of Pittsburg, for it was during that year that men halted in their race for riches and gave more than ordinary attention to the things of comfort, relaxation and ease.¹

Mary Schenley's offer to donate her Mt. Airy Tract for the creation of a public park came at a time when the desire for riches that accompanied the thriving steel industry promoted capitalist gain at the expense of many things: the environment, safe labor practices, working conditions, wages, and for some, a sense of civic virtue in the city. The *Pittsburg Dispatch* declared that Schenley's offer was "the noblest donation that has ever been proposed to Pittsburg."² Once the park acquisition became official, the popular newspaper celebrated the park as "a testimony of pride in the place and of interest in its welfare."³ Just under two decades later, the 1908 text, *A Century and a Half of Pittsburg and Her People*, identified Schenley Park as "a gift royal," which "ushered in a new and better era for Pittsburg and her progressive people. From that date on they saw pleasure, not alone in gold and bonds and steel-plate, but in trees, rocks, flowers, birds, and the general enjoyment of nature, with such cultivation as man could add to such things."⁴ Schenley Park ushered in a new era in development of public space, urban progress, and civic participation.

¹ John Newton Boucher, *A Century and a Half of Pittsburg and Her People* (New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1908), 469.

² "The Mt. Airy Park," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Sept. 18, 1889.

³ "Influence of the Schenley Gift," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Nov. 6, 1889.

⁴ Boucher, *A Century and a Half*, 469.

The enduring tensions of progress and preservation – of industry, of the environment, of the city and its people – are vividly illustrated in discourse of the early introduction and development of Schenley Park. As industry brought greater economic growth and wealth to the city it also brought corruption, pollution, and social turmoil. Increased fragmentation and division of laborers and employers contributed to civil unrest that threatened the stability of industry. “Good” citizens made for good business while “civic ugliness” created concern among potential business investors, incentivizing Pittsburgh-based capitalists to investment in urban reform.⁵ Pittsburgh’s large immigrant and labor populations were experiencing job insecurity, exploitative working conditions, and a lack of opportunities for rejuvenation outside the home or factory. At the same time, middle and upper middle-class progressive reformers were caught between fear of corrupt elite businessmen and politicians and fear of uncivilized and virtue-less immigrant and lower-class inhabitants. The introduction of public parks by city officials addressed and alleviated numerous and immense concerns of the diverse range of urban inhabitants regarding Pittsburgh’s industrial development.

In this chapter, I trace how citizenship is entangled with rhetoric of parks in the introduction of Pittsburgh’s Schenley Park. I examine historical newspaper columns, letters to the editor, testimony from public officials, and documentation of public address given in the parks.⁶ I argue that rhetoric of Schenley Park reinforced progressive narratives of the good citizen as enacted through the pursuit of moral, wholesome time spent in parks. Wealthy elite saw themselves as tasked with the responsibility of shaping the public experience for less privileged inhabitants

⁵ Francis G. Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh: Class and Culture in an Industrializing City 1877-1919* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 95.

⁶ I searched the Library of Congress database for newspaper articles that matched hits for “Schenley Park” from 1889-1892 and received over 1,000 results. The majority of these findings come from the *Pittsburg Dispatch*, a Republican leaning paper that was known as the official paper of Allegheny County.

through philanthropic giving for the establishment of educating and elevating public cultural resources. Pittsburgh's first regional park introduced public urban space designed specifically for pleasure and civic engagement. Capitalist donations of additional public institutions, like libraries and conservatories, inspired widespread debate over the meaning of values such as virtue, citizenship, and nature. The use of Schenley Park for family gatherings, music concerts, patriotic celebrations, housing other public institutions, and offering recreation activities like golf, biking, and horseback riding, all support a radically renegotiated understanding of citizenship and civic life, particularly as enacted in public space.

In the first section of this chapter I provide a brief history of Mary Schenley and the story of how she came to donate ground for the creation of Pittsburgh's first regional park. Second, I examine the case for nature as a counterpart of industry in Pittsburgh's urban rebirth by historicizing the cultural context in which Schenley Park was created, examining class and difference in the park, and identifying new public programming. I then turn to consider how philanthropic donations both promised a better life for the general public and at the same time masked the systemic inequality rooted in industrial development. I include consideration for tensions between criticism and commemoration of new public resources to reveal how both the city's elite and laborers struggled to redefine public space and public life to create a more equitable society.

2.1 Schenley Park

Young Mary Croghan moved from Louisville, Kentucky to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania in 1828 with her father William Croghan Jr., following the death of her mother, Mary O'Hara, and

brother, Will Croghan.⁷ Mary Croghan inherited her mother's vast estate, including the 300-acre Mt. Airy Tract, left by her maternal grandfather Colonel James O'Hara, making her the largest property owner in Allegheny County at just two years old. While away at finishing school on Stanton Island, Mary Croghan, then 15, eloped to England with Captain Edward W. Schenley, aged 43, taking the name Mary Schenley. News of the scandal made headlines around the world, resulting in the Pennsylvania state legislature passing a bill that placed Mary Schenley's inheritance into the ownership of her father. Following William Croghan Jr.'s death in 1850, Mary Schenley's inheritance was finally returned to her, valued at \$50 million in land and other assets.

While Schenley was living in London, Pittsburgh's growing steel industry expanded along the downtown and three rivers, polluting the air, water, and land. The labor and immigrant population lived in increasingly cramped central housing while Schenley's property remained undeveloped wilderness. Schenley made two proposals to donate 135-acres of her Mt. Airy Tract to the City of Pittsburg for the creation of a public park, first, in 1872, and again in 1880, but received no reply from city officials. When speculating about the earlier failures of the city to accept Mary Schenley's offer, councilman and attorney for the Schenley Estate, Robert Carnahan suggested that city officials had "too many other matters to attend to to think of the offer."⁸ Pittsburgh had not yet experienced its rapid population growth, and farmland and woodland were still easily accessible to all inhabitants within city limits. However, debates over the necessity of public parks continued throughout the 1880s. The city's wealthy citizens, who already had access

⁷ A spelling error in the city charter, granted on March 18, 1816, named Pittsburgh as "Pittsburg," accidentally leaving off the intended "-h," resulting in inconsistent naming of the city. In 1891, a decision was made by the United States Board on Geographic Names to standardize place names. This included the general principle that place names ending in -burgh should drop the final -h, rendering the city, Pittsburg. Official city documents, however, continued to use the old spelling of "Pittsburgh." The Board reversed their decision on July 19, 1911, restoring the official city name to Pittsburgh following mounting resistance to the name change. As such, the names Pittsburg/Pittsburgh are both used and quoted throughout this chapter to reflect historical accuracies as well as contemporary reference.

⁸ "Carnahan Blushes," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Nov. 14, 1889.

to private nature spaces, argued that parks were vital to civilize their poorer urban counterparts by providing an alternative to rowdy pastimes. Laborers, however, had greater priorities for their wellbeing than aesthetic improvements to the natural landscape.⁹ From 1870 to 1890, the population of Pittsburgh more than doubled, exceeding 200,000 inhabitants and placing increased stress on the natural environment and on city officials to provide livable space for inhabitants. The rise of downtown's central business district by the 1890s "sharply segregated work from leisure and one social class from another," radically shifting "bonds of class and community which had undergirded the social balance of power in the Iron City," making clear the need for radical transformation to the urban environment.¹⁰

In 1889, following the death of Captain Edward W. Schenley, Mary Schenley reached out to the City of Pittsburg again, now desiring to donate 300-acres of her land for the creation of a park. She was finally able to facilitate a deal with Carnahan and Edward Manning Bigelow, the city's Chief of Public Works. Schenley had two stipulations for the donation of her land: first, that the land be used for a park and second, that the land never be sold. Schenley's understanding of the value of parks was shaped through her own experience living directly opposite London's Hyde Park. In that capacity, she witnessed Hyde Park's transformation from privately used royal grounds to being open for the enjoyment of the public, including the construction of its grand entrance, The Great Exhibition of 1851, and its use as a Speakers' Corner for public speaking, discussion, and debate. During one of Bigelow's trips to London, she told him, "Make it a park for the people" and "a place where the masses will find welcome and entertainment."¹¹ Word reached Bigelow

⁹ Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh*; Robert Lewis, "Frontier and Civilization in the Thought of Frederick Law Olmsted," *American Quarterly* 29 (1977); Roy Rosenzweig, "Middle-Class Parks and working-Class Play: The struggle over recreational space in Worcester, Massachusetts, 1870-1910," *Radical History Review* 21 (1979).

¹⁰ Couvares, 82 and 83.

¹¹ "An Option Secured," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Sept. 2, 1890.

that Schenley's real estate agent, A. W. Naylor, was making arrangements to sail to England in attempts to dissuade Schenley from donating her property in November 1889 after several months of negotiations. That same night, Bigelow sent Carnahan to catch a three A.M. train to New York to set sail on the *Etruria*, heading to London. By time Schenley's real estate agent arrived two days later, Carnahan had secured Schenley's donation of her Mt. Airy Tract for the creation of a public park. In describing the successful transaction, Bigelow declared that, "this has been the dream of my life and is at last a reality. The park will be established, and there is not the slightest doubt that the necessary appropriations will be made."¹² Bigelow's successful parks acquisition quickly earned him the nickname "Father of the Parks."¹³

New city land acquisition made clear the politicized nature of park space and the role it played in amplifying the wealth gap of urban citizens and inhabitants from the start. The rapid increase in population growth that accompanied the boom of the steel industry brought an incredible surge in the cost of real estate, adding to immense public interest in Schenley's donation.¹⁴ One article in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* described how "Mrs. Schenley was notified that she could have \$1,500 per acre for the property throughout. To this she replied, the necessity of a public park had been so urgently impressed upon her, that she would certainly reserve some of the property for the city's use."¹⁵ Schenley received dozens of letters from Pittsburgh residents who advised her not to give her property to the city. Some believed that the park acquisition was a scheme for rich city officials to raise their property value located near the park borders.¹⁶ One

¹² "The Schenley Park," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Nov. 5, 1889.

¹³ "Edward Manning Bigelow," Pittsburgh Art Places, <http://www.pittsburghartplaces.org/accounts/view/290>.

¹⁴ In my search for "Schenley Park" in the Library of Congress database from 1889-1892, hundreds of results were in real estate ads, referencing the proximity of property to the park.

¹⁵ "From Mrs. Schenley," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Nov. 13, 1889.

¹⁶ "The Schenley Park."

article in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* exclaimed that “some of the best known capitalists of Pittsburg” had “announced their wish to purchase the grounds for the erection of handsome squares of Aristocratic Residences, inclosing iron-fenced lawns, to which none could gain admission except the residents of the surrounding houses.”¹⁷ Others still warned that the parks would cause more trouble than their worth, creating political conflict and would not be properly cared for.¹⁸ Despite opposition, the parks donation became official and with it, the development of civic institutions and resources within the public park and wealthy private estates at its borders. Schenley Park provided, for the first time, a large public space for public engagement by all classes of people, promising to forever change public life in the city by creating what has come to be affectionately known as “Pittsburgh’s civic park.”¹⁹

2.2 The Case for Nature in Pittsburgh’s Urban Rebirth

Urban parks are carefully curated nature sites designed to reflect the values of their creators; in the 1890s, they were believed to inspire moral behavior deemed necessary for good citizenship. While industrialization relied on the pillaging of the earth’s natural resources and its laborers, national parks were rhetorically figured as a counter-force that preserved the life of the land and the morality of people, making parks both “natural and national, not to mention

¹⁷ “From Mrs. Schenley.”

¹⁸ “From Mrs. Schenley.”

¹⁹ “Schenley Park,” *Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy*, accessed September 8, 2020. <https://www.pittsburghparks.org/schenley-park>.

‘American.’”²⁰ Kevin DeLuca’s examination of the early national parks development in the 1870s illustrates how “the idea of wilderness is both a product of and a protest against industrialism.”²¹ While less wild than national parks, urban planners similarly hoped that urban parks would preserve natural space that could counter the harmful effects of industrialization. My examination of tensions present in rhetorical framing of parks illustrates how efforts toward Americanization rely on the manipulation of environments – social, natural, economic, political, cultural – to normalize desired institutional ideals. Kenneth R. Olwig explains, “when seen in this light, parks become places where we ‘reinvent nature’ in our own image, and hence good places to study the reflections of that image.”²² The desire to create and preserve natural environments in cities, reflected a radical shift from the prior division of culture and nature places by city and countryside. As referenced in my introduction chapter, the parks movement built on early urban cemeteries. In this section, I look to rhetoric of Schenley Park that emphasizes its value for bringing nature to the city. I begin with outlining the changing urban landscape to offer context for the rhetorical situation in which Schenley Park is created. Next, I examine why Schenley Park creates a desirable public space for the mingling of class. I then turn to consider the types of public programming that emerged in park space.

²⁰ Kenneth Olwig “Reinventing Common Nature: Yosemite and Mount Rushmore – A Meandering Tale of a Double Nature,” in *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature*, ed. William Cronon (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1995), 380.

²¹ Kevin DeLuca, “Salvaging Wilderness from the Tomb of History: A Response to *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*,” *Environmental Communication* 4, no. 4 (2010): 488.

²² Olwig, 380.

2.2.1 A New Urban Landscape

The demand for iron that accompanied the War of 1812 transformed Pittsburgh from the small and wild ‘Gateway to the West’ to a thriving industrial city. When Pittsburgh was incorporated as a city in 1816, its population was well under 10,000 inhabitants, and its landscape included vast stretches of farmland, hilly ravines, wilderness, rivers, and a wealth of natural resources. Over the next several decades, its population over tripled in size as Pittsburgh became established first as the Iron City and later as the Steel City. Population growth and industrial development brought rapid abuse of the city’s natural resources, devastation of its environmental landscape, and debate over changing cultural ideals of citizenship and belonging as the city and its people navigated tensions of progress and preservation.²³

The rise of the Steel City changed Pittsburgh’s cultural environment. In the mid-nineteenth century, Pittsburgh was one of the largest cities west of the Allegheny Mountains. Known as a manufacturing giant of commercial goods including glass, iron, brass, and tin, booming new industries attracted mass immigration to fill jobs in mills, shipyards, and coalfields.²⁴ The skilled labor required for performing manufacturing tasks resulted in strong collective working-class consciousness.²⁵ Working-class culture was enacted in public space, particularly on Saturday afternoons after the ironworks let out, where “downtown Pittsburgh became the scene of ‘a decent carnival,’” reflecting the dominant visual presence of the immigrant and lower-class in public space.²⁶ Technological advances from 1860-1890 benefited the steel industry, resulting in it

²³ Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964).

²⁴ “Preservepgh: Executive Summary,” *City of Pittsburgh*, 2012.

²⁵ Couavares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 30.

²⁶ Couavares, 37.

replacing the iron industry as the economic driver of Pittsburgh. The accompanying shift in demand from skilled to unskilled labor resulted in the reorganization of work dynamics, another surge of mass immigration, breakdown in labor solidarity, and the restructuring of urban space, ultimately transforming everyday life in the city.²⁷ The establishment of a central business district, suburbanization, and the rapidly changing social geography of Pittsburgh separated “work from leisure and one social class from another” as the city expanded.²⁸ New public transportation in the form of streetcars allowed for spatial expansion and metropolitanization.²⁹ Topography contributed to division, particularly among working class laborers, as the hilly landscape quite literally cut neighborhoods off from one another, resulting in social, ethnic, and economic isolationism. The “reorganization of urban space” shattered the sites “within which workers had exercised significant power,” and reflected the emergence of “a more assertive elite culture.”³⁰ In sum, Pittsburgh’s transformation from the Iron City to the Steel City contributed to fragmentation of the working class and reorganization of the city’s social dynamics, ultimately changing how citizenship and belonging were understood and enacted in the city, with elite citizens as the drivers of cultural change.

The rapid changes Pittsburgh experienced in its transformation from Iron City to Steel City contributed to what John Bauman and Edward Muller describe as the city’s “urban rebirth” in the 1890s.³¹ Inclusion of nature in urban space was perceived to be essential for the future of civic wellbeing and preservation of American identity. In examining the politics of America’s urban

²⁷ Pittsburgh’s population grew by almost 200,000 from 1860-1890, with about 2/3rds having foreign parentage, and 1/3rd foreign born themselves.

²⁸ Couvares, 31 & 82.

²⁹ Sam Bass Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston (1870-1900)* (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978).

³⁰ Couvares, 3.

³¹ John Bauman and Edward Muller, *Before Renaissance: Planning in Pittsburgh, 1889-1943* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006), 4.

parks, Galen Cranz highlights how “park proponents argued that the presence of these green expanses could do much to alleviate the problems of city life.”³² Progressive beliefs that being in nature promoted moral wellness points to why parks were framed as valuable sites for influencing public understanding and enactment of citizenship in American industrial cities like Pittsburgh, especially in contrast with corrupting influences of modernization.

Many of Pittsburgh’s civic leaders who championed the parks movement are identifiable as progressive reformers. Progressive reformers believed that through human engineering of nature, civic institutions could produce virtuous, safer, healthier, happier, and more productive people and places, although, the specifics of those conceptions varied widely. In his edited collection that examines rhetoric and reform in the progressive era, J. Michael Hogan identifies that while the term “progressives” sounds inherently positive, its open-ended emphasis on “enthusiasm for change” means that it can be inclusive of anyone from liberals to white supremacists to elitists.³³ Notable for the purposes of this dissertation, is Hogan’s observation that the Progressive Era can be understood as a “*rhetorical renaissance* that changed how Americans *talked* about politics and society.”³⁴ Fundamentally, progressives “looked for answers in a revitalized public sphere,” making discourse over the introduction of the public park a vital space for shaping new ideals and practices of urban reform.

Pittsburgh’s middle-class progressive reformers desire for urban change reflected their anxiety over the growth of urban “slums” and foreign-born laborers who inhabited those spaces.

³² Galen Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1982), 5.

³³ J. Michael Hogan, *Rhetoric and Reform in the Progressive Era: A Rhetorical History of the United States Volume VI* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2003), ix.

³⁴ Hogan, x.

David Cisneros explains how, “more often than not, the immigrant is ‘a source of fear’ and anxiety, a threat to national unity and the cultural integrity of the nation,” driving institutional desires to promote and preserve national identity.³⁵ Progressive reformers believed civic responsibility demanded promotion of urban reform in order to save virtuous Americans from vice and train immigrants in proper patriotic behavior.³⁶ They emphasized that “given the proper institutions and environment, all persons, regardless of birth or social standing, were capable of becoming active and valued participants in republican government,” justifying urban reform as a means of addressing fear and anxiety over immigration.³⁷ Leslie Hahner’s examination of discourses of vice at the turn of the twentieth-century reveals how regional planning was used by progressive reformers to resolve civic unrest and anxiety that accompanied modernization at the turn of the twentieth century by creating a more orderly and easily surveilled urban landscape.³⁸ Bigelow’s parks project offered progressives sites for increased monitoring, control, and public surveillance through instructional reform of undesirable civic behavior in public space.³⁹

Urban reform was complicated by a culture of distrust in the local government. Notorious politicians Christopher Magee and William Flinn consolidated Republican power within the city and Allegheny County to control public works projects and consequently urban life. Progressive reformers’ distrusted city political “bosses” and believed institutional changes at the governmental level were needed before Pittsburgh could truly be reborn as a moral environment. Bigelow quickly

³⁵ Josue David Cisneros, “(Re)bordering the Civic Imaginary: Rhetoric, Hybridity, and Citizenship in *La Gran Marcha*,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 1(2011): 29.

³⁶ Bauman and Muller, *Before Renaissance*, 37.

³⁷ Lawrence W. Rosenfield, “Central Park and the Celebration of Civic Virtue,” in *American Rhetoric: Context and Criticism*, ed. Thomas Benson (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989): 222.

³⁸ Leslie Hahner, *To Become an American: Immigrants and Americanization Campaigns of the Early Twentieth Century* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2017).

³⁹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1980).

earned a reputation as “married to the ring,” referencing his close relationship with political elites like Magee and Flinn, who aided in his ability to acquire and develop park land.⁴⁰ Problematic characteristics of industrialization including mass immigration, poor health, inhumane labor conditions, overcrowding, environmental pollution, and social turbulence, revealed Pittsburgh to be a city struggling with economic growth and cultural and social changes. What was evidenced as growing social disorder in the city heightened progressives’ commitment to “moral environmentalism,” and the belief that the natural environment offered a superior life compared to the urban social and physical environment.⁴¹ Progressive reformers’ perception of political corruption was echoed by other local institutions. Pittsburgh’s Civic Club of Allegheny County and the Chamber of Commerce, both founded in 1887, became predominant forces for opposing “civic ugliness” that accompanied industrialization through their dedication to civic improvement, including addressing the corruption of government.⁴² While their initiatives supported progressive reformers’ goals, they also appealed to wealthy business owners, who understood that the pollution, disease, and disorder of the city ultimately risked undermining economic growth.

My examination of progressive reformers’ rhetoric reveals how moral environmentalism promoted the inclusion of natural landscaping in the urban environment to counter the moral corruption of the growing steel industry.⁴³ The popular movement for “muscular Christianity” in the mid-nineteenth century strengthened rhetorical connections between hard work and healthful time spent in nature, supporting Bigelow’s desire to develop opportunities for play, sport, and recreation in Schenley Park.⁴⁴ Schenley Park was identified as a place where “pleasure-seekers”

⁴⁰ Bauman and Muller, *Before Renaissance*, 20.

⁴¹ Bauman and Muller, 10.

⁴² Bauman and Muller, 39.

⁴³ Bauman and muller, 10.

⁴⁴ Bauman and Muller, 37.

could go to spend their time in the nature rather than corrupting institutions like saloons, brothels, and gambling rings.⁴⁵ The first full year that Schenley Park was open to the public coincided with the introduction of Saturday half-holidays, as provided by the Legislature of 1890, where all employees of state and municipal buildings would receive summer half-holidays from June 15 through September 15. Mayor Henry Gourley responded to the holiday in a speech given at City Hall and later published in the *Pittsburg Dispatch*, where he offered advice for how workers should spend their summer holiday time, further illustrating popular support for the connections between nature and religion. Gourley stated:

Take my advice, go out into the parks or into the country, put in the afternoons vigorously exercising in the open air, go home then, eat a hearty supper and go to bed. If you do this you will rise Sunday morning early, after a refreshing sleep, prepared to go to church and listen to a good sermon and to put in a full day of perfect rest. A summer of Saturdays spent in this way will make you more valuable to the city, more healthy and vigorous in every way, and will render unnecessary a trip to the seashore later in the season.⁴⁶

Time spent in the parks offered wholesome entertainment that provided an alternative to leisure activities that were seen as less desirable, such as pool halls and saloons and even more importantly, produced more productive citizens.⁴⁷ Increased access to alcohol, gambling, and prostitution were rhetorically figured as threatening the wellbeing of civil society, resulting in demand by reformists for increased regulation.⁴⁸ Gourley promoted connections between nature and the production of moral and spiritual citizens by pairing parks and church attendance to fill citizens' weekends. A weekend of nature and religion promised citizens would return to the work during the week as more productive and valuable laborers, contributing to the economic strength of the city.

⁴⁵ "Picnics in the Park," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, June 27, 1892.

⁴⁶ "Clerks Get a Rest," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, June 12, 1892.

⁴⁷ Bauman and Muller, *Before Renaissance*.

⁴⁸ Hahner, *To Become an American*.

Progressives' predominant belief in the civilizing qualities of nature afforded Bigelow broad support for the rapid growth of the parks system. Parks were promoted as "lungs of the city in the battle against pestilence and disease," provided "democratic spaces and act[ed] as a civilizing tool in the war against chaos and civil disorder."⁴⁹ The anthropomorphizing of urban parks became a popular approach for media to explain parks' value to their audience. In a "Snapshot of the Season," one urban inhabitant described Schenley Park as "the lungs of Pittsburgh," and declared that "good lungs guarantee longevity," suggesting that some inhabitants embraced narratives of park value as intertwined with longevity of the environment and urban life.⁵⁰ Progressive elites "believed that a good natural and social environment not only boosted the city's economy, but also uplifted the physical and moral health of the citizenry."⁵¹ In particular, Schenley Park's central location in the city and immense popularity as a site for the promotion of public resources quickly earned it the nickname as Pittsburgh's Civic Park. The development of Pittsburgh's large regional parks system in the 1890s, first with Schenley Park and later with Highland Park, introduced green space that, unlike its rural cemetery antecedents, was designed explicitly for public use and enjoyment.

⁴⁹ Bauman and Muller, *Before Renaissance*, 27.

⁵⁰ "Snapshots in Season," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Sept. 3, 1890.

⁵¹ Joel Tarr, *Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and Its Region* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 33.

2.2.2 The Mingling of Class

*The residents of the twenty-second ward walked the streets with a more erect air and sprightly step, feeling some three inches taller in spite of the depressing condition of the atmosphere as who should say “we are the park people.”*⁵²

Equality was rhetorically constructed by urban visionaries as a core value of urban public parks development. An article in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* described how “rank loses itself when it crosses the bridge and caste is buried somewhere in Panther Hollow in a nameless grave.”⁵³ Ross-Bryant argues, “the park idea thus creates a space that celebrates values that conflict with other American values, but in this place they can be held together. There is thus an overarching affirmation of community, even as the more expected, ‘American’ emphasis on the individual in solitude is affirmed.”⁵⁴ In practice, however, park planning promoted an ideology that bringing the rich and the poor together would elevate rather than equalize class difference. Lawrence Rosenfield explains that “public parks were manifestly suitable socializing vehicles for the democratic experiment.”⁵⁵ Disparities of class in the city were by and large absent in discourse about the parks. The perceived neutralization of economic and social class became an important element in early park rhetoric. In his examination of early American parks, Galen Cranz notes that, “from the first, park spokespersons studiously avoided the controversial subject of social or economic class, or handled it by pronouncements of its meaningless or neutralization within park

⁵² “Carnahan Blushes,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, November 14, 1889

⁵³ “Patriots in a Park,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, July 5, 1892.

⁵⁴ Lynn Ross-Bryant, “Ken Burns and American Mythology in *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*,” *Environmental Communication* 4, no. 4 (2010): 476-477.

⁵⁵ Rosenfield, “Central Park,” 222.

boundaries.”⁵⁶ Cranz explains, “This neutralization, in fact, was an important element in early park ideology. Urbanists saw the pleasure ground as an important arena for the preservation of democracy, since it is in people from different walks of life could rub shoulders and dissipate class hostilities and rivalries.”⁵⁷

The “‘imagined’ community” rhetorically invoked by people of power in planning for the development of space significantly shapes who will come to use a given environment, and consequently, who will not.⁵⁸ Popular media accounts promoted the opportunities parks provided “for mingling among those of different economic classes and cultures.”⁵⁹ Early in the first months of good weather following the opening of Schenley, Postmaster Myler stated, “I think it would be one of the best things out if the parks were thrown open to various entertainments. Let the public seek joy and contentment by rolling in the grass, and have a balloon ascension. Anything to have the people meet, say ‘how-do-you-do’ to one another and eat peanuts and gingerbread.”⁶⁰ One article from the *Pittsburg Dispatch* described how, “The parks were appreciated yesterday. They were thronged with young and old, the poor and the proud, the grave and the gay – in short, by everybody who had 10 cents to get there and back, and ability to enjoy an outing in the green fields and leafy glens.”⁶¹ Newspaper coverage in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* repeatedly emphasized the park as enjoyed together by all urban inhabitants.

⁵⁶ Cranz, *The Politics of Parks Design*, 183.

⁵⁷ Cranz 183.

⁵⁸ Janis L. Edwards “Locating Nihonmachi: Urban Erasure, Memory, and Visibility in Japantown, USA,” in *Communicative Cities in the 21st Century: The Urban Communication Reader III*, eds. Matthew D. Matsaganis, Victoria J. Gallagher, and Susan J. Drucker (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2013), 176. See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 2016).

⁵⁹ Rosenfield, “Central Park,” 223.

⁶⁰ “Patriotism in the Parks,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, June 19, 1890.

⁶¹ “People Pack the Parks,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Aug. 3, 1891.

A closer examination of popular recreation opportunities suggests inequitable access to Schenley Park's resources. While some parks improvements and events catered to a wide range of audiences, such as picnic areas, lakes, a botanical garden, zoo, and special programming like the Fourth of July festivities and free music concerts, even those events were marked by race, class, access, and gender inequity, with individuals excluded from participation or made out to be the entertainment rather than audience of it. Most park features directly catered to the more affluent interests of the upper class, including driving ovals and sporting venues for baseball, tennis, riding, bicycling, tennis, and golf. Schenely Park's spatial location on the perimeter of the East End, known for its proximity to millionaire's row, and internal development projects, including a golf course and country club, racetrack for horses, bridle trails, and driving range, geographically and spatially figured Schenley Park as belonging to the wealthy. Newspaper accounts of "driving day in Schenley Park," and the observation that, "from the stylish surrey, victoria, coupe and family carriage to the democratic buggy, every desirable thing on wheels was represented," suggest that Schenley Park promoted new elite cultural practices.⁶² It was observed in one article how, "since Schenley Park opened its gates, the local demand for fine carriages has materially increased. [...]

Schenley Park has been the means of bringing about a new era in the manufacture of vehicles in Pittsburg."⁶³ The fields for athletic recreation, hygienic facilities, race-course, roadways, and vistas made trips to the park for the less affluent a way of visualizing the good life. Park amenities thought to only be accessible to the middle and upper middle class served as symbolic reminders to

⁶² "Schenley Park Crowded," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Aug. 25, 1890; "A Sunday in the Park," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Sept. 22, 1890.

⁶³ "Pittsburg's Fine Carriages," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Oct. 4, 1891.

persuade working class visitors that they too might one day achieve beyond their social status, a sentiment widely promoted but rarely achieved.⁶⁴

While rhetoric of the democratizing nature of parks highlighted inclusivity and togetherness, a closer examination of the everyday use and spatial arrangement of the park reveals how physical design actively discouraged mingling across class. Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar explain that “the distinctive character of parks are largely defined in and through ‘patterns of use.’”⁶⁵ They write, “the people who claim access to this public space constitute the cultural public,” identifying the significant rhetorical power of place in citizenship.⁶⁶ Landscape architect for Schenley Park, John Culyer, explained how parks “are a necessary recreation, not for one class, but for all the people. A rich man enjoys a drive over the smooth roads amid the fresh, pure atmosphere, but his less fortunate neighbor, who gets less recreation and enjoys it more, derives equal pleasure and greater physical benefit from a ramble in the park.”⁶⁷ Separate but supposedly equal opportunities for engagement did not fulfill their promise of the park as a site accessible to all people of the city. An article in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* observed, “the fact is that the park, as laid out today, is more of a horseman’s carriage owner’s, and a bicyclist’s resort than a place of recreation for the multitudinous pedestrian.”⁶⁸ The installation of multiple varied drives, walks, pathways, and bridges enabled the free flow of different types of movement, so that people of all social, economic, and ethnic groups could make common use of parks in each other’s presence, however, importantly, without actually needing to engage with one another. The rich often traveled throughout the park in cars on the driving ranges and participated in recreation

⁶⁴ Thomas Benson, *American Rhetoric: Context and Criticism* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989).

⁶⁵ Rosenzweig and Blackmar, *The Park and the People*, 6.

⁶⁶ Rosenzweig and Blackmar, 6.

⁶⁷ “Parks Profitable,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, May 19, 1892.

⁶⁸ “Coolness is Coming,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Oct. 5, 1891.

activities such as horseback riding and golf, while the poor traveled through the park on footpaths away from the roads and could not afford the same opportunities for recreation because of financial or time constraints.

Many working-class families lived on the city borders, miles from Schenley Park and before street cars became more widely available to ease accessibility. Conflict over the accessibility of public space to those individuals was made clear in the petition for the Allegheny Arsenal to be turned over for the creation of a park in Lawrenceville, “the home of the industrious workmen.”⁶⁹ On January 1, 1890, a few months after the gift of Schenley Park became official, the Lawrenceville petition declared, “now that a benevolent lady, Mrs. Schenley, donates a large tract of land near Oakland, it is not too much to expect that Uncle Sam, who is much richer than Mrs. Schenley, will accede to the request of the Lawrenceville petitioners.”⁷⁰ The petition’s demand that the government provide public space in the city reveals how parks were used by citizens for civic engagement, both through processes of use and acquisition. The request for the establishment of a park in Lawrenceville reflected the topographical influence of the city on quality of life for its inhabitants. The petition continued,

No part of the city is more deserving of a park than Lawrenceville. Most of the residents of the district are the sons of toil. In the hot summer days the men work in the mills, and it can be truly said of them that they “earn their bread by the sweat of their brow.” After these men finish their days’ work it is too far for them to go to Allegheny or the Schenley Park.⁷¹

The petition for a park in Lawrenceville outlined a different need for public green space than seen with Schenley Park. Rather than need for a civic space, the petition described how working people deserve a park so that they might have a place of rest away from factory pollution, their

⁶⁹ “A New Park Petition,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Jan. 1, 1890.

⁷⁰ “A New Park Petition.”

⁷¹ “A New Park Petition.”

overcrowded working class dwellings, and altogether nearer to their homes. Dr. Covert, a prominent physician of Lawrenceville was included as expert testimony in the petition explaining that “for years the people have longed for such a place, where the hard-worked men in our factories and mills can go after their labors are over to breath pure air and rest their bodies.”⁷² He continued, “The laboring men, those who toil in our mills, deserve a resting and a breathing place. Their only place now is to loaf on their doorsteps. They cannot get the pure air in the closed up streets. Having a park to go to would conduce to greater social intimacy among the people.”⁷³ Covert’s narrative highlights the perceived value of parks both for their health benefits as well as their potential for initiating greater social intimacy. The need for new public space to facilitate greater social intimacy speaks to the significant physical changes experienced in the urban landscape following the breakdown of labor solidarity in the 1880s.

Schenley Park was not only spatially inaccessible to many urban inhabitants, social difference limited immigrants’ capacity to benefit from the new park as well. While expected to attend patriotic celebrations, demonstrate the behavior of good virtuous citizens, and benefit from the civilizing qualities of time spent in the park, non-citizens were excluded from more tangible benefits Schenley Park offered, such as employment. An article published in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* described how a Hungarian who had only been in the United States for a few days applied for employment at Schenley Park. He “ran against some jokers,” who “gravely informed him that the position vacant was that of hostler to the bear, which is now quite a chunk of an animal.”⁷⁴ The Hungarian accepted the perilous position; he brushed the bear and “completed his job” with “no

⁷² “A New Park Petition.”

⁷³ “A New Park Petition.” See also Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 75.

⁷⁴ “He Curried the Bear,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Aug. 4, 1890.

clothes on worth mentioning.”⁷⁵ After the “jokesters” felt entertained, they then “had to buy the Hungarian a new suit of clothes, and being unable to furnish him with a situation, the city having made no provision for a bear keeper, they made up a little purse as an acknowledgement of the man’s pluck.”⁷⁶ Superintendent McKnight and Controller Morrow faced criticism from Mayor Gourley for their employment of Italian laborers at the Park. When questioned “why he was signing warrants for the payoff aliens when the city laws implicitly state that only citizens of the United States should be given employment on the public works,” Controller Morrow replied that “it was impossible to obtain American laborers, and therefore the city had to employ Italians.” He continued, “If I could get a sufficient number of American citizens, I would discharge every Italian in the Park. I am willing to give citizens work and give them the preference, but they won’t come. I cannot be expected to take a fish net and go about through the streets of Pittsburgh capturing all the American citizens who have no work. Any that will come can find a job.”⁷⁷ The exceptional labor of immigrant workers in the park demonstrated the precarious nature of pursuing quality of life in the city as an immigrant. While Gourley criticized employment of immigrants in public works, he advocated for their patriotic commitment to America. In his 1892 Fourth of July address, Mayor Gourley praised the inclusion of diverse citizenship:

Before the men of Italy, the men of Austria, the men of Germany, the men of Scotland, the men of unhappy Ireland, the men of Asia, the men of the isles of the sea, who are crowding our shores in the search of happier homes under brighter skies, let us hold up the sublime achievements of our patriot dead, who established in this new world a refuge for the exile and a home for the oppressed of every land and of every clime.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ “He Curried the Bear.”

⁷⁶ “He Curried the Bear.”

⁷⁷ “Italians Must Go,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Aug. 14, 1890.

⁷⁸ “Welcomed by the Mayor,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, July 5, 1892.

In this address, Gourley promoted the Fourth of July celebration as valuable for the patriotic education of the city's large immigrant population. Gourley's desire for his audience to admire and share the same achievements as "our patriotic dead," however, reflected the impossible task faced by immigrants when those same opportunities are not made available.⁷⁹ Schenley Park did not create an equitable site for the mingling of class, so much as it revealed the drastically inequitable access to public space.

2.2.3 Public Programming

Public programming played a critical role in promoting the newly established parks system. Events like weekly music concerts and the *Pittsburg Dispatch's* proposed "idea of an old-fashioned Fourth of July" celebration held in Schenley Park introduced the general public to the value of the parks as a public resource.⁸⁰ As Leslie Hahner argues, the rituals of the Fourth of July "tutor[s] participants in appropriate conduct" through "publicizing American values."⁸¹ The *Pittsburg Dispatch* published numerous calls for the old-fashioned celebration to be recognized as a "permanent institution" to establish a new and ritualized tradition in the city of Pittsburgh.⁸² Over a month before the third annual Fourth of July celebration in the park, the *Pittsburg Dispatch* posted a letter from Mayor Gourley sharing his desire that all people attend the public event. He wrote, "The day we celebrate is rapidly approaching again. We propose to observe it in a fitting and appropriate manner. We want the people of all conditions and classes and creeds to participate

⁷⁹ "Welcomed by the Mayor."

⁸⁰ "Everybody Likes It," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, June 14, 1890.

⁸¹ Hahner, *To Become an American*, xxii.

⁸² See, for example, "Fun for the Fourth," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, May 11, 1891; "An Old-Time Fourth," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, May 17, 1892; "Parks Profitable," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, May 19, 1892; "A Handful of Earth," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Jul. 6, 1892.

in this great anniversary festival. We want the old and the young, we want the 50,000 children of our two cities to contribute, by their presence, to the interest and success of the occasion.”⁸³ Gourley’s aim of uniting people of differing backgrounds in the same place with the shared aim of celebrating America normalized patriotic demonstration as linked with good citizenship. The popularity of those celebrations reveals Bigelow’s “ability to define public space.”⁸⁴

Organizers of the Fourth of July celebration used the event to instill patriotic values in children, demonstrating the perceived power of public ritual and tradition for influencing the beliefs, values, and actions of ideal citizens.⁸⁵ Landscape architect and civil engineer Colonel John Culyer was brought from New York by Bigelow to aid in the development of Schenley Park. Culyer expressed his support for hosting the Fourth of July in Schenley Park, arguing how, “Open-air jubilees are good things to teach the rising generation love of country, and it is thus how parks contribute their share to preserve the nation.”⁸⁶ Superintendent Morris W. Mead, of the Bureau of Electricity described the significance of the park celebration for children in anticipation of the first Fourth:

Children should be brought up with a full understanding of the duties incumbent upon them as citizens, and should be so imbued with love of country that any sacrifice they might be called upon to make [...] its sake would be offered willingly. I firmly believe that if this celebration is held next month it will never be allowed to lapse, but will become a regular institution of Pittsburg. In the years to come, say 20 or 30 years hence, the children of to-day will tell their children about the first Fourth of July celebration ever held in Schenley Park. I believe the proposed demonstrating will become an event which will be handed down in the history of the United States.⁸⁷

⁸³ “An Old-Time Fourth.” Allegheny City was not annexed by the City of Pittsburgh until 1907.

⁸⁴ Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 111.

⁸⁵ Hahner, *To Become an American*.

⁸⁶ “Future of the Park,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, May 17, 1891.

⁸⁷ “Everybody Likes it,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, June 14, 1890.

Mead's desire to instill patriotism in children reflected broader aims of reformers to ensure that the Fourth of July celebration become a ritualized tradition. Coverage of the event described how "the boys and girls allowed no opportunity for pleasure to escape them. [...] They were out for fun, and to most of them the first old-fashioned Fourth of July in Pittsburg will be a red letter day indeed."⁸⁸

Bigelow's old-fashioned Fourth of July appealed to both working-class culture and pietist demands for wholesome celebration, demonstrating the park's versatile utility as a site for mass public gathering of diverse ethnic, labor, religious, and class groups from across the city.⁸⁹ The *Pittsburg Dispatch* described previous urban celebrations as taking place on the streets and downtown and characterized by drunkenness, loud music, raunchy dancing, violence, and general rowdiness. The selection of Schenley Park to revitalize an "old-fashioned" Fourth of July in a nature landscape was understood to overcome the threat of corrupting urban influences by providing a family friendly and patriotism infused celebration.⁹⁰ Entertaining performances such as fireworks, music, sports, vaudeville shows, balloonists, and horse races shared space with traditional song and oratory address given by prominent business, political, and religious men. As noted in the *Pittsburg Dispatch*, "without the time-honored tradition of reading the Declaration of independence and a half-dozen stirring, patriotic speeches, the celebration could not be termed old-fashioned."⁹¹ General William Koontz explicated the significance of performance and patriotism in recalling the idea of "the old-time Fourth of July celebrations," arguing that "we can't have too much genuine patriotism, and the proper observance of our national holidays is a duty of

⁸⁸ "Celebrating in Olden Days," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Jul. 5, 1890.

⁸⁹ Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 108.

⁹⁰ Couvares.

⁹¹ "Many New Features," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, May 14, 1891.

the people.”⁹² He recalled, “This is as it should be. [...] When I was a youngster, ‘before the war,’ the jolly celebrations we used to have down at the arsenal and the old fair grounds, when patriotic principles were instilled into us with pink lemonade, vanilla ice cream, speeches, music, fire works, and the Stars and Stripes.”⁹³ Gourley observed that “during the whole day there was neither accident nor disorder to mar the pleasure or disturb the harmony of the celebration,” illustrating the success of the gathering at achieving progressive aims for moral betterment.⁹⁴

Wholesome activity in Schenley Park became synonymous with love of country. Fourth of July performances by elite figures, athletes, musicians, and children publicly demonstrated what proper patriotism and citizenship looked like and was meant to serve as a display of model civic behavior. One recap of the first Fourth in the park observed,

The people of the town are out – sober, honest, industrious, respectable, citizens, husbands, wives and babies, all here to enjoy the fresh air, sunshine, trees, grass and birds, and by enjoying them, renew their energy and ambition, and in some cases, like my own, their youth. It’s a lovely spot in which to have the spirit of patriotism inculcated in us, in the depths of a forest in the heart of a great city – somewhat paradoxical, but, nevertheless, rue, for from where we stand we cannot see a human habitation; simply magnificent trees, charming rustic nooks, and grottoes, and hills that would have put a Highlander on his native heath.⁹⁵

The Schenley Forest was described as the heart of the city, suggesting its essential role for the continued life of industrialization and productivity. One observer noted, “and how they did enjoy themselves! The people had gone out to the park with the intention of having a good time; not the good time of modern days that necessitates first getting highly and artificially hilarious, but the simple, old-fashioned good time, which is not necessarily followed by a headache.”⁹⁶ This

⁹² “Big Time in Greensburg,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Jul. 5, 1890.

⁹³ “Like it Once Was,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Jul. 5, 1890.

⁹⁴ “An Old-Time Fourth.”

⁹⁵ “Like it Once Was.”

⁹⁶ “Celebrating in Olden Days.”

observation suggests the starch distinction drawn by some seeking to establish a measurable shift in public behavior and a direct criticism of drinking culture promoted by the popularity of saloons. The popularity of the old fashioned Fourth of July was framed in popular media as revealing the true spirit of the people of Pittsburgh. Importantly, mediated narratives of the park suggested the nostalgic return to a time before the city experienced the cultural developments that accompanied industrialization. As such, parks promised that industrial cities threatened by corrupting influences could successfully return to a more virtuous culture.

The Fourth of July was the most widely attended event to be held in the park. It was observed that, while many crowds “paid respectful attention to and duly enjoyed the patriotic oratory of the Fourth of July speakers, [...] there is no doubt that for the vast majority of the tens of thousands who took their pleasure there, the great enjoyment was in the magnificent views, the fresh breezes, the romantic roads and shaded ravines of the spot in which they felt themselves to be part proprietors.”⁹⁷ The attendance of such events figured significantly in public narratives that promoted the value of investment in public resources and a sense of ownership in the public parks. In only the second year since its establishment, rhetoric of Schenley Park confirmed that “every year gives fresh evidence of the boon, in which this noble acquisition to the city’s possessions gives the entire people, in affording a place where the whole population can be brought closely into communion with nature’s most charming moods.”⁹⁸ Margaret LaWare explains this rhetorical gesture when she argues that “the meaning of parks is in large part located in and through the way that the public interacts within them – what segments of the public are brought together and in

⁹⁷ “Pittsburg’s Pleasure-Ground,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Jul. 5, 1891.

⁹⁸ “Pittsburg’s Pleasure-Ground.”

what ways.”⁹⁹ In actuality, most laborers and their families did not have the time or means to travel to the park on a regular basis. That the parks were much less accessible to the masses than narratives of the once annual celebrations led on reveals the tensions present in comparing the desired function and actual utility of the park for various populations.

While the grand Fourth of July celebration created an annual tradition that reinforced progressive reformers’ ideals of wholesome civic virtue and good citizenship, staged music concerts offered a more regular way to promote public education and favor for the parks and their resources. Music concerts in Schenley Park showcased elite culture to the diverse park attendance. The first open-air concert at Schenley Park drew “fully 5,000 people from all classes of society.”¹⁰⁰ One article identified how, “the throng was very much cosmopolitan, as types of all nationalities were mixed indiscriminately as they listened to the strains from the 40 odd musicians on the stand.”¹⁰¹ At such concerts, “which rich and poor could enjoy together,” reformers hoped time spent in the presence of elite culture would positively influence the virtue of lower class citizens.¹⁰² Newspaper articles made repeated claims of the “educating influence” of music, and its tendency to “elevate the mind” making clear the desired implications of attending such events.¹⁰³ Pittsburgh’s police Chief Brown said of the music festivals:

The power of music [...] has been recognized in all civilized ages, and where you find it cultivated you find a superior educated people. We Americans pay too little attention to it, and we Pittsburghers much less. There is probably not another city in the country in which there is so little music on our streets and in public spaces, such as parks, as in Pittsburgh. I would favor music in the parks at public expense. The people would get the benefit of it,

⁹⁹ Margaret R. LaWare, “Defining a ‘Livable City’: Parks, Suburbanization, and the Shaping of Community Identity and Ecological Responsibility,” in *Communicative Cities in the 21st Century: The Urban Communication Reader III*, ed. Matthew D. Matsaganis, Victoria J. Gallagher, and Susan J. Drucker (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2013), 18.

¹⁰⁰ “The Music World,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Jul. 19, 1891. A crowd of 5,000 reflected approximately 2% of the population in 1890.

¹⁰¹ “Band Concert in Allegheny,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, June 23, 1892.

¹⁰² “Music Hath Charms,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, April 24, 1892.

¹⁰³ “Music Hath Charms.”

not only in the pleasure of hearing it, but in the real physical and intellectual good it would do them. I believe if we had frequent concerts at the park in seasonable weather it would benefit our department. It would take many people to the parks who otherwise might go to other places and get into trouble, requiring their arrest. Such occasions also metropolitanize the people. They get accustomed by attending large gatherings of that kind to handling themselves in a crowd, and when crowds can take care of themselves there is less need for police and less trouble generally, I am heartily in favor of music, and particularly free music at the parks, where all can enjoy it.¹⁰⁴

Parks programming like music festivals played a key role in cultural programming aimed at education of the masses. They were also used to showcase proper orderly behavior for public gatherings. Music concerts provided alternatives to perceived corrupting institutions, “keeping many away from saloons and other places where the influence is bad.”¹⁰⁵ Carnegie and Bigelow’s successful establishment of Schenley Park as a cultural district for the city of Pittsburgh served for the “amusement of the people.”¹⁰⁶ Particularly as a site of public gathering, “it brings out the stay-at-homes, tends to elevate and educate, and after an evening of such recreation a man feels better and is better.”¹⁰⁷ As such, public parks as places for free music concerts were seen as necessary for civilizing urban populations.

2.3 Parks and Philanthropy

No more enduring memento of this generous transaction can be devised than will be found in Schenley Park itself and in the public appreciation of this much-needed addition to the attractions of Pittsburg. Not merely for its own immediate value is the gift to be

¹⁰⁴ “Music Hath Charms.”

¹⁰⁵ “Music Hath Charms.”

¹⁰⁶ “Music Hath Charms.”

¹⁰⁷ “Music Hath Charms.”

*esteemed, but for the example which it sets to other people of great wealth to contribute in some similar manner to the general welfare.*¹⁰⁸

Pittsburgh's economic growth required more than investment in the steel industry; an overstressed urban environment demanded investment in public wellbeing. Schenley's donation of her Mt. Airy Tract for the creation of Schenley Park ushered in a new era of philanthropic giving that radically transformed the development of public resources and institutions in the city. Changing ideology of good citizenship meant that the city's elite faced new pressure to use their culture and wealth to support public betterment. The creation of public institutions simultaneously supported the general welfare and proved advantageous for private financial gain. In *Philanthrocapitalism*, Matthew Bishop and Michael Green describe this businesslike approach to giving as reliant upon a philanthropy that is “‘strategic,’ ‘market conscious,’ ‘impact oriented,’ knowledge based,’ often high engagement,’ and always driven by the goal of maximizing the ‘leverage’ of the donor’s money.”¹⁰⁹ Wealthy citizens’ desire to protect their capital gain from the unstable and unruly lower-class and immigrant populations, whose labor they relied on and whose civic virtue was understood as especially threatened by the corrupting influence urban vice, weighed heavily in decisions about which public institutions were supported. Capitalists like Carnegie desired to appease the growing civil unrest in the city and in the steel mills. Social turmoil and civic unrest threatened economic security and the creation of the right kind of moralizing public institutions were believed to play a powerful role in producing stable citizens and civic life.

¹⁰⁸ “Influence of the Schenley Gift,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Nov. 6, 1889. 4

¹⁰⁹ Matthew Bishop and Michael Green, *Philanthrocapitalism* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008), 6. See also Anand Girdhardadas, *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2019).

The public parks system and the public institutions housed within it provided verifiable proof that the city could achieve industrial progress without compromising the morality of its social environment or quality of the natural landscape. These new pillars of public welfare were not without their critics, however, as Schenley Park quickly became a playground for wealthy elite to demonstrate their wealth. In this section, I explore the role of Schenley Park in philanthropy, looking first at public institutions created within and on park borders, and second to the public controversy surrounding such projects.

2.3.1 Contributions of Great Wealth

Bigelow's newly unfolding parks system provided a critical venue for industrial capitalists to support the growth of industry through investment in public welfare. As an added benefit, investment in the establishment of public resources allowed industrial capitalists to minimize the role they played in the corruption of the city. Through their connection to Schenley Park, new public institutions and resources promised to generate a mutually beneficial system whereby poorer inhabitants gained public access to green space and cultural institutions, while wealthy patrons, donors, and potential investors maintained their investment in the competitive development of the Steel City. In this way, wealthy citizens could appeal to reformists' investment in moral environmentalism without giving up or cutting back on their pursuit of capital gain. Pittsburgh's "moral entrepreneurs" saw their promotion of elite culture as aligned with advancing the interest of the common man while mutually serving their individuated interests as idealists, philanthropists, commissioners, and capitalists.¹¹⁰ The unsustainable demands industry placed on the city to

¹¹⁰ Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design*, 157.

provide a healthy and productive environment for laborers required change if business were to continue.

Popular media framed the public resources and institutions created within park borders as critical infrastructure for civilizing urban inhabitants because of their proximity to nature. Schenley Park established, for the first time, an urban site specifically dedicated to the enjoyment, pleasure, leisure, instruction, culture, and assembly of the general population. In contrast with the indecent entertainment found in the urban downtown such as bars or brothels, time spent in nature promised civilized entertainment for public. Within weeks of the public announcement for the creation of Schenley Park, Carnegie proposed to Bigelow and Schenley that Schenley donate an additional 10-acres of land for the establishment of a grand, formal entrance to the park in the wealthy Oakland district. If secured, Carnegie promised he would develop those grounds as an educational and cultural district for the common people by donating a free library, music hall, and museum. Rather than the corrupt vices of urban life, such as brothels, bars, or gambling, he promoted the gifting of public resources like libraries, museums, hospitals, conservatories, churches, and parks as “several excellent uses to which rich men may put their money” to advance the virtue of the city and its people.¹¹¹ In Carnegie’s *Gospel of Wealth*, he explained that those who experience good fortune should use their wealth to promote “the permanent good of the communities from which they have been gathered.”¹¹² Importantly, he believed that vast accumulation of wealth was a good thing because capitalists could more wisely spend that money than the labor class, who he believed would unwisely squander it on vice. He argued, “Let the man of money give the start, and then let everybody else who is interested help.”¹¹³ On November 17, 1891, Henry Phipps, Jr., a successful

¹¹¹ “The Critic’s Review,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Dec. 9, 1889. 4

¹¹² Andrew Carnegie, “The Best Fields for Philanthropy,” *The North American Review* 149, no. 397 (1889), 685.

¹¹³ “The Critic’s Review.”

real estate investor and business partner to the Carnegie Steel Company, asked Mayor Gourley if he could donate funds to erect a conservatory at Schenley Park. In Phipps' letter to Gourley, he proposed that, with the help of Bigelow and others, "we shall endeavor to erect something that will provide a source of instruction as well as pleasure, to the people."¹¹⁴ Phipps' proposal promoted both educational instruction and wholesome pleasure, supporting the belief that civic institutions productively reinforced reformers goals for instilling virtue in non-elite people of the city.

The public gifts inspired by Schenley Park solidified elite culture as exemplifying good citizenship and wealthy citizens as necessary providers for the wellbeing of the working class. An article in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* noted, "such gifts as this one of Andrew Carnegie's are an excellent evidence of patriotism, and are likely to directly encourage that feeling while serving at the same time as examples to others."¹¹⁵ Controller Morrow observed, "I have expected to hear from other publicly spirited men since Mr. Carnegie's magnificent gift. This last [gift by Mr. Phipps] will probably cause still others to open their purse strings on behalf of the city's beauty spots. There is plenty of room at Schenley Park yet for other gifts, that will not only beautify the place, but make monuments to the generosity of the donors that will endear them to the people."¹¹⁶ Morrow's comments illustrate how rhetoric of parks and citizenship are complicated by identifying parks not only as sites for instilling patriotic virtue in the common person or inspiring additional donations, but as sites to commemorate riches and the examples set by rich men of the city in particular. In this way, public institutions not only provided resources for the public good, they created public memorials to the wealthy citizens responsible for erecting them. In his study of New York City's Central Park, Thomas Benson explains that "the public park served for nineteenth-

¹¹⁴ "A Gift to the City," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Nov. 19, 1891.

¹¹⁵ "One Feature of the Fourth," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, June 29, 1892.

¹¹⁶ "A Gift to the City."

century urban democracy much the same function that civic oratory or eloquence served in traditional republican societies: to celebrate institutions and ideological principles thought to be the genius of those cultures.”¹¹⁷ Rhetoric of the parks and the numerous public resources developed and events hosted on their grounds reveals how they became commemorative sites for promoting the value of industry and capitalism.

The overwhelming focus on Schenley Park as the site for civic growth and cultural advancement kept philanthropic investment fragmented and unevenly focused on development of the Oakland region, excluding development of the neighborhoods which housed minority, immigrant, and working-class individuals and families. Bigelow supported Carnegie’s plans for turning Oakland into an educational and cultural district, himself desiring to establish numerous public resources in the park. Letters from Schenley, too, revealed her support for their plans: “It is for the people,” she said, ‘and a free library, museum, and zoological garden will help out the grand scheme for the public benefit. They ought to be together near the entrance to the park.”¹¹⁸ Carnegie’s successful claim to developing the park entrance significantly impacted the future of those grounds. An article in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* noted how, “there is no doubt that, in the course of years, this site will be a center of communication,” foreshadowing the rapid development of Oakland as the unrivaled elite cultural district of the city for decades to come.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Rosenfield, “Central Park,” 222.

¹¹⁸ “An Option Secured,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Sept. 2, 1890.

¹¹⁹ “An Option Secured.”

2.3.2 Criticism and Commemoration

The uneven distribution of public resources created tensions between spatial development and cultural improvement of the city for the general population and increased power wielded by city's elites. While many elite men of the city took advantage of the opportunity the founding of Schenley Park provided for public demonstration of their wealth and prestige by contributing to public welfare projects, not all members of the public shared the same enthusiasm for Carnegie's plans. Carnegie's desire to concentrate of all four of his cultural attractions (the art gallery, museum, grand music hall, and main library building) at the entrance to Schenley Park was criticized for not being accessible to the masses. In particular, some publics demanded the library and music hall should be located downtown. One commentator noted,

In my judgment, if they are located out there, instead of being placed where the poor can go for recreation without price, the buildings will be used by the wealthy East Enders for entertainments such as they are given in our club houses to-day. While I don't mean to say that the poorer people will be taken by the neck and thrown out, the social atmosphere of these buildings will be such that it will prevent the full and free use of the common gift by Mr. Carnegie.¹²⁰

This critique of a cultural entrance to Schenley Park highlights public suspicion that surrounded claims of the dissipation of class discrimination that was promised in the democratic park sites. Proponents of the Schenley Park entrance for Carnegie's grand music hall and library responded to criticism of the location by citing the success of other cultural events held in the park. The completion of a bridge project was named as aiding in the greater accessibility for economically diverse audiences to attend public band concerts in Schenley Park. The confidence in inevitable expansion of public transportation was used as evidence for concerns over access by the poor:

¹²⁰ "Palaces in a Park," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Feb. 14, 1891.

“There is no place the Library might be put where it would not be 15 minutes from various parts of the town. With the cross-roads which are sure to come from the Southside and Lawrenceville to the park, there will eventually be no more convenient location.”¹²¹ An article in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* declared, “it may be safely prophesied that the attendance of such concerts will startle those short-sighted folk who declared that a library and music hall at the park would not be within convenient reach of the mass of the people for years to come.”¹²² The Great Western Band's concerts at Highland Park, for example, attracted large crowds despite its remote and wealthy geographic location. Cultural development became a catalyst for additional urban progress initiatives. While the numerous cultural sites established in Schenley Park were open to the general public, their accessibility and social atmosphere ultimately catered to wealthy patrons.

Public accounts criticized Carnegie's selection of the Library Commission, established to oversee the planning and implementation of the public space, as exclusionary and self-serving. These debates illustrate some of the few spaces where inequity is directly addressed in challenging popular frames of parks as inherently democratic spaces. In one of the numerous published debates over the library, a Mr. Bingham argued:

I don't think much of Mr. Carnegie's selection of commissioners. He says his gift is intended for the people of all classes and conditions and for all sections of the city. In my humble opinion, he has selected a commission of men composed of only one class of society and from only one section of the city. I will expect Mr. Hudson and the Councilmanic Library Committee, which represents the various sections of the city, and, to a certain extent, the various social classes. They desire to get the grandest and most beautiful buildings at Oakland, near where they live.¹²³

The Library Committee cited practical reasons for locating Carnegie's cultural district at the entrance to Schenley Park, noting how “the necessity of space for the future extension of these

¹²¹ “The Trip a Short One,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Jul. 9, 1891.

¹²² “The Music World,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, June 28, 1891.

¹²³ “Palaces in a Park.”

features, and of protecting their contents from damage by smoke and dust, fixes their location” at the park entrance.¹²⁴ While it was true that smog and pollution carried devastating consequences for architectural structures downtown, locating Carnegie’s public resources in Oakland also situated them adjacent to the East End neighborhood. The close proximity between Schenley Park and the wealthy East End contributed to public divisiveness regarding who the parks and public resources belonged to. John Shambie pressed for a reconsideration of the Schenley entrance site, citing concerns from both working men and capitalists. He argued,

It is a mistake [...] to put the music hall and museum building out there. They ought to be down town. I get letters every day from working men and capitalists who say it is a mistake. Men have come to me who live in close proximity to where it is proposed to put the building and tell me that while it will enhance the value of their property they think it is a mistake to put the main library building there.¹²⁵

Despite the promised democratic nature of urban parks, Schenley Park’s proximity to millionaire’s row exacerbated growing tensions of access to public and private land. If Carnegie succeeded in creating a cultural district in Oakland, it would significantly enhance property values of the already wealthy East Enders, revealing how rich citizens disproportionately benefit from their close proximity to Schenley Park.

The numerous debates over where public resources should be located illustrate the significance of considering rhetoric of place in conceptualizing citizenship. In a letter to the editor, one reader of the *Pittsburg Dispatch* questioned the park site for the library, arguing that the decision reflected an emphasis on symbolic import rather than practical value. The signatory “taxpayer” highlighted concern for the site location as prioritizing elite desires rather than serving the public good. They argued,

¹²⁴ “Placed in the Park,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, April 21, 1891.

¹²⁵ “Fixing the Library Site,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, April 3, 1891.

If we want the library as a palatial building to adorn the park entrance, it might seem proper to place it there. But what do we want a library for? A free library is for the masses, and should be placed in a section where the railroads, streetcars and transaction lines center. The idea of locating the main institution in such a remote quarter is something beyond ordinary comprehension. How long will it be before all the transportation facilities center at Schenley Park? A casual glance at the topographical outline of the city proves it utterly impractical at any time.¹²⁶

This taxpayer perceived the reach of mass public transportation to Oakland to be beyond comprehension. Carnegie and Bigelow's plans to establish a cultural district in and around Schenley Park however, required the creation of numerous expensive infrastructural projects, instigating the expansion of and investment in transportation from downtown to Oakland. These parks and development projects in Oakland provided a catalyst for increased elite accumulation of wealth through capital development projects. Following several months of heated debate and opposition to the concentrated cultural site, an amended Carnegie Library ordinance ultimately passed by a unanimous 24 votes, granting the Carnegie Library Commission "the right to erect the music hall, art gallery, museum, and main library building at the Forbes street entrance of Schenley Park."¹²⁷ This decision solidified Schenley Park as a primary site for future investment in public resources, and laid the foundation for what many criticized as the creation of a "perpetual monument to [Carnegie]."¹²⁸

Construction of new parks, roads, bridges, and lines of cheap public transit were framed as democratic and equalizing development projects, however, they disproportionately concentrated development in the wealthy Oakland area. One citizen wrote to the *Pittsburg Dispatch* arguing how "parks are nice, but they are only ornamental," citing the need for development of other more essential public resources, such improved streets, free bridges, potable water, and smaller, more

¹²⁶ "Our Mail Pouch," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, April 18, 1891.

¹²⁷ "Had a Lively Time," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Mar. 31, 1891.

¹²⁸ "The Carnegie Library," *Iron County Register*, May 15, 1890.

accessible neighborhood parks for working families.¹²⁹ The poorer neighborhoods located outside the Oakland district did not benefit from the new investment in infrastructure that Schenley Park prompted. It was noted that, “up to the present time the necessity of reaching the park by riding or driving has confined its advantages largely to the wealthier people.”¹³⁰ In order to promote the parks as sites for the masses, then, investment in new and varied development public transit projects affirmed capitalist expansion in the name of equality. This rapid yet fragmented growth of the city ultimately became a central concern and problem for the city for decades to come, which is illustrated in my future chapters.

Those in favor of locating Carnegie’s cultural center at the entrance to Schenley Park argued that Oakland would better serve the city and its people as urban infrastructure expanded public transit from the city center into surrounding regions. The popularly attended new “old-fashioned” Fourth of July celebrations at Schenley Park became a testament to the strength of choosing the park entrance as a new cultural center of the city. Over 200,000 residents and non-residents attended by the third year of the patriotic celebrations in the park. This number was particularly significant as the population of Pittsburgh in the 1890s was estimated at around 250,000 residents.

It has often been said that when the great free library lifted its gables and towers above the park entrance, its grandeur and location would bring it only to the autocrats of the East End. But these annual assemblages in the park of the common people, these jollifications for the working man, with his wife and children, will teach the middle and poor classes to go to the park and to love it. It will become a familiar place to them, and the library will seem to them as only a part of the broad domain where they have a right to roam and to find delight.¹³¹

¹²⁹ “Accepts the Offer,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, Oct. 7, 1890.

¹³⁰ “Pittsburg’s Pleasure Ground,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, July 5, 1891.

¹³¹ “A Great Fourth in the Big Park,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, July 4, 1892.

Carnegie and Bigelow's establishment of Schenley Park's grand entrance made the park a symbol of urban culture. Repeated attendance to the park helped to establish new institutionally sanctioned traditions of patriotic celebration and promote a culture of inclusion. The popular attendance of such events played a key rhetorical role in countering critiques of accessibility through demonstrating a particular instance when masses, rich and poor, successfully gathered together at the park. Rich men, then, could congratulate themselves for their philanthropic public donations, while simultaneously promoting and preserving their own elite culture, making Schenley Park a uniquely elite luxury.

While capital investment in Schenley Park was growing, the hourly wage of their laborers was shrinking. Civic unrest among the laboring class reached its boiling point. As the third grand Fourth of July celebration in the park approached, the *Pittsburg Dispatch* solicited thousands of dollars in private donations for the celebration. At the same time the city was on the brink of a massive labor strike. On July 1, 1892, workers at the Homestead Steel Works began an industrial lockout and strike over their decreased wages that came with an increased demand for unskilled labor. Carnegie's desire to put on an elaborate public performance at the Fourth of July celebration for the ground-breaking of his free library site coincided with the escalating strike at Homestead. Discourse surrounding the celebration illustrates how the library groundbreaking was emphasized and recognition of the strike was minimized. It was important to urban officials that the library groundbreaking be made into a spectacle for the people attending the Fourth of July at Schenley Park. As anticipation for the events of the Fourth built, an article in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* described the much-anticipated ground-breaking ceremony: "On the Fourth of July ground will be formally broken for the building. It is the intention of the Library commission to have this first

visible step toward the erection of the building made a ceremony to be remembered.”¹³² The over 200,000 visitors to the Fourth of July celebration not only participated in the ritualized patriotic demonstration of love for country; by baring witness to the library groundbreaking, they also validated Carnegie’s public philanthropy at the expense of laborers.

The Library Commissioners were not the only urban elite who sought to use the Fourth of July to avoid the reality of Homestead. In his welcoming speech for the oratory performances, Mayor Gourley set the tone for public erasure of the labor strike from public memory through the Fourth of July oratory events. As he stood on the grand stage in Schenley Park’s Flagstaff Hill he declared: “This is a festive day. It is a time to rejoice and render thanksgiving. There may be times when we should clothe ourselves in sack clothing and mourn over the sins of the hour, but not to-day. This is our jubilee occasion.”¹³³ Only one of the orators directly confronted the realities of Homestead. Tom Marshall, one of Western Pennsylvania’s most celebrated lawyers, was characterized as hardworking, politically engaged, recognized for his resolute opposition to capital punishment, and an advocate for the abolition of slavery.¹³⁴ In speaking of Homestead, he declared:

Our fathers, the colonists, in 1776, laid down the principles of this nation. The first is the right of self-government, the inherent right of men to control their own affairs. When we look back and see the little handful of men that defied the queen of the seas, we are amazed. We stand here to-day to see what we have been and are now. Our railroads, public buildings, and proposed library out here in the country for Pittsburg, are monuments of our greatness. Let us remember that the great truth underlying all is the equality of man and that trusts and monopolies must stand beneath the feet of men. These privileges must not be stolen under the guise of law. When this is done we must stamp them beneath our feet, and declare again the principle that all men are equal. – Gentlemen, I am sad to-day. Just across this hill lies Homestead. Outside the works are the men encamped, inside are the managers. They say it is a conflict between labor and capital. Not so. The workmen are the creators. The managers inside are the employers. They are not capitalists. I hope some great

¹³² “Will be a Great Day,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, June 29, 1892.

¹³³ “Welcomed by the Mayor.”

¹³⁴ Frank Marshall Eastman, *Courts and Lawyers of Pennsylvania: A History, 1623-1923, Volume 4 – Primary Source Edition* (Charleston, SC: Nabu Press, 2013), 351.

statesman will soon solve this problem for us that this great country may not perish by intestine broils.¹³⁵

Marshall's address highlights the tensions of progress and production in troubling popular understanding of labor and capital. His erasure of capitalists from those workers and managers involved in the strike obscures the roles and responsibilities of Carnegie and others from contributing to the conflict. By July 6, 1892 the strike turned into a massacre. Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick, two of the wealthiest men in the nation, who both played pivotal roles in the development of Pittsburgh's regional parks system and public resources, were also responsible for the horrific exploitation of their laborers and mass shootout between the strikers and the Pinkertons, a private security guard service hired by Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick to shut down the strike.¹³⁶

Rather than address the structural problems of the steel industry, the city's most powerful members turned to donation of public resources as a means of addressing social turmoil and swinging classes. These private donations and their publicity obscure in historical records any alternative approaches to addressing the problems faced by the working class. After the Homestead Strike, debate over whether or not to follow through with erecting the Carnegie Library became highly contested for its symbolic import. With the ground-breaking of the library site occurring in the midst of the Homestead tragedy, it was noted that, "many of the workmen of Pittsburg are anxious to express their sentiment toward Mr. Carnegie for his connection with the lock-out of the homestead steel-workers."¹³⁷ One way this sentiment was expressed was in asking that the Council return Carnegie's \$1,000,000 donation he gave the city of Pittsburgh for the creation of the free

¹³⁵ "Glorious Old Tom," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, July 5, 1892.

¹³⁶ Carnegie's creation of a cultural district in the entrance to Schenley Park; Henry Clay Frick left 190 acres of Frick woods to the City of Pittsburgh in his will, to be used for the establishment of Frick Park (1927).

¹³⁷ "Sentiment Toward Carnegie," *The Indianapolis Journal*, July 10, 1892.

library at Schenley Park. Councilman William Nolden, of the Thirtieth ward, said: “The idea of erecting a million-dollar monument to Carnegie will be a blot on this community forever.”¹³⁸ The Local Union 142, Carpenters and Joiners, which has 600 members, adopted a resolution to ask the Mayor and Councils “not to accept Carnegie’s gift of a public library for Schenley Park.”¹³⁹

A measure was proposed to repeal the contract and return the money for the library. Citing his support of the measure to return the money, Councilman John J. King raised concern for the political significance of the Carnegie Library.

I am opposed to raising monuments to Carnegie with money that represents the sweat of the workingmen. It would only be erecting a memorial to Carnegie which the people of Pittsburg will literally have to take care of, while he will get all the glory of it. The events at Homestead justify us in returning the money. The differences between capital and labor should be settled in a business-like way, and not by shooting men down. There is no excuse for bringing Pinkertons to Homestead and Carnegie deserves this rebuke.¹⁴⁰

Calls to reject building Carnegie’s library as a monument to himself was seen as one appropriate measure of punishment for Carnegie’s role in the Homestead Strike. The above comment by King reveals the hypocrisy and capitalist ideology that was behind the parks development that followed Schenley’s donation. The decision by elites to invest their wealth in public structures rather than invest directly in their workers functioned to memorialize the donors and erase the labor of the working class.

Public demands to return the library money created division among numerous members of the city’s elite. In favor of returning the money, King stated, “the library is to be located in Schenley Park where it will be out of the way of the working people, and those whom it would most benefit would not be able to avail themselves of it. It would be a good business model to give

¹³⁸ “Cautioned to Wait,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, July 11, 1892.

¹³⁹ “Carpenters and Joiners Resolve,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, July 14, 1892.

¹⁴⁰ “Cautioned to Wait.”

the money back, because the city cannot now really afford to give the money to keep it up. It is more needed in other directions.”¹⁴¹ Councilman James McHugh declared, “I heartily indorse the actions of these workingmen.” He continued,

In 20 years the city will have as much money invested in the library as Carnegie, yet the city will get no credit for it. I say give it back and in some time some one who is really philanthropic will give us a library. If otherwise we could appreciate each year the money it would cost to maintain the one offered, and in 20 years we could build a library that belonged to the people and it would not be an advertisement for any particular man.¹⁴²

McHugh understood philanthropy to provide absolution from any charges of labor exploitation. His idea that only a city-financed building could truly represent the people challenged Carnegie’s idea of the wealthy should be the proprietors of public wellbeing.

Contractual obligations were also cited by those who rejected returning Carnegie’s gift for the library as reason to build. Councilman W. A. Magee, and member of the Library Commission, supported building the library, stating, “Councils no longer has control of the money. It is in the hands of the Library Commission and Councils has signed a contract to give \$40,000 a year. We cannot break the contract and as Mr. Carnegie controls the board, they will not.” Magee saw the rhetorical distancing of the return of the library as a suitable punishment of Carnegie for the recent Homestead Strike, continuing, “it is not a question that should be settled just now any way. The entire gift for the library and the endowment for an Art gallery and museum amounts to about \$2,100,000. No matter how Mr. Carnegie got this money, he has it. If it belongs to the working people this is a good way of getting it back and why not take it.”¹⁴³ Rather than criticize exploitative wages, Magee argued that a cultural district financed by Carnegie’s low wages for workers was a desirable way for Carnegie to pay retribution to the people by investing in his chosen

¹⁴¹ “Cautioned to Wait.”

¹⁴² “Cautioned to Wait.”

¹⁴³ “Cautioned to Wait.”

public resources rather than the people themselves. One member of the Library Commission, James B. Scott rebuffed the request to return the money, stating, “it would be foolish to deprive our citizens of the great benefits to be derived from this gift. Were this money returned it would close the pockets of all men inclined to donate money or other things for the public good. The delay in accepting the gift made us ridiculous in the eyes of the world, and to now return it would bring upon our city the deserved ridicule and contempt of the world.”¹⁴⁴ Scott’s comments illustrate how the elite felt charged to provide for the wellbeing of laborers. The public library is praised by powerful men as the greatest gift laborers could receive, ignoring the systemic issues of income inequality, overcrowding, and the need for other basic resources such as free bridges and public transportation.

International prestige and wellbeing of the city were rhetorically linked in public discourse to reinforce the belief that investment in education and culture were of greater importance than investment in the individual citizens who labored for the city. Scott declared, “If this money were returned we could not stop there. To be consistent it would be necessary also to return to Mrs. Schenley the 19 acres of the Schenley Park entrance or pay her what it is worth, \$25,000 an acre. She sold it at \$4,000 per acre on condition the main library should be placed there.”¹⁴⁵ He also erased the exploitation of labor that accompanied the criticism and desired rejection of Carnegie’s donation by linking the Carnegie donation with the Schenley donation. The Carnegie Library Commission rejected the Union’s proposed resolution, and the voices of those in favor of maintaining Carnegie’s donation for the library triumphed. Carnegie’s perpetual monument to

¹⁴⁴ “As Seen Abroad,” *Pittsburg Dispatch*, July 16, 1892.

¹⁴⁵ “As Seen Abroad.”

himself became a central feature of Oakland, centrally located at the new entrance to Schenley Park.

Over the course of the 1890s, the foundation was laid for the establishment of Oakland as a cultural and educational center of Pittsburgh with actors such as Bigelow and Carnegie leading the charge. This partnership reflected the establishment of public-private collaborations that promoted “physical and cultural improvements for the Oakland section, a verdant region where philanthropists, planners, and visionaries would flex their imaginations about better urban form” for years to come. These collaborations were further influenced by the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition held in Frederick Law Olmsted’s Jackson Park.¹⁴⁶ The exposition earned Chicago the nickname of the “White City” due to the massive white buildings, which showcased chief architect Daniel Burnham’s ideas for what became the “City Beautiful” movement.¹⁴⁷ Numerous other public resources were donated throughout the next few decades, including the establishment of observatories, universities, technical schools, libraries, hospitals, laboratories, swimming pools, music halls, a zoo, churches, a casino, and the creation of Highland Park and smaller neighborhood parks throughout the city. Such resources were cited as carrying “untold and incalculable” good will and good influence on the city and its people.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Bauman and Muller, *Before Renaissance*, 13.

¹⁴⁷ David F. Burg, *Chicago’s White City of 1893* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2014).

¹⁴⁸ “Influence of the Schenley Gift.”

2.4 Conclusion

Mary Schenley's donation of her 300-acre Mt. Airy Tract for the creation of Pittsburgh's first regional park introduced a new means for navigating urban tensions of progress and preservation. Schenley Park created a designated public space for nature and pleasure not previously found in industrial cities that was believed to alleviate crises of urban corruption and civic unrest. Through introducing public space for people of all classes and backgrounds to share, the potential for mingling of class promoted the illusion of parks as democratic sites, however, their material design too often prioritized elite cultural values. Public programming such as the old-fashioned Fourth of July celebrations and free music concerts sought to elevate, rather than equalize the crowds in attendance. At such events, citizens and noncitizens alike were expected to publicly demonstrate their patriotism and civic virtue through participation in wholesome recreation and public attendance. Schenley Park acted as a catalyst for urban capitalists to flex their philanthropic muscles through their donation of new public resources, institutions, and events to be established or held on the city's new park grounds and borders. The transformation of Oakland as a new cultural district filled with valuable public resources like museums, libraries, music halls, and conservatories quickly developed complicated legacies, however, creating perpetual monuments to elite men who created them, often at the literal expense of the people who labored under capitalist development.

The steel industry's destruction of social and natural landscapes in the city left Pittsburghers faced with trying to build a viable industry that did not compromise good citizenship and civilization. A core concern of late nineteenth century civic leaders was that if nature is civilizing and industrial labor and urbanity are uncivilized, then how do you go about building a livable city? Schenley Park introduced the idea that public space could preserve civilization within

its borders to effectively balance or counteract potential threats to industrial progress. My examination of rhetoric about Schenley Park illustrates how public green space became a powerful tool for progressive reformers who aspired to save virtuous citizens from the corruption, vice, and uncivilized influences of urban industrial living through parks' restorative qualities for health, spirit, and productivity. Parks could introduce the morally compromised lower class to elite culture and encourage them to imagine how they too could achieve the same 'good life' as the city's elite. Despite popular narratives that claimed parks were accessibly designed for the enjoyment of all citizens, my analysis of Schenley Park reveals how elite citizens' desires were often privileged at the expense of more compromised urban inhabitants in public space. Schenley Park's contribution to establishing Oakland as a verdant civic center for public enjoyment was arguably a hollow gesture, with only minor improvements to the quality of the natural environment and the majority of changes designed to facilitate elite leisure and pleasure.

3.0 Orderly Landscape, Good Citizens: The Citizens Committee for City Plan of Pittsburgh and the Reform Park

*Planning, in a broad sense, was virtually unheard of in American cities of the last generation. It has hit this generation as an emergency problem, inescapable. We are doing the best we can, let us hope, to pave the way for the next half century to achieve enduring solutions.*¹

At the turn of the twentieth century, citizen-driven reform movements sought to radically transform the urban condition so that economic vitality was balanced with environmental and human needs. Progressives linked social injustice and economic degradation with corrupt political rule and believed that excessive individualism promoted capital gain at the expense of civic consciousness. New voluntary civic organizations studied the problems faced by society and proposed solutions for developing legislation to address pressing issues such as poor air and water quality, the growing housing crisis, immigration, space for children, labor strife, disease, vice, and deteriorating infrastructure. They believed that urban reform would improve moral, economic, and health conditions of citizens as well as general economic productivity. Public space like parks were seen as vital for providing fresh air and democratic space for mingling; as such, Olmstedian rhetoric of parks as “lungs of the city” carried through to the twentieth-century, supporting an urgent case for spatial reform in conversations, lectures, public organizing, promotional materials,

¹ “Editorial,” *Pittsburgh Sun*, January 17, 1922.

meetings, and more. Ultimately, comprehensive urban planning was promoted as an essential consideration for civic organizing and progressive initiatives for urban development.

The first comprehensive planning initiative undertaken in Pittsburgh was the citizen-driven formation of the Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh (CCCPP) in 1919. Urban planner and founder of the CCCPP Frederick Bigger emphasized the importance of parks for connecting urban infrastructure in pursuit of creating a well-planned, accessible city. In a holistic system of urban reform, parks provided overworked laborers with mental, physical, and moral relief from the urban industrial condition and unified the city's fragmented social, physical, and economic infrastructure. In this chapter, I map the ways in which scientific, citizen-driven comprehensive urban planning initiatives envisioned the orderly benefits of parks and playgrounds recreation to inspire the good citizen. I focus my critical rhetorical analysis on the CCCPP's recreation subcommittee plans for parks and playgrounds, examining meeting notes, the monthly newsletter, *Progress*, and the final planning reports of the CCCPP. The documents produced by the CCCPP illustrate how the CCCPP members imagined "making interventions into material spaces" to change both the physical and symbolic landscape of the city and its people.² My analysis reveals how recreation spaces were figured as the antithesis of the congestion of the city and its corrupting influences. I argue that the CCCPP's proposal for comprehensive planning rhetorically linked spatial arrangement of the city with transformation of citizens from disorderly to orderly inhabitants. They did this in part through public demonstration, seen in the promoted representations of the CCCPP and their engagement with junior citizens. This can also be seen through their reimagining of public parks as orderly sites for organized recreation, where youth,

² Jenny Rice, *Distant Publics: Development Rhetoric and the Subject of Crisis* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012), 13, 6-7.

adult, and immigrant populations would be trained in embodying proper enactments for good citizenship.

I begin with describing key changes to life in Pittsburgh at the turn of the twentieth century. Second, I describe the processes of civic organizing associated with the Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh, including introducing the formation of the civic organization, their work with the Junior Civic Club, and their scientific process for planning the urban landscape. Third, I narrow my scope of the CCCPP to the efforts of their recreation committee, looking at the role of parks and playgrounds in urban reform. This includes their approach to open space and urban growth, relationship between recreation and economic security, and efforts toward equitable development. Fourth, I consider how recreation planning targeted specific publics including children, immigrants, and the good citizen. Finally, I describe how the CCCPP illustrates a successful civic movement for education and organization, however, ultimately fails to enact material change in the urban environment.

3.1 Early Twentieth Century Pittsburgh

The Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893 set the stage for the City Beautiful Movement, which rapidly spread across America between 1901 and 1902.³ City Beautiful emphasized the significance of comprehensive planning for creating functional and aesthetic public space. This included the necessity of grand civic centers, railroad stations, boulevards and other transit and transportation infrastructure, as well as parks and playgrounds that would visually

³ William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

showcase civil progress. Popular urban planners like Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. promoted City Beautiful for comprehensive physical development of the city as critical for shaping the health, happiness, and productivity of citizens.⁴ Voluntary organizations, inspired by the World's Columbian Exposition, highlighted improvement of public space, urban infrastructure, housing, and environmental reform as critical components in enhancing cities moral and economic conditions.

Organization of civic groups, study of the urban condition, and advocacy for the significance of public space were predominant themes emphasized by Pittsburgh reformers in early 1900s. Reformers argued that civic organizations, not governments, should manage urban planning initiatives and develop recommendations for the modern city. When democrat George Guthrie was elected as mayor of Pittsburgh (1906-1909) following a significant stretch of "the Republican political machine's grip on the executive office," civic organizations received political support for advancing citizen driven planning initiatives.⁵ In 1907, the neighboring Allegheny City was annexed as part of Pittsburgh and the city's population grew to near half a million residents overnight. Two crises that same year intensified reformers' desire for environmental reform and urban planning to stabilize the city's economic condition. The devastating March 15 flood temporarily shut down train service and numerous mills, putting thousands of individuals out of work and creating intense labor strife. A national financial panic followed soon after, "devastating the city's stock exchange" and destabilizing economic growth.⁶ These events made it all the more

⁴ John F. Bauman and Edward K. Muller, *Before Renaissance: Planning in Pittsburgh, 1889-1943* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006), 70.

⁵ Bauman and Muller, 51.

⁶ Bauman and Muller, 63.

imperative to civic organizers that comprehensive urban planning be utilized in reforming the city to create stable social and economic conditions necessary for continued growth.

Survey director Paul Kellogg led a large team of investigators to examine the urban conditions of Pittsburgh from 1907-1908. The survey publicized the crisis of place experienced by the working people of Pittsburgh and became a landmark of the progressive era's push for urban reform. The findings were published across six volumes of work from 1909-1914, including *Women and the Trades*, *Work-Accidents and the Law*, *The Steel Workers*, *Homestead: The Households of a Mill Town*, *The Pittsburgh District: Civic Frontage*, and *Wage-Earning Pittsburgh*. The dire conditions faced by urban inhabitants illustrated in the Pittsburgh Survey attracted national attention and immense concern from progressive reformers over the conditions faced by and lifestyles of immigrants and the working-class, the corruption of corporate industrialism, and the vast negative effects of industrialization on the urban environment. These issues were identified as a reflection of the fragmentation of authority, focus on localism, and piecemeal development characteristic of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Kellogg identified that the survey was not intended to single out Pittsburgh as "merely a scapegoat city."⁷ Rather, Pittsburgh was an exemplary national case where "for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, for vigor, waste and optimism, is rampantly American."⁸ Roy Lubove explains that the Survey illustrated how the "multidimensional fragmentation" of the urban landscape – material, social, political, economic – contributed to the overwhelming tensions between selfish accumulation through capital investment and production of civic and public good.⁹

⁷ Paul U. Kellogg, "The Pittsburgh Survey," *Charities and the Commons* 21, no. 14 (1909): 525.

⁸ Kellogg, 525.

⁹ Roy Lubove, *Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh: Government, Business, and Environmental Change* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1969), 19.

In the final year of Guthrie's term, talks of urban planning intensified and he appointed the Pittsburgh Civic Commission (PCC), composed of business and professional men of the city, to plan for the general welfare of Pittsburgh's industrial district and civic wellbeing. Several follow-up reports were published from 1910-1911 drawing upon the Pittsburgh Survey's call for various urban reform projects, including Olmsted's *Pittsburgh: Main thoroughfares and the Down Town District: Improvements Necessary to Meet the City's Present and Future Needs* and Bion Arnold's *Report on the Pittsburgh Transformation Problem*. In Olmsted's report to the Pittsburgh Civic Commission he included a section on public space, describing how "public parks or recreation grounds become of the most urgent civic needs, if the health and vigor of the people are to be maintained."¹⁰ By creating opportunities for "clean, healthy recreation," parks provided "decent surroundings" instead of saloons or "questionable dance-halls and other baneful establishments for the commercial exploitation of the spirit of play."¹¹ Olmsted's report reinforced progressive beliefs that spatial transformation was essential to correct the social ills of the city.¹²

National circulation of the Pittsburgh Survey accelerated progressive calls to action for developing a comprehensive plan for urban reform. The PCC utilized the Pittsburgh Survey as the foundation for deliberating over the city's much needed civic improvements. In the early years of the twentieth century, numerous clubs and organizations, such as the Civic Club, Pittsburgh Architecture Club, and Engineers' Society, were established by wealthy businessmen and elite and upper-middle class citizens who felt it was their civic duty to aid in reforming Pittsburgh to be a

¹⁰ Frederick Law Olmsted, *Pittsburgh Main Thoroughfares and the Down Town District* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Civic Commission, 1911), 113.

¹¹ Olmsted, 114.

¹² While his report was intended to serve as the city's first comprehensive plan, it was ultimately scaled back significantly and never enacted.

city freed from the burdens of smoke, sewage, traffic, and dilapidation.¹³ The return to republican political leadership in 1909, however, resulted in progressive planning becoming entangled in political debate, despite the newly elected Mayor William Magee (1909-1914 and later 1922-1926) being a proponent of city planning. Through mayors Joseph Armstrong (1914-1918) and Edward Babcock (1918-1922), debates between comprehensive planning, predevelopment platforms, and public works as providing jobs, rather than redesigning the city, dominated development discourse. With support for planning organizations significantly tightened during World War I, planning initiatives weakened.

The U.S. entry into World War I in 1917 inspired new discussions in Pittsburgh and across the nation about what obligations Americans did or did not have to the state. These discussions promoted “one of the twentieth century’s broadest, most vigorous, and most searching public discussions about the meanings of American citizenship.”¹⁴ In his explanation of governmental difficulties in mass mobilization of citizens during World War I, Christopher Capozzola notes,

In the years before the war, voluntary associations – clubs, schools, churches, parties, unions – organized much of American life. Such groups provided social services, regulated the economy, policed crime, and managed community norms. Schooled in this world of civic voluntarism, Americans formed their social bonds – and their political obligations – first to each other and then to the state.¹⁵

The popularity of voluntary associations reinforced the ideology that citizen-driven reform was an ethical obligation of good citizenship enactment. A distrust in government was reinforced by Pittsburgh’s precarious economic situation post World War I. High demand for goods including steel, glass, and coal during the war strengthened Pittsburgh’s economy following the 1914-1915

¹³ Andrew S. McElwaine, “Slag in the Park,” in *Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and its Region*, ed. Joel Tarr (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 176.

¹⁴ Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 8.

¹⁵ Capozzola, 7.

economic recession, however, postwar labor shortages and the Steel Strike of 1919 destabilized capital investment. Despite maintaining absolute economic growth, Pittsburgh slipped from the eighth to ninth most populous city, contributing to economic wariness in the power of environmental and urban reform. Debate, discussion, and planning for modern comprehensive reform returned with intense vigor after the war, however, with elite planning organizations promising to provide a foundation for supporting and enhancing civic life. Planners pinned a failure to achieve comprehensive urban reform as resulting from prior decades fragmented and uncoordinated development. That lack of planning was blamed as responsible for the city's deteriorating political, social, environmental and economic issues. As a result, urban planning of the 1920s favored scientific and comprehensive approaches that were believed to create orderly cities.

The urban planning profession gained national legitimacy by the 1920s as a new discipline of study. Professional training, education, and certification programming was created, and planning experts emphasized the importance of educating the public on planning as a practice. The city's elite understood civic organizing to be imperative for good citizenship. Civic organizations in the early twentieth century emphasized the promotion of public over private interest in investment. As pointed out by Samuel Hays, however, while reformers used rhetoric of democracy and public interest to justify their interventions, "they in no sense meant that all segments of society should be equally involved in municipal decision-making."¹⁶ Voluntary civic organizations formed by Pittsburgh's business and professional leaders confronted by the imperative for change and sought to centralize power in the hands of a select elite body. These organizations initiated

¹⁶ Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 55 (October, 1964), 160.

and dominated environmental reform and comprehensive planning for the city, invoking rhetoric of democracy and public good, but most often relying on select business and professional control.¹⁷

Reformers aspired to promote an orderly system of rational, bureaucratic, and centralized decision-making to address community problems through public and private sector cooperation.¹⁸ Radical spatial and economic change in the city transformed Pittsburgh's gritty and uninviting downtown into a modern center for business ventures and prepared the city to enter a new economic structure of mass consumption and mass communication.¹⁹ City planning was seen as synonymous with traditional civic boosterism that would enhance the economic competitiveness and prosperity of the city through refining urban space. It also served to organize the orderly assimilation of children, immigrants, and laborers into the regional economy infrastructure. Newly acquired legal authority did not always weld actual power, however, as civic education programming about planning frequently overshadowed actual planning policy and implementation. The strength of these groups often lay in their contribution to building a framework for conversations about transportation, infrastructure, zoning, industrial regulation, and regional expansion.

3.2 Civic Organizing

Civic organizing was an important component of citizenship enactments in the early twentieth century. The CCCPP emphasized a comprehensive plan for urban reform for the first

¹⁷ Hays; Lubove, *Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh*.

¹⁸ Lubove.

¹⁹ Bauman and Muller, *Before Renaissance*, 104.

time in the city of Pittsburgh, linking civic wellbeing with spatial arrangement of the urban landscape. It also saw building favor with the publics it sought to represent to be an integral component of good urban planning. In this section, I begin with describing the organization and goals of the Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh. I then turn to highlight their work with the Junior Civics Committee. Last, I describe the scientific approach to planning playgrounds and parks.

3.2.1 The Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh

Frederick Bigger left his position as Assistant Secretary to the Pittsburgh Art Commission to join the war effort where he advocated for the utility of civic order and economic stability while working on government housing and industrial management.²⁰ Bigger believed in the power of public organizing to advocate for practicality and beauty to strengthen the economy and resolve urban turmoil. In October 1918, he brought together several powerful businessmen including banker and financier Richard Mellon, entrepreneur Howard Heinz, President of Armstrong Cork Charles Armstrong, city engineer James Hailman, and others, to establish the Executive Committee for the voluntary formation of the Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh (CCCPP). The CCCPP was chartered as a Municipal Planning Association organized to produce the Pittsburgh Plan, becoming what Roy Lובה describes as “the chief vehicle through which businessmen attempted to influence the evolution of the physical environment.”²¹ In a break from prior planning initiatives, Bigger emphasized planning around the organic city, linking together all

²⁰ Bauman and Muller, 108.

²¹ Lubove, *Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh*, 87.

projects as a coordinated systems infrastructure. Sub-committees organized on matters of finance, a major street plan, recreation, legislation, publicity, transit, transportation, waterways, and freight terminals. Ultimately, six reports were released, covering playgrounds, a major street plan, parks, transit, railroads, and waterways. Taken together as a comprehensive approach to urban planning, these matters were believed to address all potential unrest that might contribute to unruly citizenship in the city.

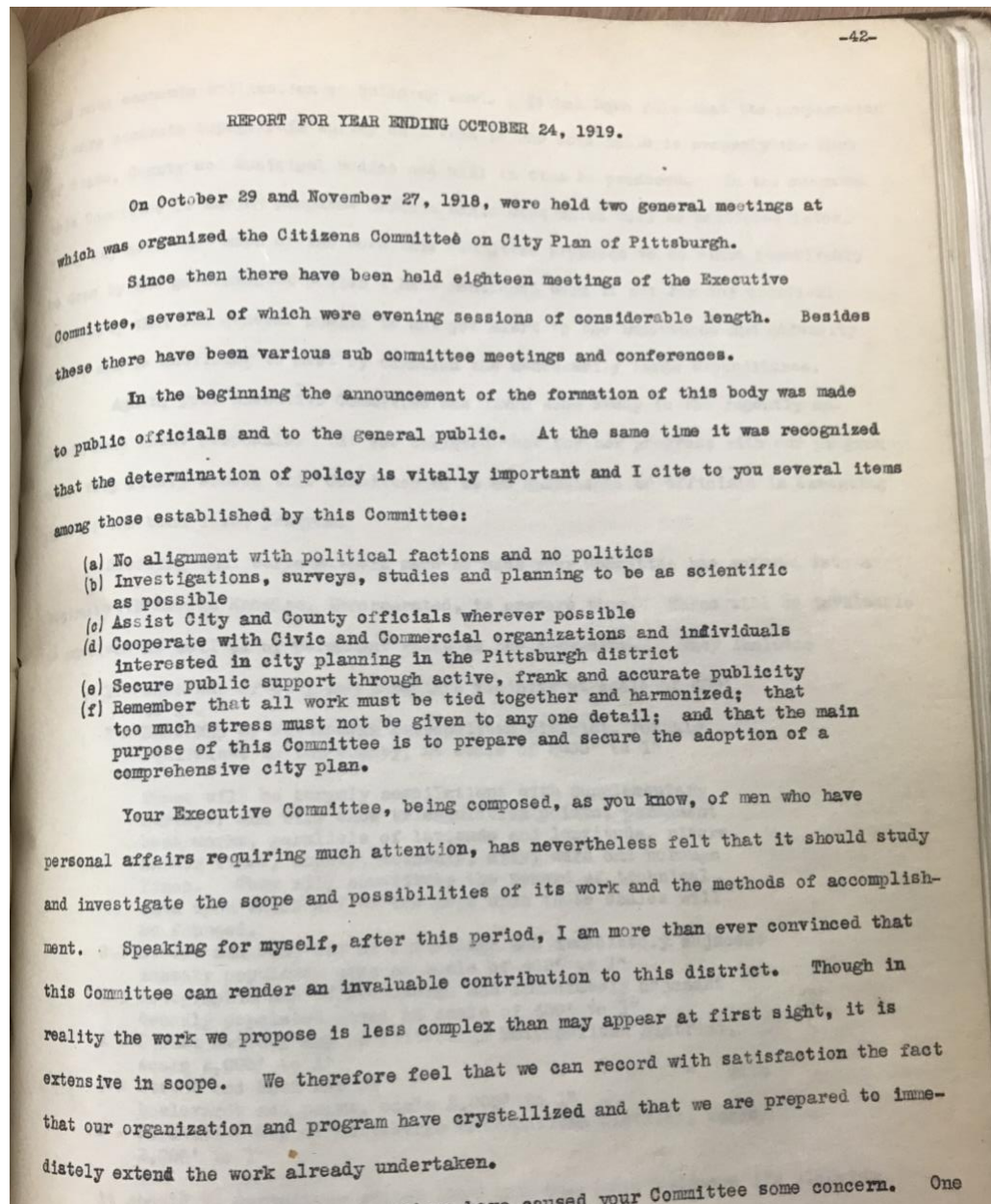


Figure 3.1 Page from Citizens Committee for City Plan of Pittsburgh Report for Year Ending October 24, 1919 (Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)

The CCCPP held its first official meeting to outline a system for determining policy recommendations on October 29, 1918. It emphasized a lack of political ties, strong governmental

cooperation, public support, that work be completed as scientifically and harmoniously as possible, and that its main purpose is to prepare and secure a comprehensive plan for urban development (see Figure 3.1). These guiding principles endured in later public narratives of the CCCPP. When it published its first public bulletin just over two years later, the purpose of the new civic body was “to promote the orderly and efficient development of municipalities, to further scientific methods of city planning, to obtain publicly in matters pertaining to city planning, and to publish reports, maps and plans to be used for the public benefit.”²² The committee organized the plan around the stated objective of giving Pittsburgh “an orderly, scientific, comprehensive program of city building, and [...] secur[ing] for the people the city greater comfort, safety, health, convenience, utility and beauty in their daily lives.”²³ In considering language and the making of place, Yi-Fu Tuan argues that “although speech alone cannot materially transform nature, it can direct attention, organize insignificant entities into significant composite wholes, and in doing so, make things formally overlooked – and hence invisible and nonexistent – visible and real.”²⁴ Rhetoric of the CCCPP directed public attention to the importance of place in shaping citizenship and in particular, that an orderly city produces good orderly citizens.

In the 1920s, Pittsburgh’s predominantly white, middle-class citizens began moving out to nearby suburbs, bringing with them their money and resources. Post-World War I anxieties intensified elite and middle-class suspicions of the large number of foreign-born citizens who inhabited Pittsburgh. This was further amplified by the ethnic, religious, and class-based division of neighborhood settlements. Living in an industrial town with few environmental regulations

²² “Citizen’s Committee Obtains Charter,” *Progress*, January 1921, 5.

²³ “Citizen’s Committee Obtains Charter.” Featured in every issue of *Progress*.

²⁴ Yi-Fu Tuan, “Language and the Making of Place: A Narrative-Descriptive Approach,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 90, no. 4 (1991): 685.

meant that those who could not afford to leave the city were subjected to polluted conditions that contributed to a low quality of life. In an attempt to retain capital investment, the CCCPP needed to generate social and political support for physical redevelopment of the city that promised to address both material and symbolic concerns that might otherwise drive wealthy citizens and their financial capital to other cities.

The CCCPP began publishing a monthly newsletter, *Progress*, in January 1921, with the aim of garnering public support for their urban planning recommendations. In every issue of the newsletter, one section was dedicated to introducing the CCCPP to potential new audiences. In that section, the CCCPP defined themselves as “an unofficial body of private citizens,” who organized with the shared belief “that a definite and workable program of development is even more necessary for the City of Pittsburgh, in its business, than it is for any individual Pittsburgher in his business or profession.”²⁵ They made repeated claims of having “no political connections and no partisan purposes,” however, at the same time, promoted how they enjoyed “the sincere and powerful support” from “officials of city and county, from civic and commercial bodies, and from individuals in every walk of life, representative of every interest in the community.”²⁶ This support was described as affirming how “we have won a fair measure of public confidence,” demonstrated by their “many letters of approval, and similar commendation” by “word of mouth.”²⁷ At the end of the first year in which *Progress* was launched, the CCCPP noted that, “most important of the Committee’s tasks in 1922 is the retention of that measure of confidence, on the part of the public, of press, and of officials, which has strengthened the Committee’s hands

²⁵ “An Explanation,” *Progress*, January 1921, 5. Featured in every issue of *Progress* and in the six planning reports.

²⁶ “An Explanation,” 5; “Aid Appreciated,” *Progress*, October 1921, 6.

²⁷ “Aid Appreciated,” 6. “Major Street Plan Earns Approbation from Professionals and Laymen,” *Progress*, October 1921, 7.

thus far, and has given reason for the believe that the Plan, once complete, will be met with the heartiest approval of the people of Pittsburgh.”²⁸

Importantly, public approval for comprehensive city planning was highlighted as the primary goal of the Committee rather than physical development. In addition to their monthly bulletin, *Progress*, and six planning reports, they led hundreds of training and education programs, lectures, and talks at schools, churches, meetings, town halls, and public forums, to reach thousands of individuals around the region. While “governing bodies,” like the CCCPP did not hold direct political power, they aspired to “manag[e] the social life within” the city through other means.²⁹ The CCCPP imagined the city as a “regulatory space” for enacting citizenship through good urban planning.³⁰ Despite their ultimate failure to enact the comprehensive physical rebuild of the city, the CCCPP’s wide-reaching public promotion of the plan encouraged citizens to value urban planning and reconsider what it meant to be a good citizen.

²⁸ “Another Year,” *Progress*, October 1921, 4.

²⁹ Casey Schmitt, “Mounting Tensions: Materializing Strategies and Tactics on National Park ‘Social Trails,’” *Environmental Communication* 10, no. 4 (2016): 428.

³⁰ Raymie E. McKerrow, “Corporeality and Cultural Rhetoric: A Site for Rhetoric’s Future,” *Southern Communication Journal* 63, no. 4 (1998): 278.

3.2.2 Work with Junior Civic Clubs

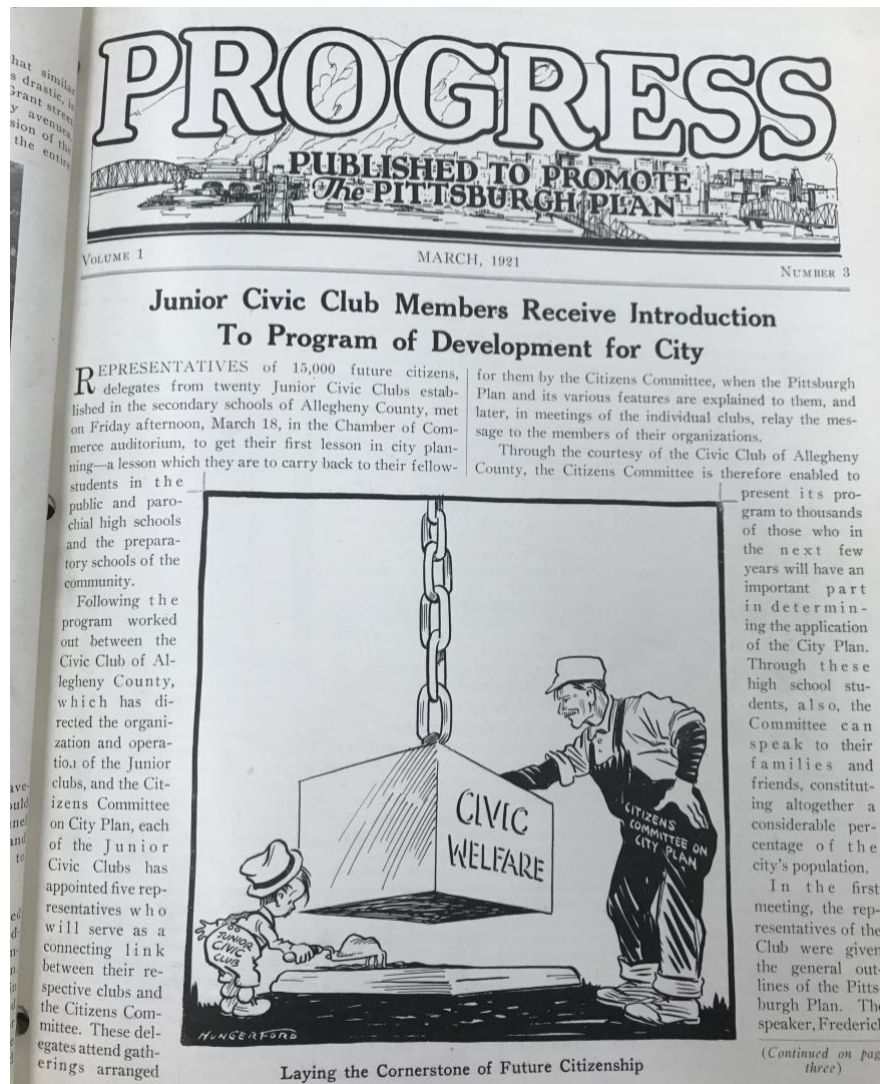


Figure 3.2 Cartoon “Laying the Cornerstone of Future Citizenship,” from March 1921 Issue of *Progress* (Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)

The CCCPP used the Pittsburgh Plan to promote civic engagement with children through partnering with Junior Civic Clubs (JCC). A cartoon image of the CCCPP and JCC working

together can be found on the cover of the third issue of *Progress*, featured in the article “Junior Civic Club Members Receive Introduction to Program of Development for City.”³¹ Drawn in overalls, out of the business suits of their day-to-day attire, the Citizens Committee is envisioned as male and as a manager of labor, overseeing the physical development of the city by the laboring junior citizen. The Junior Civic Club, also pictured as male, holds a brick paver, the tool for “laying the Cornerstone of Future Citizenship,” which is civic welfare. The anonymous crane operator, not pictured, holds the chain to maneuvering civic welfare, suggesting an authority that lies outside the JCC or CCCPP. Without the crane operator, the JCC and CCCPP have no leverage to control where the foundation of civic welfare lies, or even the ability access it at all. Figure 3.2 illustrates how the CCCPP desired to regulate the labor of the youth, suggesting that a primary aim of the CCCPP was to set the stage for future development through the education of future citizens. An article that corresponded with Figure 3.2 noted that, “it is altogether fitting, therefore, that our younger future citizens, who will have the most [...] to do concerning the Plan, should begin now to learn of its great advantages and to get the vision of the greater Pittsburgh of the future.”³² Incidentally, the Pittsburgh Plan was envisioned as a tool for teaching younger generations how to plan for physical infrastructural urban development when they were older. At the same time, the Pittsburgh Plan encouraged the youth to develop shared values with the CCCPP for what constitutes civic welfare. The emphasis on training the future citizens suggested that one of the most comprehensive measures the CCCPP aspired for was not only the planning for the physical city, but the comprehensive planning for a shared vision of the city and its future citizenry as well.

³¹ “Junior Civic Club Members Receive Introduction to Program of Development for the City,” *Progress*, March 1921, 1.

³² “Our Junior Citizens,” *Progress*, March 1921, 4.

The ambitious tasking of the youth with the future good of the city further relied on mass education and persuasion efforts by the CCCPP.

The CCCPP saw power for change rooted in a strong collective citizenry rather than in the power of government. They noted, “If 15,000 high school students make up their minds that their city needs a Plan, nothing can stop them from giving their city the kind of plan they want.”³³ Here, the collective desire of the students was believed to be the most powerful tool for creating tangible change. Comprehensive planning for the future citizenry made the cooperative work between the CCCPP and JCC “of high importance.”³⁴ *Progress* reported from an editorial for the *Pittsburgh Sun* stating,

Insomuch as the Pittsburgh Plan, now being evolved, looks forward many years, it is appropriate that especial effort should be made to explain the need for planning to the children of the city. They are the citizens of tomorrow, by whom the major part of the great work must be executed. It is fair to them that they be given the opportunity to learn, the true situation of their city at a time when life interests are forming.³⁵

The CCCPP recognized their city plan as laying symbolic groundwork for the junior citizens to take up materially in the future. Despite consistent rhetoric that framed the youth as “future citizens” or “citizens of tomorrow,” numerous measures taken to encourage students’ participation in the Pittsburgh Plan all suggest the youth were already actively engaged in civic enactments. Youth participated in public promotion of the plan, conducted fieldwork, studied the planning documents in school, gave speeches, and attended promotional talks and lectures. The cooperative and interactive nature of the CCCPP and JCC was reflective of the far-reaching measures taken by the business elite to ensure a specific and orderly means of training future citizens. One article noted how, “the 12,000 members of the organization of future citizens will have opportunity to

³³ “Our Junior Citizens,” 4.

³⁴ “Building for the Future,” *Progress*, January 1922, 3.

³⁵ “Building for the Future,” 3.

hear the facts regarding planning from men of experience and authority. The juniors will come into maturity with a fuller perception of and more alert interest in planning and related civic subjects than this generation has had opportunity to develop.”³⁶ Here, the CCCPP governing individuals are presented as ideal citizens and authority figures formatters of urban planning. The text describes high schoolers coming into maturity with a shared vision of urban planning thanks to training provided by the CCCPP. Rhetoric of youth education illustrates Leslie Hahner’s claim that American ideology of the early twentieth century held that proper education could successfully steer the youth down a path of good virtuous citizenship.³⁷

³⁶ “Building for the Future,” 3. The 12,000 high school members of the JCC reflected approximately 2% of the city’s population at that time.

³⁷ Leslie Hahner, *To Become an American: Immigrants and Americanization Campaigns of the Early Twentieth Century* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2017).



Figure 3.3 Cartoon “A Fine Catch” From May 1922 Issue of *Progress* (Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)

Support from students was described as critical for the CCCPP’s urban planning initiative. In contrast with the cartoon from a year earlier, (see Figure 3.2), in Figure 3.3, the child representing the JCC is self-sufficient. He has ‘caught’ the city plan independently and without aid of the CCCPP, generating surprise and admiration of the City of Pittsburgh. Pictured as a barefoot country boy dressed in overalls, the cartoon illustrates how the city child is now as resilient and self-sufficient as their rural counterpart, who incidentally has not been exposed to urban corruption. The accompanying cover story featured on the May 1922 issue *Progress*, “Knowledge of Pittsburgh’s Needs Shown by Students in Explaining Advantages of City

Planning,” promoted the successful essay contest in which Junior Citizens submitted hundreds of submissions on “why Pittsburgh needs a city plan.”³⁸ Naomi A. Lee, a junior at South Hills High School, received first prize in the essay contest. They argued,

Cities furnish the real life blood of the nation. Here we find the men of creative ability, the men who make for progress. Cities are the very highest and the very lowest expression of our civilization. They are the crucibles of our citizens. Pittsburgh is one of them. Here the new immigrant is either assimilated into our national life or remains a menace to our welfare. With a vast population, with many functions to perform, the government of cities has become the great problem of American life.³⁹

Their submission frames the city as essential to national progress, and the seamless assimilation of foreign citizens as crucial to productivity. Essentially, in identifying failures of government as responsible for societal ills, the student promotes the necessity of civic participation and organizing when nation-building. The second prize essay by Esther Levitt, of Fifth Avenue High School, spoke to the City Beautiful influence on city planning. They explained, “If we wish the children to grow up as noble men and women, with high hopes and aspirations, we must surround them with beautiful things. Beauty is necessary to a full rich life. It inspires and it creates. A city plan will benefit from it and will make the future brighter.”⁴⁰ Levitt’s essay emphasized the role of spatial design and development as a necessary cornerstone of societal wellbeing. The CCCPP’s selection of winning essays presents a carefully constructed narrative of their work with students. Rhetoric of the winning essays is offered as evidence that the youth have “caught” the CCCPP’s values such as the cultural assimilation of immigrants and careful cultivation of public space as vital for urban life and good citizenship. Public circulation of the chosen essays reinforces the CCCPP’s urban planning strategies as critical for the future of Pittsburgh. The emphasis on

³⁸ “Knowledge of Pittsburgh’s Needs Shown by Students in Explaining Advantages of City Planning,” *Progress*, May 1922, 1.

³⁹ “Knowledge of Pittsburgh’s Needs,” 1.

⁴⁰ “Knowledge of Pittsburgh’s Needs,” 2.

children modeling the morals of civic leaders is consistent with the perception of the time that “children are imitators” and that it is the duty of adult citizens to supervise and model that process of learning.⁴¹

3.2.3 Scientific Planning for the Urban Landscape

Urban development emphasized scientific and comprehensive planning to resolve mounting urban crises, marking a significant shift from “the haste and confusion of haphazard development” of the past.⁴² It espoused the benefits of scientific planning for avoiding pitfalls of earlier fragmented development and planning, which were understood as visionless and contributing to social unrest. For Frederick Bigger and other urban planners of the 1920s, zoning, plans for development of unused lots, and comprehensive street and development planning, promised the rise of an idealized city where happy, healthy citizens could live and thrive. The six plans the CCCPP outlined for changing the city’s physical landscape were organized under three basic planning committees that addressed reform needs of transit, transportation, and recreation. In this section, I focus specifically on the Recreation Committee’s plans for parks and playgrounds, to address the role of a green and open space system in comprehensive city planning.

The CCCPP’s proposed changes for recreation emphasize aesthetic improvements to the city. Aesthetic improvements were believed to improve public virtue and respond to the moral imperative to alleviate the crime and immorality linked to a dirty environment. Andrew McElwaine explains:

⁴¹ Sidney A. Teller, “The Community Which Today Recognizes the Benefits of Plan Will Have Better Citizens Tomorrow” *Progress*, April 1922, 8.

⁴² G. L. Pepler, “City Planning Maps Hung in Public Office,” *Progress*, March 1922, 2.

The effect was in part informed by landscape designer Frederick Law Olmsted Sr.'s belief that a healthy atmosphere and environment would directly improve the well-being of urban residents. By providing a healthy and attractive city, with recreation and open space, many of the city's professionals believed that working-class pathologies could be ameliorated. While improving conditions, the process could also serve the professional and business classes' paternalism and self-interest.⁴³

City planners argued that open space improved the urban living experience. Their scientific approach to comprehensive planning emphasized consideration for the public good rather than the interests of individuals. In *Parks – A Part of the Pittsburgh Plan*, the Recreation Committee explained that early urban development at the turn of the twentieth century reflected selfish behavior that valued an individual's right to own land at the expense of the public good. Comprehensive scientific planning, by contrast, was described as objective, equitable, and carrying far-reaching benefits for all citizens and inhabitants. Access and serviceability also benefited efforts toward Americanization through fostering "contentment and happiness," which "facilitated the bonds of patriotism."⁴⁴ The CCCPP's emphasis on quality of life reflected a central tension in planning for future urban progress.

⁴³McElwaine, "Slag in the Park," 176-177.

⁴⁴ Hahner, *To Become an American*, 179.

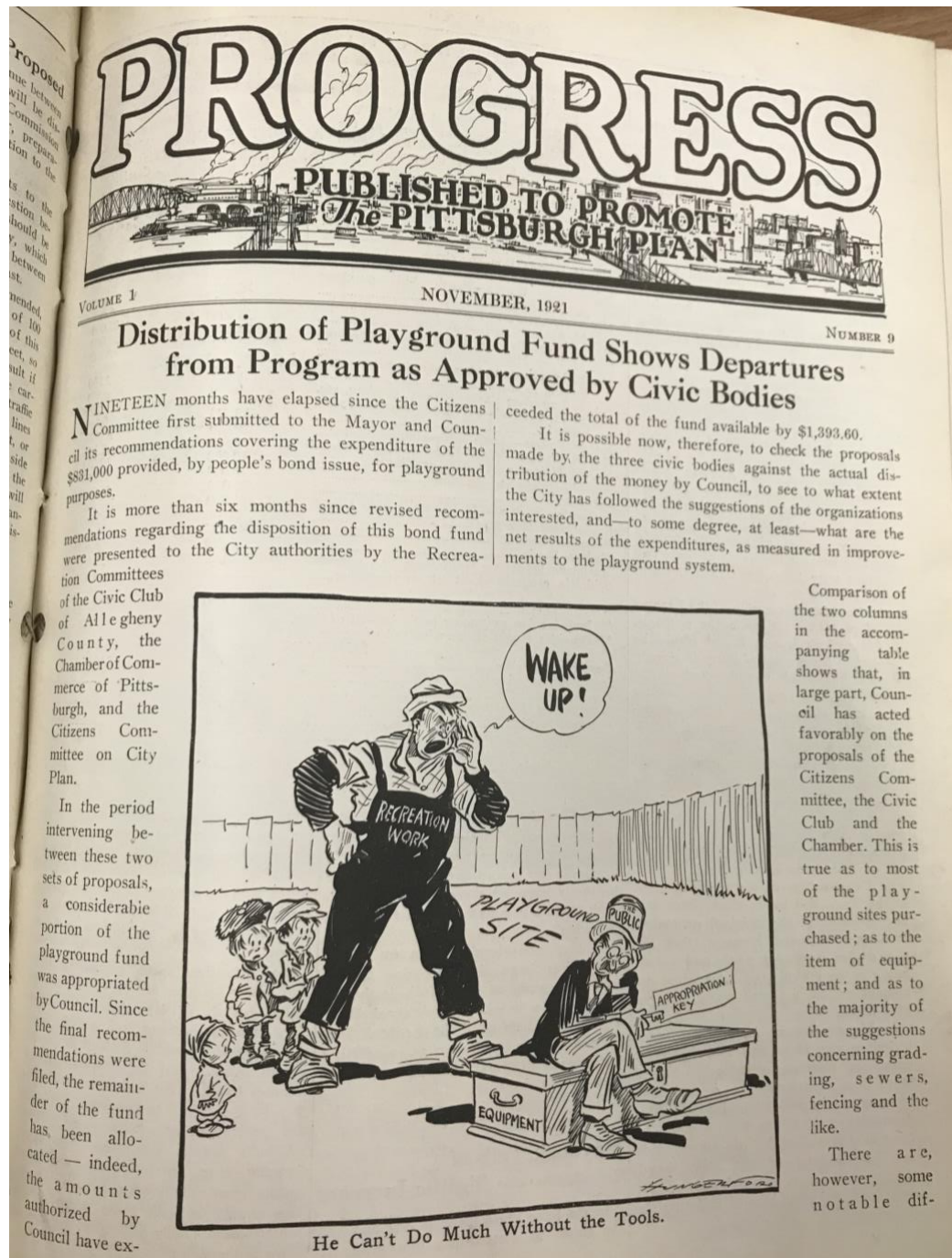


Figure 3.4 Cartoon “He Can’t Do Much Without the Tools,” From November 1921 Issue of *Progress* (Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)

The installation of playgrounds in or in place of neighborhood parks reflected a new vision for public space in the 1920s and showcased how the youth were a main priority for urban planning. *Pittsburgh Playgrounds: A Part of the Pittsburgh Plan* (1920), was the first report published by the CCCPP. In the introduction to *Parks*, published three years after *Pittsburgh Playgrounds*, it was stated that “the Committee has found it impossible to improve the unscientific, haphazard methods of municipal activity in providing, developing, maintaining, and administering recreation area facilities.”⁴⁵ The CCCPP validated their need to reinvent recreation in the city by categorizing the restoration of prior recreation areas as an impossible task, tied to failures of the public to appropriate proper funds and support for equipment, as seen in Figure 3.4. The Committee saw their shift to scientific and impartial planning as resolving the politically charged and fragmented decision-making of the past, which served “to please rather than to secure the utmost efficiency.”⁴⁶ Scientific planning was thus understood as uniquely apolitical, equitable, and holistic. James Scott identifies that the precision and calculations of scientific planning relied on “standardizing the subjects of development,” which “was implicit even in the noblest goals of the planners. The great majority of them were strongly committed to a more egalitarian society, to meet the basic needs of its citizens (especially the working class), and to making the amenities of a modern society available to all.”⁴⁷ The chaos of numerous, wide-reaching events that occurred in the late 1910s, like World War I, the First Red Scare, the 1918 Flu Pandemic, and the Steel Strike of 1919 exacerbated already heightened fears for urban life including immigration, disease,

⁴⁵ Frederick Bigger, *Parks: A Part of the Pittsburgh Plan* (Pittsburgh: Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh, 1923), 13.

⁴⁶ Bigger, 13.

⁴⁷ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the State Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 345.

labor, and the economy.⁴⁸ The orderliness of comprehensive urban development promised to alleviate some of the fractured public sense of what good citizenship meant and how to enact it.

When professional urban planning was introduced in the 1920s, “urban order itself” was understood to be “wrought [with] social benefits: good streets and boulevards, and good parks and playgrounds [...] made good people.”⁴⁹ In order to achieve maximum efficiency in urban development, “investigations, surveys, studies, and planning” were designed “to be as scientific as possible.”⁵⁰ The data that was gathered sought to record physical conditions of the city, as well as necessary social and economic data. Social scientific data through survey collection on subjects including industry, recreation, and housing, for example, were included, however, usage was limited only to such information which was understood to “directly affect” or be “affected by, the physical layout of the city and adjacent districts.”⁵¹ This emphasis on narrowing the scope of planning influences reflected the ideology of the CCCPP as basing the Pittsburgh plan only “on accurate knowledge of present conditions, with a thorough study of all the factors which make a city.”⁵² As Scott explains, for large-scale planning, “to the degree that the subjects can be treated as standardized units, the power of resolution in the planning exercise is enhanced.”⁵³ The treatment of citizens as standardized units was imagined as easily obtainable in the orderly city imagined through comprehensive development; all citizens could be socialized through organized recreation, zoning plans allowed for the easy politicization of place, and economic gain was stabilized through an easily accessible flow of transportation that promoted productive work.

⁴⁸ Ryan C. Brown, *Pittsburgh and the Great Steel Strike of 1919* (Cheltenham, UK: The History Press, 2019).

⁴⁹ Bauman and Muller, *Before Renaissance*, 14.

⁵⁰ “Report for Year Ending October 24, 1919,” Meetings of the Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh, 1918-1921, Box C, Folder 28, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials, William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

⁵¹ Report for Year Ending October 24, 1919, 44.

⁵² “An Explanation,” 5.

⁵³ Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 346.

Scientific planning was perceived to be mutually reinforcing with the nation-wide City Beautiful movement, however, with greater emphasis on practical comprehensive planning. The Recreation Committee outlined the connection between scientific planning and City Beautiful in one of their meetings identifying that beauty is not only found in ornament or aesthetic design, but also found where design is both useful and attractive. This was achieved through a precise, and “conscious handling of the structural elements as will bring them into a harmony of form, mass, proportion, texture, line, and pattern.”⁵⁴ Bauman and Muller point to the exceptionalism of Frederick Bigger’s approach to design as contrary to the “more conservative social and political course” taken by most progressive reformers of the 1920s.⁵⁵ Rather than engage strictly in “expert, orderly, politically neutral public authority,” Bigger was identified as favoring “the mayhem of the private marketplace in shaping the urban environment,” in hopes that by making Pittsburgh “more attractive and efficient,” the city would also become a “more socially equitable and just” space.⁵⁶

The re-theorization of open space significantly shaped urban planning and its impact on citizenship in 1920s Pittsburgh. It was reflected both in the rise of zoning and in the desire for a functioning city that included productive and orderly recreation, transit, and transportation. Recreation expanded consideration for public space beyond parks to include a much broader conceptual approach to open areas. Yards, streetways, playgrounds, neighborhood parks all provided new means of adding green space to the city. Open space was not only seen as essential to the wellbeing of urban dwellers; it was also “essential to the free, healthy development of our cities.”⁵⁷ The shift away from the narrow frame of site-specific development projects characteristic

⁵⁴ Recreation Committee Meeting – May 16, 1922, 507, Box X, Folder 207, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials. William R. Oliver Special Collections Room Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

⁵⁵ Bauman and Muller, *Before Renaissance*, 7.

⁵⁶ Bauman and Muller, 7.

⁵⁷ John Ihlder, “Open Spaces Greatest Need in City Growth,” *Progress*, March 1922, 6.

of the nineteenth-century and toward a regional zoning system dominated urban development conversations in Pittsburgh in the 1920s. Recreation Committee meetings highlighted how “the political subdivision of the city into wards creates arbitrary and imaginary lines throughout the physical territory” and “the political boundary lines of the municipality bear no fixed relationship to the topographical features such as ravines, valleys, hills or rivers.”⁵⁸ Though their critique of political planning, the CCCPP used geographic frames to provide new evidence for the necessity of zoning. CCCPP re-envisioning the physical districting of the city was thought to play a key role in securing public support for maximum recreation benefits. The same perceived strengths of objective scientific planning, however, resulted in an overemphasis on planning details of the physical landscape, including a disproportionate focus on zoning, street alignment, empty lots, and arterial plans that ultimately did not reflect or take into account the lived experiences of communities and their use of local spaces for engagement.

⁵⁸ Recreation Committee Meeting, 516.

3.3 Recreation and Reformation of Public Space

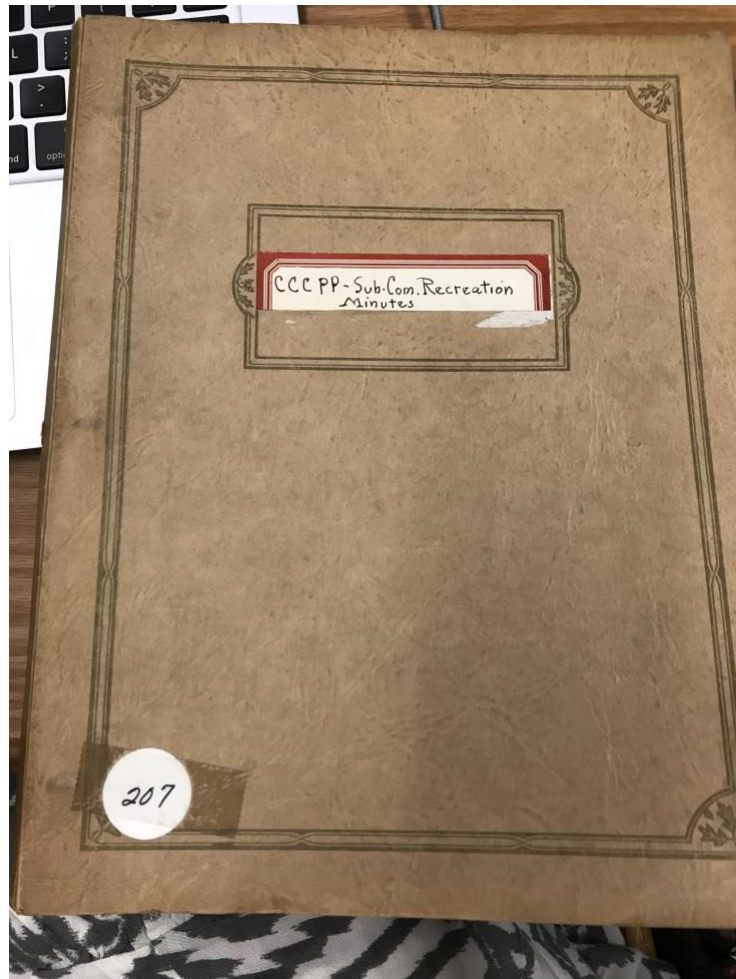


Figure 3.5 The CCCPP Sub-Committee on Recreation Minutes (Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)

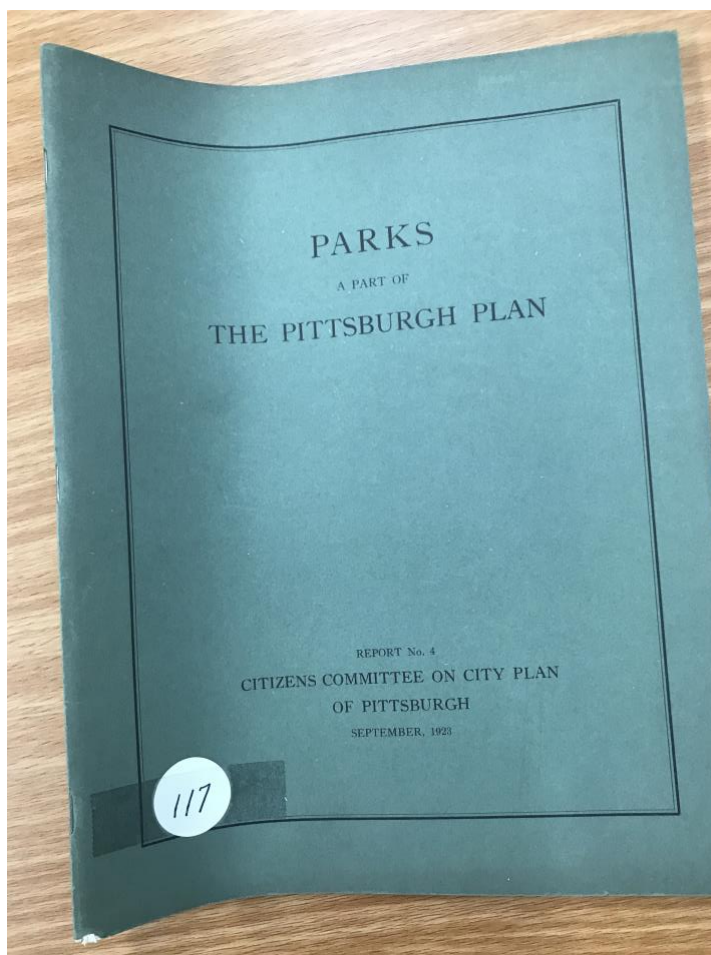


Figure 3.6 Parks: A Part of the Pittsburgh Plan (Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)

In contrast with late nineteenth century progressive beliefs that the united pillars of nature and culture alone could resolve mounting social disorder and decay, early twentieth century reformers turned to more direct methods of influence. This included expanding the function of parks to provide more accessible instruction in good citizenship through organized recreation and

play.⁵⁹ The Recreation Committee was demonstrative of the national ideology for the reform parks era (1900-1930). Galen Cranz explains, “the keynote approach of reform parks was to organize activity,” especially for children and working-class men.⁶⁰ The earlier parks system conceptualized parks as pleasure grounds, where people’s primary use of public space including milling about of their own accord in their limited free time. Thanks to new labor laws that provided people with more unsupervised time, “urban park planners now considered the masses incapable of undertaking their own recreation.”⁶¹ The rise of organized recreation and team sports was designed to maximize free time that promoted civic participation rather than individualized leisure. While a shortage of free time at the end of the nineteenth century meant maximizing what little time off people did have, in the early twentieth century, organized play at neighborhood parks provided structure and organization for efficiently using their newfound free time in a wholesome manner. The Recreation Committee estimated that the average individual had six to eight hours a day for recreation. Particularly for children and adult men, organized team sports and recreation provided creative outlets and relief from the monotony of school and routine office and factory work. In both the pleasure ground and reform park, free time could easily be used ways understood to be corrupting, such as time spent in saloons, dance halls, or at the cinema, or it could be spent in a wholesome and virtuous manner, such as attending church, the YMCA, or participating in organized sports.⁶² In short, the philosophy of the reform park era observed that through order, free time could be controlled and managed to encourage good citizenship. In this section, I examine

⁵⁹ Francis G. Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh: Class and Culture in an Industrializing City 1877-1919* Albany, NY: The State of New York Press, 1984), 108.

⁶⁰ Galen Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1982), 61.

⁶¹ Cranz, 61.

⁶² For more on workers and leisure in industrial cities, see Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1985).

how the Recreation Committee approached reformation of public space. I begin with their approach to understanding the relationship between open space and urban growth, how recreation impacts economic security, and lastly their theorizing of equitable development.

3.3.1 Open Space and Urban Growth

The CCCPP's desire to control public behavior, and in particular, children and working-class men, which included a large segment of the city's immigrant population, encouraged select citizens' passive dependency on governing bodies, creating what Lauren Berlant describes as the "infantile citizen."⁶³ As Berlant notes, however, the paradox of the infantile citizen lies in "the infantile citizen's stubborn naivete" which gives them "enormous power to unsettle, expose, and reframe the machinery of national life."⁶⁴ The production of orderly recreation that takes place with the surveillance of the ever watchful citizens brigade attempts to foreclose possibilities for the unstable child, immigrant, or laborer to disrupt the creation of a productive, healthy, and stable urban infrastructure.

Parks reform justified the demolition of undesirable public spaces for urban renewal. City dumps, cemeteries, old piers, empty lots, and "slum" neighborhoods were often slated to be condemned in service of city beautification, capital development, and recreation opportunities. In describing their "adequate study of the recreation problem in Pittsburgh" the Recreation Committee included consideration for location, number and proportion of the population served, size, type, efficiency of development for public use, possibility of improvement, need for

⁶³ Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 27.

⁶⁴ Berlant, 29.

extension, possibility of extension. It did not, however, reflect consideration for the resulting displacement of low income, often black or immigrant residents it would cause.⁶⁵ In a Recreation Committee Meeting on recommendations for improvements to specific parks, it was noted that urban planning had not kept pace with urban growth. The consequences of an ever-increasing population density included an increase in demand for public and private land, increase in property value due to increased demand for housing, and an increase in infrastructural maintenance necessary to keep up with the stress of increased use. In the most neglected neighborhoods, it was found that “the density of population has become so great and the neglect and deterioration of the buildings has so greatly outdistanced the effort to repair or rebuild, that there results a reduction in rentable value and in assessing valuations. Districts of this character are either already slum or are rapidly becoming slum-like in character.”⁶⁶ The decision of whether to repair or rebuild holds significant consequences for those neighborhood residents should they be labeled as beyond saving. Discourse of this Recreation Committee meeting revealed how many already overcrowded neighborhoods were quickly concluded to be not worth saving, allowing for their condemnation, and thus, creating new opportunities for capital investment in their rebuilding.

The condemnation of overpopulated “slum” neighborhoods for new development revealed how undesirable citizens were to be sacrificed through the CCCPP’s rhetorically reframing of their homes as economically unjustifiable urban blight. In their May 1922 Recreation Committee meeting notes, the members concluded that, “so we find in Pittsburgh, entirely because of the operation of this well known natural law of uncontrollable city growth, residential areas of varying degrees of congestion and deterioration or of openness and decency.”⁶⁷ the Recreation Committee

⁶⁵ Recreation Committee Meeting.

⁶⁶ Recreation Committee Meeting, 500.

⁶⁷ Recreation Committee Meeting, 514.

explained that open spaces for recreation were desirable sites for combatting threats to urban wellness by contrasting congestion and deterioration with openness and decency. Further, they illustrated how openness became synonymous with decent citizenry, and the people who inhabit congested areas could be understood as contributing to the deterioration and wellness of the city.

It is a truism that the need for space for public recreation increases in proportion to the increase of population, and that this need is greatest where the population is densest. But we have seen that open spaces are more difficult to find or to create in those districts where the population is densest. Consequently, as a major social problem which can be partially relieved by proper planning, the City of Pittsburgh must make it possible to provide, in various localities, recreation areas which are larger in size or more serviceably arranged in direct proportion to the density of population and the existing lack of available, adequate, open, unoccupied spaces.⁶⁸

Here the CCCPP clearly illustrated the tension between open space and overpopulation. In the most densely populated spaces of the city, the least amount of open space could be found. The difficulty of creating and providing open space for those communities, however, relied on the destruction of already existing places and the displacement of their current inhabitants. In *Democracy's Lot*, Candice Rai examines how rhetoric of conflict over redevelopment and contested public space can productively illustrate the communicative strategies used in negotiating the production of space. Rai describes these “non-places,” like empty lots or rundown apartment buildings, as significant rhetorical sites for examining contested meaning of democratic life.⁶⁹

While never named explicitly, the decision to condemn slum housing, lots, and other undesired spaces for the creation of open, uninhabited recreation areas, reveals how the CCCPP envisioned fixing the problems that came with congested, densely populated areas, and by consequence, clearing out the often poor, immigrant, or black communities who inhabited them.

⁶⁸ Recreation Committee Meeting, 514.

⁶⁹ Candice Rai *Democracy's Lot: Rhetoric, Publics, and the Places of Invention* (Tuscaloosa: University of Arizona Press, 2016), 2.

Indeed, this tension was made clear in the *Parks* report recognition that “a considerable number of the people within these underserved areas are of low economic status. Their family budgets are restricted and a trip to a park by automobile or frequent trips by street car are impossible.”⁷⁰ Many of those very people who the recreation spaces were said to be built for, would necessarily become displaced by the demolition of dilapidated buildings or pushed out by the rising cost of real estate that would accompany the promised rebuild of the city, suggesting the tensions between the democratic and anti-democratic nature of urban reform.

⁷⁰ Bigger, *Parks*, 18.

3.3.2 Economic Recreation



**Figure 3.7 Cartoon “Look out for kidnappers!” from February 1921 Issue of Progress
(Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of
Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)**

Slum development and urban deterioration were understood as ill for the city not only because of the threats or lack of resources experienced by those living in neglected spaces, but also because urban decay threatened capitalist growth. On the cover page of the second issue of *Progress*, a cartoon featured a child-like “citizen” of Pittsburgh standing in an alley by a trashcan looking longingly at the inviting figure of a well-to-do woman leaning out of a car labeled “Chicago boulevards.” On the other side of the alley fence, a woman from Cleveland is holding “recreation candy” and looks down on the Pittsburgh citizen with concern. The two women’s

tempting offerings to the Pittsburgh citizen suggest that Pittsburgh was threatened by the temptations of better-off cities. Chicago and Cleveland are represented by adult, maternal white wealthy women, suggesting their capability to care for the child-like citizens of Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh citizen is depicted as facing the lure of boulevards, represented by an expensive car and driver that carry the wealthy Chicago woman decked in a fur shawl, and Cleveland, whose offer of recreation candy, a large house, expansive yard, and oil fields is far more tempting than the broken stick pictured in Pittsburgh's hand. Berlant's "infantile citizen," quite literally depicted here, threatens to potentially disrupt the development of Pittsburgh if lured away by the temptations of other cities.⁷¹

The article featured in *Progress* that accompanies the cartoon identifies how "local business men who have seen skilled workers give Pittsburgh the 'go-by' in favor of some other city where wages may be less, but where living is decidedly better will not miss the point in the cartoon on the first page of this issue."⁷² The article continued, noting, "Pittsburgh has in recent years lost numerous industries and commercial establishments which would have been located here but for difficulties of transportation and transit, of adequate ground space, and – for capital cannot remain where labor will not – of housing and recreation."⁷³ To adjudicate the problems of capital loss, better living conditions were found in the acquisition and development of open space. The official parks plan explained how, "if the aggregate time annually available in this city for recreation were expended wholesomely and healthfully, even if very great expenditures were required to provide facilities for that purpose, there would be an incalculable economic return. The

⁷¹ Berlant, *The Queen of America*, 27.

⁷² "For a Better City," *Progress*, February 1921, 4.

⁷³ "For a Better City," 4.

investment would be an investment in public health, contentment and efficiency, and in better citizenship.”⁷⁴

The CCCPP members saw encouragement of capital investment in comprehensive development as fulfilling their civic duty. In an article in *Progress*, the CCCPP noted that a weakness of the city was that “other cities lured workers elsewhere by providing better living conditions and more and better recreation facilities than Pittsburgh could offer.”⁷⁵ As a call to action, the Citizens Committee expressed a desire to enlarge their membership “to include more of the men and women who believe that the future Pittsburgh can, and must, be a finer and greater Pittsburgh than the city of today. The citizen who wishes to help in this cannot do better than to join with the Citizens Committee in its work.”⁷⁶ The CCCPP demonstrates investment of people in place by inviting all Pittsburgh citizens to participate in city-building, thus making them less likely to leave Pittsburgh for other cities. In this way, a greater Pittsburgh was characterized by its ability to attract new capital investment in the linkage of citizenship and attachment to place.

It became well established early on in city development that relief from urban hardship was necessary for gaining and maintaining happy and productive inhabitants. Discourses of open spaces as “the city’s lungs” and “breathing places” carried Olmstedian rhetoric through the twentieth century, recognizing the human cost to too much capitalist production.⁷⁷ In the 1920s, that recognition took the form of providing moral and healthful recreation for relief from the demands of modern living. Ross-Bryant explains, “the park idea thus creates a space that celebrates values that conflict with other American values, but in this place they can be held together. There

⁷⁴ Bigger, *Parks*, 15.

⁷⁵ Recreation Committee Meeting, 501-502.

⁷⁶ “For a Better City,” 4.

⁷⁷ Bigger, *Parks*, 15.

is thus an overarching affirmation of community, even as the more expected, ‘American’ emphasis on the individual in solitude is affirmed.”⁷⁸ The CCCPP identified the urgent need for increased provision of open space as a “fundamental issue” that must be faced “squarely.”⁷⁹ The numerous benefits of recreation promoted by the CCCPP included their social, economic, and commercial values.

At the Annual Meeting of the Recreation Committee in 1922, it was emphasized that the *Parks* recommendations should also be mutually reinforcing with the recommendations of the findings from the *Transit and Transportation* Committee reports. One of the dominant concerns of progressive reformers from the early- to mid-twentieth century was adapting the city for increased transit and transportation infrastructure. More accessible means of transit meant greater opportunities for urban commerce downtown and also promised retention of new talent by enabling “people to escape from congested areas to those where there is more open space.”⁸⁰ In addition to transportation concerns, conception of space and city borders were radically rethought away from planning solely for present political borders to regional planning for future growth. John Ihlder, Manager of the Civic Development Department of the United States Chamber of Commerce, argued how shifting from narrow site planning to regional metropolitan area planning, “will enable us to get a right perspective, to place emphasis where it should be instead of where compelled by conditions already developed within the congested area and its narrow fringes.”⁸¹ Ihlder observed how by using transportation and regional planning as a framework for utilizing open space to guide city development, “we can think of transport and transit systems in

⁷⁸ Lynn Ross-Bryant, “Ken Burns and American Mythology in *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*,” *Environmental Communication* 4, no. 4 (2010), 476-477.

⁷⁹ Bigger, *Parks*, 15.

⁸⁰ “Open Spaces Regarded Vital to a City’s Welfare,” *Progress*, May 1922, 8.

⁸¹ Ihlder, “Open Spaces Greatest Need,” 6.

constructive terms, not in the negative terms of mitigating evil conditions.”⁸² The planning reports linked transportation and recreation infrastructure together to emphasize the future development of the city rather than dwell on the deteriorating and unsustainable conditions of the status quo. An interwoven system of transit and transportation was supposed to encourage the public audience of *Progress* to consider how urban improvements benefited their lives within the city, effectively encouraging them to limit movement to within the region, quelling capitalist fears of draining economic investment. In light of the advance of new modes of transportation, a desire to maintain and attract new business ventures to downtown and respond to early suburban flight, Pittsburgh, and other industrial cities, needed to reimagine what cities looked like. To account for recreation, transportation, and transit, the comprehensive planning of the CCCPP aspired to correct the ways that those different facets enhanced or harmed the success of one another. At the same time that increased traffic reflected the economic drive of the city and new means of transportation demonstrated technological progress, those same advances also threatened Pittsburgh by illuminating how the city was ill prepared to keep up with change.

Park development projects included greater accessibility measures and new public facilities. One article in *Progress* pointed to the following recommendations as essential to developing a final parks report:

[...] Changes in park drives, entrances and adjacent streets to make existing parks more accessible; development of shelters, comfort stations, bus service, and the like in the parks; the extension of existing parks and the location of new parks; the boulevarding of some portions of the main thoroughfare system; the location and development of one or more waterfront recreation centers, on a large scale; the treatment of the downtown river fronts; and the development of community centers.⁸³

⁸² Ihlder, 6.

⁸³ “Recreation Plans,” *Progress*, October 1921, 3.

In contrast with the natural elements of parks, these transportation and transit infrastructural enhancements were understood to be uniquely civilizing features. The accessibility and serviceability of Pittsburgh Parks were, however, a continuous subject of debate. The Recreation Committee explained that the problem of location was vitally important, as “the greatest social welfare of an individual park lies in its accessibility and serviceability to that part of the city population which can receive the greatest benefit from it.”⁸⁴ Two key factors were identified for affecting the serviceability of parks, first, distribution and access, and second, relating to specific development, the suitability for intended purpose and attractiveness of site.⁸⁵ Ultimately, addressing public concerns for accessibility of parks remained a weakness of the *Parks* plan, with the Recreation Committee concluding that “it is difficult if not impossible to determine the actual serviceability of Pittsburgh’s parks.”⁸⁶ Frequent tensions over plans for change and a perceived inability to enact those plans contributed to the CCCPP emphasis on symbolic change over physical change to the urban landscape.

Emphasis on developing neighborhood parks reflected a significant shift from earlier parks planning initiatives and supported the broader development of a complete parks system. These smaller-scale “breathing spots” reinforced rhetoric of the *Playground* Report, published three years prior, on the need for “direct service to people living in congested districts which otherwise are lacking in open spaces.”⁸⁷ Unlike the large-scale regional parks, neighborhood parks enabled the Recreation Committee to recommend the harmonization of parks with playgrounds, athletic fields, and other recreation centers to fit the needs of their immediate communities, and maximize

⁸⁴ Recreation Committee Meeting, 511.

⁸⁵ Bigger, 16.

⁸⁶ Recreation Committee Meeting, 502.

⁸⁷ “Recreation Committee Making Park Study,” *Progress*, October 1922, 5.

the limited available space in densely populated areas. Whereas the Committee perceived the current state of those communities to be threatening because there were no sites for public gathering, parks would provide what Margaret LaWare describes as “material symbols and shared experiences that demarcate who is part of the community.”⁸⁸ The orderly integration of dominant community values was understood as facilitating greater social cohesion and civic engagement following World War I anxieties over the city’s high number of foreign-born residents.

3.3.3 Equitable Development

Any citizens of Pittsburgh who did not support urban planning were subject to a great deal of scrutiny by the CCCPP and written off as self-serving and inherently anti-American. While past failures to create a comprehensive city plan were been blamed on the fragmented decision-making of earlier urban planners, the present and future failures of the orderly city became hinged to ordinary citizens. Reflective of citizen-building rhetoric that emphasized a shift in American values from the promotion of private to public interest, it was noted that,

Always the city planner has been hampered by the ability of many of his fellow citizens to interpret city development except in the terms of their own personal relationships. [...] Some of our citizens can see no good in any bond issue unless it contains provision for their own neighborhood; some think a playground report useless unless recommendations immediate purchase of a plot around the next corner. [...] Carried to extremes, this is the spirit which is chiefly responsible for inefficient public expenditure; which ties the hands of public officials who are trying to see the needs of the city as a whole and serve all of the public instead of a few.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Margaret LaWare, “Defining a ‘Livable City’: Parks, Suburbanization, and the Shaping of Community Identity and Ecological Responsibility,” in *Communicative Cities in the 21st Century: The Urban Communication Reader III*, eds. Susan J. Drucker, Matthew D. Matsaganis, and Victoria J. Gallagher (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2013): 14.

⁸⁹ “Civic Selfishness,” *Progress*, May 1921, 4.

Here, citizens were contrasted with public officials as holding blame for why urban development has been inequitable. While the good political official was framed as desiring to serve all of the public, the non-political citizen was selfish. This emphasis on supporting community and nation were heavily valued in the desire to promote a new ethic of good citizenship that contrasted with earlier values of private over public interest.

Equitable development was repeatedly cited as a concern for the CCCPP, who saw their mission as tied to correcting the unbalanced and politically influenced development of the past. In *Progress*, the CCCPP made a case for playground site selection based on need. In particular, they criticized prior approaches to development that placed a premium “on ‘active voters,’ on adults, rather than on the needs of the children,” imploring readers to consider that “if our own district needs a playground, and another district has a greater need, we will not ask you to attend first to us, but we will gladly wait our turn.”⁹⁰ Without the power of implementation, the CCCPP relied on compelling their audience to advocate for those most in need. The CCCPP did so, however, with a great avoidance of detailing inequality. Playgrounds were understood to be particularly important to the Hill and Bloomfield districts “because of the large populations in these sections which are partly or totally lacking in public play facilities,” but failed to detail the implicit racial, economic, and social inequalities experienced in those regions of the city.⁹¹ Cranz identifies that in fact, “parks had been a battleground between the races since the late 1910s,” suggesting the hollow gesturing of equitable development based on race.⁹² Even in direct appeals for greater support for places like the Hill District, whose public works conditions were identified as “among

⁹⁰ “Before Public Money is Spent for Playgrounds,” *Progress*, November 1921, 1.

⁹¹ “Districts in Most Serious Need of Playgrounds Await Expenditure of Bond Fund Balance,” *Progress*, December 1921, 1.

⁹² Cranz, *The Politics of Parks Design*, 201.

the worst in the city,” race was absent entirely from conversation, despite the Hill District being a predominately black and immigrant neighborhood.⁹³

The CCCPP’s plans for facilitating orderly public interaction through recreation illustrates the role of parks in influencing “how people engage others.”⁹⁴ The quality of experience in a reform park was markedly different from that in a pleasure ground. Cranz identifies, “parks, like business firms and schools, followed an industrial model: age segregation, specialization of function, and a horror of waste.”⁹⁵ Shorter work weeks, earlier retirement, and more vacation time, all resulted in greater opportunities for public engagement. The Recreation Committee provided a broad explanation of what wholesome recreation may include: “it may be physical activity, mental activity, the enjoyment of beauty, mere amusement, or merely rest and relaxation.”⁹⁶ However, the type of recreation promoted in parks and playgrounds demonstrated that, in fact, there was a particular orderly style of recreation that was preferred over leaving those choices to the public’s whims. Unlike earlier uses of parks as pleasure grounds for reflective, serene, and carefree leisure, such as their use for family picnics, scenic drives, and scenic walks, reform parks were noisy and highly controlled environments, both visually and performatively, seen especially in their promotion of participation in organized team sports.

The Recreation Committee saw recreation as “an essential human need,” with numerous and far reaching social, mental, and physical benefits.⁹⁷ Recreation was “vital both for the individual and for the citizens as a whole.”⁹⁸ In one of the Recreation Committee meetings, the

⁹³ “Hill District Playground Needs Most Urgent in City, Joint Committee Tells Council,” *Progress*, December 1921, 1.

⁹⁴ Robert Asen, “A Discourse Theory of Citizenship,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90, no. 2 (2004): 191.

⁹⁵ Cranz, *The Politics of Parks Design*, 98-99.

⁹⁶ Bigger, *Parks*, 15.

⁹⁷ Recreation Committee Meeting, 501.

⁹⁸ Recreation Committee Meeting, 500.

members discussed how recreation was essential for the development and maintenance of individuals that are able to productively contribute to society as workers, producers, and citizens.

It is vital both for the individual and for the citizens as a whole. Wholesome recreation encourages contentment, develops health, and tends to create individuals who are more capable and efficient in their work. The harder and more continuously a man works, the more uninteresting or monotonous his job, the greater is his need for relaxation and change of environment and occupation. The less a family has of sunlight, fresh air, privacy and attractiveness in the home, the greater is its need for change of some and for wholesome interests to divert the mind. Human beings as well as plants thrive in the light rather than in the dark.⁹⁹

The profitability of outdoor recreation demonstrated how public space could be utilized in service of creating a productive and content citizenry and workforce. Rather than resolve issues of overworking, poor health, monotonous work, and poor living conditions, recreation was promoted to make those conditions more bearable. Wholesome recreation balanced sacrifice with sunshine “to help nurture this more profound, subtle, and inclusive sense of what it meant to be an American” through encouraging contentment with self-sacrifice for community and nation.¹⁰⁰

For all of the claims of social values of recreation, however, the emphasis on strictly scientific planning seemed to foreclose possibilities for social activity. In the Recreation meeting notes, the committee noted, “although the utmost thoroughness is, far from a sighted point of view, the most practical and economical method of procedure, there should not be excessive study of non-essential details. This is particularly true with respect to the ‘social’ factors in such a study of public recreation.”¹⁰¹ Such socialist planning saw scientific managerialism and human flourishing as sharing an inversely proportional relationship with one another. The Committee proclaimed to

⁹⁹ Recreation Committee Meeting, 501.

¹⁰⁰ Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 9.

¹⁰¹ Recreation Study – Part II, Preliminary Report of September 1, 1921 to Members of the Sub-Committee on Recreation, Municipal Planning Association submitted by Frederick Bigger. Box X, Folder 207, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials. William R. Oliver Special Collections Room Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

confine its recommendations to matters that primarily focus on physical development changes rather than with emphasis on park usage in detailing social factors as “non-essential details,” for example, looking at recommendations to park entrances or acquisition of additional land. This reinforced the belief that strictly by shaping physical environment itself, parks would positively influence the behaviors of those who encounter the sites.

3.4 Planning Citizenship

A scientific approach to urban planning posited that good citizenship could be created and controlled in an orderly landscape. Here, I more closely examine how CCCPP understood citizenship in potentially unruly groups such as children and immigrants. I then turn to describing the good citizen, as shaped through the influence of public space and recreation.

3.4.1 Children

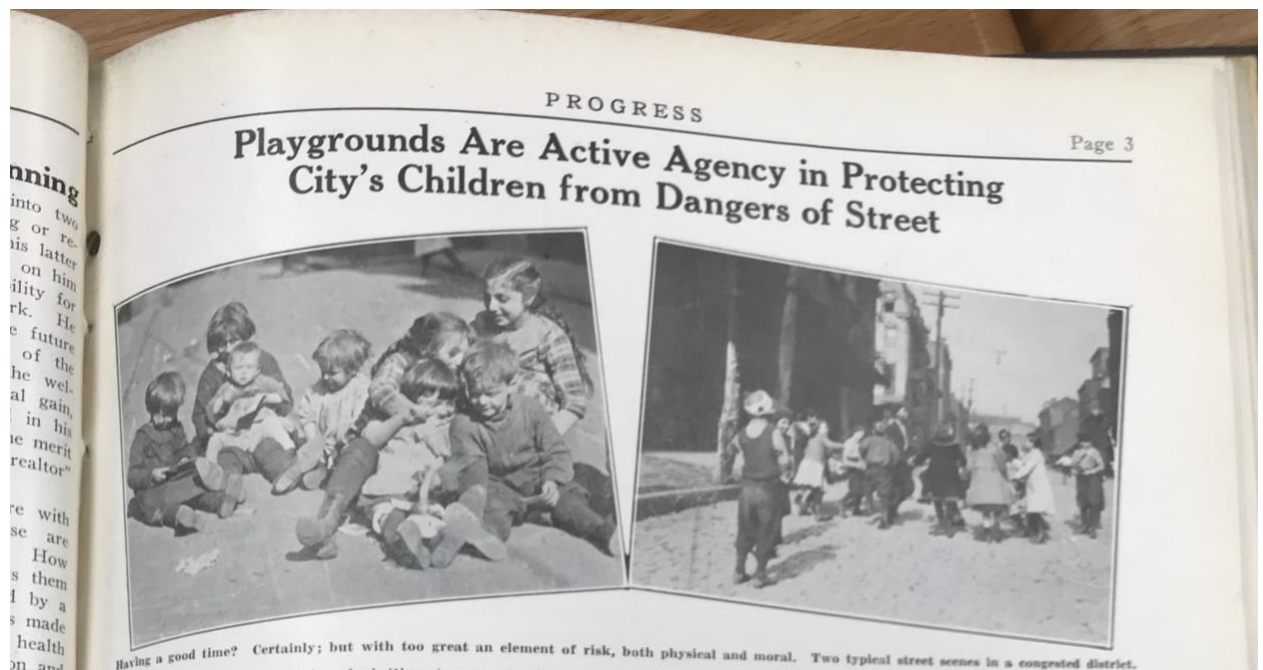


Figure 3.8 Photographs of Children Captioned: “Having a good time? Certainly; but with too great an element of risk, both physical and moral. Two typical street scenes in a congested district.” From April 1921 Issue of Progress (Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)

In the reform park era, the youth become a central concern for urban planning for the first time. Reformers understood unattended youth as posing an inherent threat to the future stability of society should they fall prey to corrupting influences, and so management of their civic virtue became of the utmost importance.¹⁰² Cranz notes how, “unlike the pleasure ground, which

¹⁰² Hahner, *To Become an American*.

encouraged family excursions and recreation, the reform park segregated the ages and sexes.”¹⁰³ The Pittsburgh Playgrounds report also identified how “in order that there shall be no discrimination in service, it is desirable that a separate record of negro children should be kept,” suggesting that reform parks were further segregated by race.¹⁰⁴ The CCCPP used granting or limiting access to space as a tool for “shaping social reproduction” of the city’s future citizens and city planners.¹⁰⁵



Figure 3.9 Cartoon “The Right Kind of Nurse” from April 1921 Issue of Progress
(Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of
Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)

¹⁰³ Cranz, *The Politics of Parks Design*, 63.

¹⁰⁴ Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh, *Pittsburgh Playgrounds, Being the First Portion of a Report Upon the Recreation System, a Part of the Pittsburgh Plan* (Pittsburgh: MacGregor-Cutler Printing Co., 1920): 8.

¹⁰⁵ Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscape as Public History* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 22. See also Henri Lefebvre *The Production of Space* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 1992).

The CCCPP emphasis on children was heavily linked with the playground movement, where early reform parks were often named playgrounds. Whereas children once played in the streets, in empty lots, or unattended in the parks, the introduction of the playground satisfied new demand for safe and orderly sites of play. As Figure 3.9 illustrates, the playground itself was understood to have inherent caretaking abilities, akin to the figure of a nurse. An accompanying article in *Progress* noted, “so the automobile, in chasing the juvenile population off the city’s thoroughfares, is also serving as a powerful factor in encouraging development of Pittsburgh’s recreation system.”¹⁰⁶ Similarly, removing children from the street served to advance a more robust transportation infrastructure. Public space was used by civic leaders to organize children into regularly supervised, surveilled, and segregated spaces. In this way, children could be kept safe from the ever-growing physical threat of automobile traffic and at the same time be instructed in correct measures of play. The text explains, “with so much to discourage the play instinct, the wonder is that it survives at all.”¹⁰⁷ Importantly, however, children’s instincts are not to be trusted when left to their own devices. As such, the solution to a lack of play space “leads inevitably to the playground – to an organized system of supplying the city ‘kid’ with an outlet for the play instinct which is as old as the human race; a system which means for the youngster’s mind and morals as well as for his body.”¹⁰⁸ Bigger emphasized the value of playgrounds for nurturing a play instinct that emphasized wholesome physical, mental, and moral development of children as civic leaders against crime and delinquency.¹⁰⁹ As such, reform park and playground spaces did

¹⁰⁶ “Playgrounds are Active Agency in Protecting City’s Children from Dangers of Street,” *Progress*, April 1921, 3.

¹⁰⁷ “Playgrounds are Active Agency,” 3.

¹⁰⁸ “Playgrounds are Active Agency,” 3.

¹⁰⁹ Bauman and Muller, *Before Renaissance*, 129.

more than aspire to develop new physical spaces for children to gather; they sought to curate a particular civilized future citizen through the use of recreation space as sites for instruction.¹¹⁰

Programs established for the city's youth aimed to facilitate future citizens who valued the urban planning initiatives outlined by the CCCPP. A March 1921 issue of *Progress* identified that, "probably no move undertaken by the Citizens Committee since the inauguration of its work has had in it greater possibilities than that begun this month in establishing direct connection between the Committee and the Junior Civic Clubs of the Allegheny County."¹¹¹ By forging a strong relationship with the youth, the CCCPP members were able to displace responsibility for enacting the City Plan onto the future generation. The CCCPP placed children squarely at the center of their recreation considerations. They argued that it was "the interests of the smaller citizens," which had suffered most from thoughtless facilities planning of the past.¹¹² One article of *Progress* featured a lengthy article by Mr. Sydney A. Teller, resident director of the Irene Kaufmann Settlement and one of the country's leading figures in public recreation.¹¹³ Teller argued for the recognition that "the child of today is the citizen of tomorrow" and that "the community which recognizes now the benefits of play and recreation will have better citizens in the future."¹¹⁴ Organized opportunities for play through recreation provided entertainment, however, as noted by Teller, it's more important role was in training young citizens.

¹¹⁰ In the late 1910s, several efforts to pass child labor protections were passed and overturned. The Keating-Owen Child Labor Act (1916) was overturned by the Supreme Court in 1918, and a year later child labor protections were included in the Revenue Act of 1919, however, was later ruled unconstitutional. See James L. Flannery, *The Glass House Boys of Pittsburgh: Law, Technology, and Child Labor* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009).

¹¹¹ "Our Junior Citizens," *Progress*, March 1921, 4.

¹¹² "Citizens Committee Protests Against Lack of Plan in Development of City Playground System," *Progress*, June 1922, 2.

¹¹³ The Irene Kaufmann Settlement was established by the Council of Jewish Women for providing moral, education, and religious training, and to advance the civic welfare of the community, located in Pittsburgh's The Hill District. It was a particularly popular resource for immigrants seeking to become U.S. citizens.

¹¹⁴ Teller, "The Community Which Today," 7.

Play was further used to educate urban inhabitants on how to participate in community building. Teller argued, “when you become part of a team, you no longer belong to yourself, and selfishness is replaced by sacrifice and individualism vanishes before cooperation.”¹¹⁵ Teller identified that each day, eight hours are used for school or work, eight hours are for rest and sleep, and the remaining eight hours are for play and recreation.¹¹⁶ He shared broader concerns resulting from more stringent labor laws that resulted in an increase in unregulated time and how citizens might use that time most productively. He claimed that, “to take these eight leisure-time hours and translate them into health, cooperation, civic spirit, and better citizenship is the biggest job and the largest opportunity that faces America.”¹¹⁷ In particular, Teller’s arguments were used by the CCCPP to support their demands for increased playground development as a central focus of recreation. Teller continued,

The money spent by a community for playgrounds is the best and largest investment that can be made. It is money spent for health instead of disease, for morality instead of delinquency, for happy and normal child life, for civic beauty, for cooperation, for better citizenship. The city that has no time, or place, or money for children’s playgrounds is a selfish, ignorant, backward city, in fact, a wicked city and one that has no place in America.¹¹⁸

In utilizing obtuse and false binaries for investment, Teller constructs a narrative for defining good and bad citizenship through studying playgrounds in America. An emphasis on the need to provide specific time and place for children to play was understood as an especially American ideal for developing good citizenship. Unlike earlier use of parks as pleasure grounds, where an absence of strict policing and “keep off the grass” signs were praised for their carefree nature, reform park playgrounds promised increased surveillance and order to correct and prevent unwanted behavior

¹¹⁵ Teller, 7.

¹¹⁶ See also Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will*.

¹¹⁷ Teller, 7.

¹¹⁸ Teller, 8.

in the cultural development of the youth. Foucauldian notions of surveillance were understood to especially aid in the creation of docile bodies, granting governing institutions greater power over shaping ideal citizens.¹¹⁹

Teller differentiates between amusement and participation in play. He highlights that participation is essential for the development of teamwork and dissipation of individualism tendencies. Play through organized recreation was expressly understood as an essential resource for teaching the youth valued principles of good citizenship.

The boy who learns to make a sacrifice hit for his baseball team so that his “side” may win, is preparing to help his community and his country. The girl who becomes a real part of her club and stays in even if someone else is elected president, is preparing for the women citizen of tomorrow who will cast her vote for civic betterment. The better citizens of a community are the ones who have play ideals and the play spirit. They are ready to make even the supreme sacrifice for their team or size, ready to lay down their lives in the defense of their country in the awfulest game of the world, *war*.¹²⁰

The CCCPP’s desire to reinvent cultural values through recreation reflected changing national ideals about mobilization of public ideology, behavior, labor, and leisure as a tool to “defeat the enemy” in World War I from the private to public sphere.¹²¹ Teller’s undefined “enemy” enthymematically nods to the rising popularity of socialism prior to WWI and the first red scare and mass deportations that followed, contributing to an overall environment of post-war paranoia. Capozzola notes how, “as the needs of modern warfare blurred the lines between state and society, between mobilization and social control, the war made private coercions into public interests through the language of political obligation.”¹²² This is seen in the Uncle Sam’s rhetoric of “I Want YOU,” to “invoke a culture of obligation at the same time that he threatened to enforce it,”

¹¹⁹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Random House, 1995).

¹²⁰ Teller, “The Community Which Today,” 8.

¹²¹ Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 11.

¹²² Capozzola, 11.

or teaching children to make “the supreme sacrifice” as taught through play ideals and spirit.¹²³ Lack of ordered and securitized play of the youth threatened national security, necessitating civic valuing of community and country through recreation.

Discourse of good versus bad citizenship was further normalized through “wholesome play and recreation,” where “we get the normal boy and girl and you, the good citizen.”¹²⁴ In contrast, “if the child or youth or community does not play, does not have the opportunity of a well supervised, well equipped playground or recreation center and only finds mischief for its idle time, then the energy goes into making delinquency.”¹²⁵ A playground setting enabled organized play whereby children could be trained to perform as idealized citizens. Teller noted that,

Leadership in play is essential and it is more important to have a good supervisor than anything else. Children will imitate – it is up to the community to decide if there will be good leadership on the playgrounds or whether the children shall be treated like chickens and told to ‘go outside and play’ – ‘chase yourself,’ and let the bully be the one who bosses the playground. We want to develop self-reliance, courage, self-confidence, initiative, resourcefulness. We do it through play and recreation, and the boys and girls who are the leaders on the playgrounds today are the men and women of tomorrow who will make real successes of their lives.¹²⁶

Similar to teaching children the value of sacrifice, play also laid the foundation for affording opportunities to teach children leadership skills that were necessary for their future roles as citizens and builders of society and city.

¹²³ Capozzola, 11.

¹²⁴ Teller, “The Community Which Today,” 8.

¹²⁵ Teller, 8.

¹²⁶ Teller, 8.

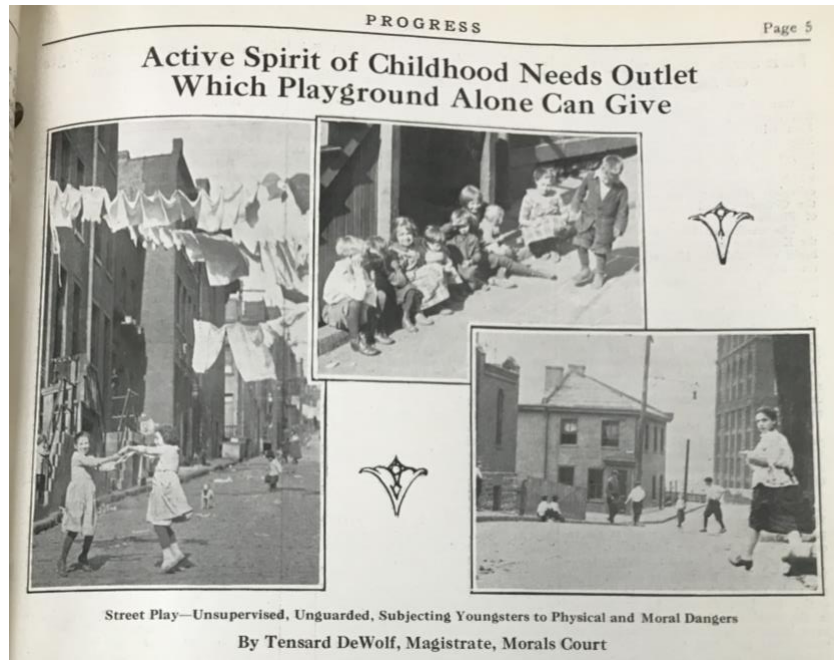


Figure 3.10 Photographs of Children Captioned: “Street Play – Unsupervised, Unguarded, Subjecting Youngsters to Physical and Moral Dangers.” By Tensard DeWolf, Magistrate, Morals Court. From May 1921 Issue of Progress (Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)

Fear for the corruption of children was a significant justification for recreation planning, driving the need for their constant surveillance in public space. At the same time that children were expected to become leaders, sacrifice their lives for their country, and build the foundation of the future city, they were not trusted to come to value those ideals without strict guidance. The CCCPP pointed to “the complexities of city life, the congestion of population, the opportunities and incentives for perversion of childish and youthful activities into unwholesome channels” as risks to the next generation of citizens and future leaders. They further identified that “all these make imperative the establishment of a complete recreation system and program whereby the spare hours

from childhood to maturity may be properly and profitably occupied,” revealing anxieties over intense surveillance of the youth.¹²⁷

Play was promoted as a key corrective measure to corruption of the youth. Teller explained, “play means progress and recreation is re-creation.”¹²⁸ To promote playgrounds, an investigation by Tensard DeWolf, Magistrate of Morals Court, was published in *Progress*, which linked a lack of playgrounds with juvenile delinquency (see Figure 3.10). A number of offenses were listed “for which no reasonable excuse could be given,” including “stealing a handful of false teeth,” “stealing articles of women’s apparel, earrings, powder puffs, and other things equally useless to a boy,” and “entering homes when the families are away and wantonly destroying the furniture and decorations.”¹²⁹ DeWolf concluded that, “unless the boy is feeble-minded or insane there can only be one answer: the lack of playgrounds.”¹³⁰ Compared with parks, playgrounds were promoted as desired places for children to play because children “must be under competent supervision and direction” to reduce arrest rates.¹³¹ Supervised play then provided essential for teaching the youth respect for property, public safety, and following law and order.¹³²

3.4.2 Immigrants

The *Parks* plan evaluated the social value of recreation for Pittsburgh’s immigrants who would otherwise be tempted by the allure of less wholesome activities such as pool and dance

¹²⁷ Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh, *Pittsburgh Playgrounds*, 9.

¹²⁸ Teller, “The Community Which Today,” 7.

¹²⁹ Tensard DeWolf, “Active Spirit of Childhood Needs Outlet Which Playground Alone Can Give,” *Progress*, April 1921, 3.

¹³⁰ DeWolf, 3.

¹³¹ DeWolf, 3.

¹³² Cranz, *The Politics of Parks Design*, 191.

halls, saloons, or sites of commercial entertainment, like Kennywood Amusement Park. In line with a scientific approach to planning, the Recreation Committee argued that social value might be measured in terms of time. They were careful to note that “the real social value, however, depends upon how this time is spent, -- whether in a way that is wholesome and healthful, stupid and meaningless, or vicious and degenerating.”¹³³ This was true not only for children, but also for adults. The Recreation Committee observed that if time were spent “in a manner which is detrimental to the individual and causes public expense and concern for the conservation of the physical and moral stability of the community,” then the social value of parks would be threatened.¹³⁴

The anxiety over morality of citizens was reflective of the continued growth in urban dwellers and in particular, the continued rise of Pittsburgh’s immigrant population. The “problem” of how social time was spent was directly linked to the diversity of the city:

An important phase of this problem is the diversity of race, nationality, and national ideals among the people of the city. The 1920 Census shows Pittsburgh’s population to be but 36.8% native whites of native parentage. On the other hand the foreign born constitute 20.4 percent and those of foreign parentage 26.8 percent of the total. A proper development of municipal recreation should assist, almost more than any other activity, in the orderly assimilation of these diverse elements into the fabric of good citizenship and stable Americanism.¹³⁵

Industry’s need for cheap labor meant that Pittsburgh’s immigrant population had been steadily high for decades. However, with the annexation of Allegheny City, Pittsburgh’s population over doubled in size from 1890-1920, jumping from approximately 240,000 to 590,000, suggesting that

¹³³ Recreation Committee Meeting – May 16, 1922: 501, Box X, Folder 207, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials. William R. Oliver Special Collections Room Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

¹³⁴ Teller, “The Community Which Today,” 15.

¹³⁵ Bigger, *Parks*, 15.

anxiety over unstable Americanism was linked to new strain on the urban environment.¹³⁶ The CCCPP's anxiety over the high immigrant population in the city was explicitly outlined as a key concern for the need for comprehensive urban reform. The rhetorical linkage between recreation and citizenship illustrates how the city's elite saw their civic responsibility as tied to encouraging the "orderly assimilation" of foreign inhabitants into desired practices of Americanism so that they too might contribute to a healthy and efficient workplace and society. Bauman and Muller explain that, more than any other space in the city, Bigger saw places like city parks and playgrounds as forming "the nucleus for revitalized civic life."¹³⁷ Immigrants becoming American was a moving target, however, seen in "the emphasis on publicly demonstrating the process and products of Americanization."¹³⁸ Hahner explains the visual logic of performance being tethered to foreign belonging in America, arguing how "patriotism became configured as an emotional quality that must nevertheless be imbibed through spectacle and displayed on bodies of residents."¹³⁹ The imperative to create numerous and diverse accessible spaces for public performance through recreation provided platforms for immigrant performances of community and belonging. Through recreation, immigrants could perform patriotism in public commons. Participation in wholesome recreative sport and play functioned both to teach immigrants American values and also quell fear and anxiety of others by the minority white citizenry through an emphasis on visual performance of patriotism.

¹³⁶ "The Growth of Pittsburgh," accessed Sept. 13, 2020, retrieved from: <http://www.brooklineconnection.com/history/Facts/Growth.html>.

¹³⁷ Bauman and Muller, *Before Renaissance*, 132.

¹³⁸ Hahner, *To Become an American*, xvi.

¹³⁹ Hahner, xxii.

The CCCPP's emphasis on difference was further materialized in their description of "the roughness of Pittsburgh's topography."¹⁴⁰ The diverse communities of Pittsburgh often settled into fragmented ethnic communities. Bigger noted how those who were foreign-born tended "to live in groups according to nationality."¹⁴¹ The geographic isolation of Pittsburgh communities based on difference made it challenging for reformers to control for orderly assimilation of difference. As Hanher explains, a significant goal of this time "was not merely to change immigrants, but to manufacture a set of pedagogical lessons that could both teach immigrants to see themselves as Americans and to transform the ways the public apprehended Americanism."¹⁴² David Cisneros too, recognizes that while the immigrant is sometimes seen as a "symbol of hope," it is more often than not the case that "the immigrant is 'a source of fear' and anxiety, a threat to national unity and the cultural integrity of the nation."¹⁴³ This fear and anxiety of the 1920s, in turn, became the driving force in framing institutional policies for the orderly assimilation of the immigrant other through the reform park.

Parks provided space for the public demonstration of American citizenship by immigrants. Reform park leaders aspired for the introduction of inner-city neighborhood parks to provide a means for cultural assimilation, however, various parks often "became known as the province of one ethnic group or another."¹⁴⁴ Cranz explains that, "these unwritten codes contradicted official theory and policy, and in practice, rather than emphasizing Americanism and the bridge between ethnic groups, parks raised and heightened the issue of ethnicity for average citizens."¹⁴⁵ The

¹⁴⁰ Bigger, *Parks*, 19.

¹⁴¹ Frederick Bigger, "Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Plan," *Art and Archeology*, 14 (1922): 271.

¹⁴² Hahner, *To Become an American*, 179.

¹⁴³ J. David Cisneros, "(Re)bordering the Civic Imaginary: Rhetoric, Hybridity, and Citizenship in *La Gran Marcha*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 1 (2011): 29.

¹⁴⁴ Cranz, *The Politics of Parks Design*, 199.

¹⁴⁵ Cranz, 199.

unresolved anxieties of U.S.-born citizens further reveals how the visual spectacle of Americanization was not always accessible to immigrants. Hahner explains,

[...] despite attempts to codify those actions, symbols, and performances that could ostensibly warrant the changed disposition of immigrants, the need for demonstrable proof could not satiate larger concerns surround the disaffection of difference. In this way, Americanization created a paradoxical visual logic in which patriotic markers could not confirm nationalism, but residents, especially immigrants, were pressed to continually exhibit patriotism.¹⁴⁶

The simultaneous demand by Americans for public performance of patriotism by the foreign inhabitants and its ultimate failure to alleviate white citizens' anxiety about Pittsburgh's large immigrant population illustrates the tensions of Americanization, performance, and belonging through recreation. In this way, public participation in organized recreation created a false sense of fulfilling civic duty for the CCCPP in the orderly assimilation of difference into the fabric of American citizenship.

3.4.3 The Good Citizen

The Recreation Committee believed that recreation played a vital role in constituting good citizenship for urban inhabitants of all ages. City planners and civic leaders understood that organized recreation for children would prepare them for the responsibilities of becoming good adult citizens. As children progressed to adulthood, the values of play from recreation continued to be promoted for its numerous societal benefits for adults: "The way for men to stay well, happy and successful is through play. The way for women to be beautiful, healthy and slender instead of fat, frightful and fort is through play and recreation."¹⁴⁷ The Recreation Subcommittee believed

¹⁴⁶ Hahner, *To Become an American*, 154.

¹⁴⁷ Teller, "The Community Which Today," 7.

that emphasizing recreation in public space would offset undesirable vice in the city that led to moral corruption. The CCCPP's comprehensive recreation planning thus upheld a particular idealization of play that was not merely for providing amusement, but for cultivating desired values of citizens, as well as their physical and mental wellbeing. Through play, recreation became a fundamental right of all current, future, and potential citizens and essential for enactment of citizenship. Teller concluded that, "as a citizen of America, the child, - yes, all of us, - has an inalienable right to 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.' That means play and recreation. All work and no play makes Jack and Jill not only dull children, but children unfit for citizenship."¹⁴⁸ Pointing to the recent growth in support for playgrounds and public recreation centers around the nation, *Progress* cited an editorial from the *Pittsburgh Chronicle Telegraph* to establish the significance recreation, arguing how, "we must recognize the vital part which healthful recreation plays in the progressive life of every community. It will help to lessen disease and crime, to build sturdy citizens. No community may safely neglect this duty."¹⁴⁹ Rhetoric of children and recreation promoted the importance of raising a new generation of Americans who valued providing for community, nation, and public wellbeing over personal and private wellbeing following World War I anxiety over the future of civic life.

Serious attention was given to the linkages between recreation and the development of good moral citizens. True to the scientific approach to urban planning, the Recreation Committee identified different types of recreation as clearly being "wholesome or unwholesome."¹⁵⁰ While in one breath the Committee claimed that, "it is not the purpose of this report to discuss public morals or to examine the moral aspect of commercial recreation," they quickly clarified, "it is a matter of

¹⁴⁸ Teller, 8.

¹⁴⁹ "Editorial, Pittsburgh Chronicle Telegraph," as cited in *Progress*, May 1922, 7-8.

¹⁵⁰ Bigger, *Parks*, 15.

common agreement that some aspects of commercial recreation are detrimental,” and thus should be carefully managed.¹⁵¹ Dance halls, for example, were identified as requiring high levels of supervision for their higher potential for corruption when compared to a baseball league.¹⁵² In giving greater attention to the careful planning and management of recreation spaces, the Citizens Committee aspired to “offset undesirable influences” of alternative entertainment spaces.¹⁵³

Post-World War I, recreation was framed as renewing a sense of community value that had been threatened during the instability of war-time. Teller explained, “organized play and recreation not only means something for individuals but is also the expression on the part of the neighborhood community, or city as a whole.”¹⁵⁴ Emphasis on recreation in outdoor spaces such as a playgrounds and parks enabled the public performance of civic virtue and enactment of citizenship. In a time when America was looking to move past mounting domestic ethnic tensions and labor agitation, public space offered a way forward where “play and recreation bind neighborhoods together” and “fuse time, making for a real nation.”¹⁵⁵ Teller’s emphasis on a making a “real” nation highlights the insecurity of national identity present following the War. By rhetorically framing a real nation as constructed through community togetherness, recreation promised a united front against anything that might threaten to break apart the nation. Collective engagement was seen by urban reformers as particularly important for the reinforcement of a united nation; Teller exclaimed, “play and recreation bring us all together as brothers, neighbors, and fellow citizens” and identified that “we learn to know each other through play and recreation.”¹⁵⁶

¹⁵¹ Bigger, 15.

¹⁵² Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1986).

¹⁵³ Bigger, 15.

¹⁵⁴ Teller, “The Community Which Today,” 8.

¹⁵⁵ Teller, 8.

¹⁵⁶ Teller, 8.

3.5 Failures of Planning

*The attempt of urban elites to impose their own will onto the city landscape, however, relied upon moral suasion and rational behavior; the political and economic system of industrial America was not particularly responsive to either.*¹⁵⁷

In July 1923, a dinner was held in honor of the Citizens Committee completing their six reports, with the final report, *Waterways*, to be published and distributed by October, just five years after the CCCPP was first formed. CCCPP President Armstrong declared that the final report affirmed the success of the Citizens Committee, whose single purpose was “the rendering of a definite public service,” and the potential for enacting the Pittsburgh Plan was now “at the disposal of the community.”¹⁵⁸ His speech demonstrated the significance of the symbolic process of planning for Pittsburgh:

More than two hundred men and women have made financial contributions to the work; nearly three score of the busiest people in Pittsburgh have given generously of their time and thought, as members of our sub-committees, to the study of our city’s most difficult problems; hundreds of talks have been made by volunteer speakers, and other work of the most arduous character has been undertaken and accomplished – and all of this without a single selfish motive and without hope of return, except the satisfaction of helping to make Pittsburgh a better city in which to live and to work. Speaking for everyone who has had share in the committee’s work, I know that if this result is accomplished, it will make all of us profoundly happy.¹⁵⁹

Armstrong’s address framed the incentive for action by the citizens committee as self-less in nature by suggesting the Plan was written as a gift for the betterment of the city and its people as its

¹⁵⁷ McElwaine, “Slag in the Park,” 176.

¹⁵⁸ “President Summarizes Work of Citizens Committee and Outlines Program of Future Activity,” *Progress*, July 1923, 4.

¹⁵⁹ “President Summarizes Work,” 4.

primary aim. Consequently, a more orderly urban environment also granted the city's business leaders some security in preventing the collapse of industry by making the city a more attractive place to live for potential investors and laborers. Comprehensive urban reform shared similar values for the promotion of moral order popular at the time included hygiene, progressivism, and eugenics. It highlighted what he identified as the uniqueness to the CCCPP's approach to urban planning when contrasted with other means of development that relied on selfish capitalist gain, affirming the dominant American ideology of the time that promoted a shift in valuation from that which promotes private interest to that which promotes public welfare. He argued that unlike "the usual method," which is carried out by technical experts, published, and then forgotten about by both committee members and public communities, the CCCPP aspired to "get the Pittsburgh Plan into the minds of Pittsburghers" as an essential element of community building and instruction in good citizenship.¹⁶⁰ To do so, the Committee saw that the planning reports must be "the product of as many as possible of our citizens, so that it will represent not only the wisdom of the best technical talent we could obtain, but also the experience and the judgment of our business and professional men who are familiar with the city's difficulties and who, in their own walks of life, have given a tremendous amount of thought to these problems."¹⁶¹ Significantly, Armstrong rhetorically narrowed the scope of citizenship to elevate the contributions of business and professional men as the guiding lens through which citizenship could be judged against. They are deemed as representing those members of society who have the greatest expertise and who have given the most valuable and reflective thought to both identifying and resolving problems of the city for city planning. A follow-up speech by Mayor Magee reinforced Armstrong's praise of the

¹⁶⁰ "President Summarizes Work," 4.

¹⁶¹ "President Summarizes Work," 4.

particular type of citizenship enacted by the Citizens Committee, arguing for the “debt we owe to these distinguished fellow citizens of ours who have been devoting their time and resources and their very great talents to the solution of all these problems.”¹⁶² In this way, the guise of collective citizenship by all the people of Pittsburgh becomes funneled through the lens of the elite Citizens Committee and the public officials, representatives of other civic committees, and other leaders in the community who were guests at the privately held dinner to celebrate their success.



Figure 3.11 Photograph of Dinner to Celebrate the Pittsburgh Plan from July 1923 Issue of *Progress* (Retrieved from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association Materials)¹⁶³

¹⁶² “Mayor Magee, Speaking at City Plan Dinner, Urges Continued Interest in Public Affairs,” *Progress*, July 1923, 6.

¹⁶³ The photograph is captioned “The Pittsburgh Plan makes its first public appearance: Flashlight of the members of the Citizens Committee and their guests – public officials, representatives of civic organizations, and other leaders in

Ultimately, the elaborate public dinner that celebrated the completion of the proposed comprehensive plan for the City of Pittsburgh foreshadowed what became a failure of urban officials to follow through with material enactment of comprehensive urban reform.

You have listened to the various committee chairmen, and realize that the complete Pittsburgh Plan is a vast thing, which cannot be put into effect over night, or indeed in many years' time. It is not intended as a prescription to be taken at once, and all at once, but rather as a program which will govern the city for a long time to come so that the community will grow logically and sanely, instead of in the haphazard, hit-or-miss style of the past.¹⁶⁴

A lack of cooperation between the civic-oriented Citizens Committee and the political and economic forces for enacting material change in the city left resulted in the lack of foundation for putting the city plan into effect. Magee symbolically endorsed the values of the plan without any accompanying policy measures for enacting change by framing the plan as a governing program. A later speech the President of the City Council suggested the significance of following up symbolic gesture with material enactment. They argued, "it is a high standard set by you good citizens, and if we do not pay attention to such standards, we will not last long as public servants."¹⁶⁵ Absent a system for enacting the suggestions of the comprehensive plan for the city of Pittsburgh, the research, surveys, and recommendations of the CCCPP remained symbolically bound to text. In the years to come, plans for urban development became bogged down with the need for street planning, and traffic, roads, and transportation systems worsened with time. Attention to parks maintenance and development waned and Pittsburgh's parks system declined

the community – who gathered at dinner on the evening of June first to hear the first announcement of the plans whose preparation has extended over the past four years."

¹⁶⁴ "President Summarizes Work," 4.

¹⁶⁵ "President of Council Assures Citizens Committee of Council's Second Approval of Plan Program," *Progress*, July 1923, 7.

throughout the twentieth century, unable to compete with the suburbanization of the Western Pennsylvania region and demands for developing a new emerald ring of regional parks for greater Allegheny County.

3.6 Conclusion

In the 1920s, Pittsburgh was recovering from World War I, experiencing an insecure labor force, addressing public health concerns following the Flu of 1918, and confronting the reality that its deteriorating infrastructure made it difficult for the city to address mounting economic and social instability. Several powerful civic leaders believed comprehensive urban reform was essential for securing a successful path forward and under the guidance of urban planner Frederick Bigger, formed the Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh. The CCCPP saw as its goal the creation of a publicly supported, scientific plan for comprehensive urban reform that would secure a greater quality of life for people of Pittsburgh. An important aspect of this work was their partnering with the Junior Civic Clubs, so that the future citizens would ultimately be responsible for enacting the plan, be educated on urban reform. A scientific approach to planning was promoted as anecdotal to the fragmented development of prior decades that the CCCPP deemed responsible for the disorder of the city. The Recreation Committee of the CCCPP emphasized reformation of public space as critical for bring order to daily living. The Recreation Committee created two plans, one for playgrounds and one for parks. The symbolic configuration of the reform park changed radically from earlier conceptualization of urban nature spaces as pleasure grounds. These new open spaces were designed to replace undesirable urban landscapes with new spaces for orderly public engagement. Playgrounds and parks were also created to provide incentives for

economic development and capital retention for growing businesses. At the same time, the Recreation Committee described goals for equitable development through a focus on creating smaller-scale neighborhood parks and playgrounds, with the recognition that poorer areas had a great need for access to recreation space.

Recreation spaces were further envisioned as critical spaces for education in practices of good citizenship. The wellbeing of children became a primary focus for the first time in urban planning, with the belief that surveillance through organized recreation could teach children how to grow up to become contributing members of society. In contrast with the openness of parks, playgrounds were praised for allowing for supervised engagement and education of youth for skills development necessary for good citizenship. Organized recreation also provided an opportunity for civic leaders to target immigrant populations in education of Americanism. Finally, continued recreation and access to green space throughout one's life was deemed critical for the maintenance of good citizenship. The CCCPP led an almost decade long project aimed at creating and promoting a comprehensive plan for urban reform. However, ultimately, a lack of political power, while hailed as a strength of the committee, also contributed to a failure for actual implication of comprehensive urban reform.

The CCCPP's reconceptualization of public space envisioned parks as a critical infrastructure for producing citizens who could balance between human needs and the needs of the economy. Orderly landscapes could produce good liberal citizen-subjects, that would secure the future of the city. In the decades that followed, however, Pittsburgh continued to struggle immensely with the declining steel industry, and city congestion and spatial disorder worsened. Neglected parks and playgrounds fell into disrepair and social difference continued to contribute to urban unrest, both reflecting a city that proved unsuccessful in its pursuit of progress.

4.0 “A City Within a Park”: Remembering the Past, Imagining the Future

One participant’s observation became a powerful rallying cry [...] “Pittsburgh is a city within a park.”¹

In 1995, a group of citizens came together to address their concerns over the condition of Pittsburgh’s four historic regional parks – Frick, Highland, Riverview, and Schenley. Landscape historian Barry Hannegan spearheaded a historic landscape survey conducted by the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation to examine Pittsburgh’s private gardens and estates, public parks, recreation areas, and Phipps Conservatory. The survey results found that the majority of the city’s parks were in “fair” or “poor” condition, confirming the citizens’ concerns that much of the city’s historic green spaces were deteriorating.² Steps toward the restoration of the regional parks system began with the formation of the nonprofit Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (PPC) in December 1996, led by founding president and CEO Meg Cheever. This organization signed a public-private partnership agreement with the City of Pittsburgh in 1998, initiating contemporary efforts to restore the city’s historic parks.

The institutional process of planning for a twenty-first century urban parks system was documented in the creation of a Parks Master Plan. The City of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy invited several landscape firms to prepare a master plan that would “provide a foundation for a new way of thinking about these precious landscapes, rooted in an ethic of

¹ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” *Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy* (2012), 12.

² The detailed findings of these landscape surveys are located in the University of Pittsburgh’s University Library Services Archive: AIS 2005:01 Records of the Historic Landscape Survey of Allegheny County.

stewardship which focuses on the necessary resources and energies needed to preserve, restore, and enhance Frick, Highland, Riverview and Schenley Parks.”³ This “new ethic of stewardship” was “based on the responsibility to maintain and care for the needs and possessions of others” while at the same time, balance “the demands of current uses while preserving the parks historic legacy and sustaining their ecological integrity.”⁴ The process was published in the 2000 Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan. It aimed to “foster a total park experience that addresses the natural, cultural and educational opportunities that great parks can provide” while at the same time “preserv[es] the parks historical legacy and sustain[s] their ecological integrity.”⁵ The decidedly “daunting” task of restoring the parks was set to unfold over a 20-year period and estimated to cost over \$100 million in public and private funds toward system-wide strategies and capital improvement projects. The initial efforts to improve the parks system earned the City of Pittsburgh national and international attention as a leader in sustainable urban park management.⁶ In 2018, the Trust for Public Land ranked Pittsburgh parks 23rd in the nation on their annual ParkScore index based on park acreage, facilities, investment, and resident access, providing affirmation of the city’s parks planning efforts.⁷

In this chapter, I conduct a critical rhetorical analysis of the Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan – A New Ethic of Stewardship, published in 2000, and the Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update. These documents are the product of dozens of urban planners, officials, landscape designers, members of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, and thousands more civic

³ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” *Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy* (2000), i.

⁴ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” 6 and i.

⁵ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” i.

⁶ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” 5.

⁷ Pittsburgh Parks, “Pittsburgh Breaks Top 25 Rankings Among U.S. Parks,” *Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy* (blog), May 23, 2018, <https://www.pittsburghparks.org/blog/pittsburgh-breaks-top-25-rankings-among-u.s.-parks>.

volunteers who collectively identified the need to restore the parks system to create a sustainable future. As a plan resulting from widespread collaboration, throughout this chapter I refer to the numerous Parks Master Plan documents as the PMP, highlighting the planners' rhetorical emphasis on the documents as an ongoing, interconnected, public-private effort toward urban park renewal. I argue that the PMP narrative reveals a complicated relationship with Pittsburgh's violent industrial past that suggests by restoring their parks, the city can return to a green, civic, and sustainable urban imaginary. I begin with outlining the process of planning for a parks master plan. I then turn to considering how the PMP illustrates the collective memory of its contributors. Finally, I identify how the parks are envisioned as contributing to the future of Pittsburgh as a sustainable twenty-first century city.

4.1 Deindustrializing the Steel City

The contemporary initiative to restore Pittsburgh's parks system takes place following significant economic and cultural changes to the city. In the early to mid-1980s, Pittsburgh's steel industry collapsed; industrialization was no longer a sustainable option for the City of Pittsburgh. Factors including the OPEC oil embargo, Iranian Revolution, weakened consumer demand for steel, and the Steel Strike of 1959 ultimately devastated American steel. The U.S. began importing steel from foreign sources and hundreds of thousands of steel workers were laid off throughout the Midwest. By the late 1980s, over 75% of steel plants in Pittsburgh closed. The people of Pittsburgh grappled with the economic impacts of deindustrialization as the city's dominant cultural identity as the Steel City was shaken. Along with other cities and towns facing deindustrialization such as Detroit, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Gary, and Youngstown, Pittsburgh was confronted with the Rust

Belt imaginary where once powerful industrial cities were perceived of as facing their inevitable decline thanks to high unemployment, aging infrastructure, a shrinking tax base, and loss of a viable labor-based economic system.

While Pittsburgh did experience significant hardship during deindustrialization, its ultimate resilience was perceived to be reliant on its elected officials and civic leaders weaving a new social, physical, and economic fabric fit for a new neoliberal city.⁸ Compared with other formerly industrial cities, Pittsburgh experienced unmatched economic revitalization thanks to its physical geography and historically rooted philanthropic foundations. The people and institutions of Pittsburgh rebuilt their cultural, political, and economic systems around innovation, business, technology, education, and healthcare. In their study of the anticipated post-industrial society, Daniel Bell explains that the post-industrial society is one in which the provision of services and knowledge industries replaces the production of goods and manual labor to advance capitalist economic systems.⁹ Tracey Neumann describes how “for public officials and civic minded businessmen from the middle of the twentieth century into the twenty-first, postindustrial Pittsburgh represented a phoenix that rose from the ashes of the steel industry.”¹⁰ In 1984, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust was established to encourage the revitalization of the city through the arts, leading the city into its second Renaissance of urban renewal. Technological investment proved successful as major companies like Google, Facebook, Uber, UPMC, and PNC Bank moved into the city throughout the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, solidifying the collapse of the labor economy and rise of the knowledge economy.

⁸ Tracey Neumann, *Remaking the Rust Belt: The Postindustrial Transformation of North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

⁹ Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

¹⁰ Neumann, *Remaking the Rust Belt*, 6.

The neoliberal city of Pittsburgh a decidedly green economy contrasts starkly with its historic economic system, which was built on environmental devastation. In addition to the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, Sustainable Pittsburgh was established in 1998 as part of the Pittsburgh Technology Council, also led by a committee of civic leaders who sought to transform the city and surrounding region. Pittsburgh quickly became a leader in the green building movement beginning in the 1990s and has since invested in over 300 LEED certified buildings with numerous award winning firsts in the nation for sustainable projects, including the David Lawrence Convention Center, Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh, Phipps Visitor Center, PNC Tower, and Frick Environmental Center.

Various sustainability focused initiatives began in the 2000s. In the city’s first comprehensive city planning initiative for open space and recreation, the OPENSOURCEPGH document highlights Frick Park’s Nine Mile Run as “one of the most striking stories of renewal.”¹¹ Frederick Law Olmstead Jr. identified Nine Mile Run as an ideal place for a large new park in the early twentieth century, however, the steel industry claimed the land as a dumping ground for slag, a toxic waste from steel manufacturing. 200 million tons of slag were dumped in the stream for over five decades, making the water entirely uninhabitable for fish. In 2006, 2.2 miles of Nine Mile Run were restored in a \$7.7 million project sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Pittsburgh that was the largest stream restoration project in the country to date. In successfully restoring of one of industry’s greatest sites of devastation, Pittsburgh restoration makes a convincing case for the city’s ability to persevere.

¹¹ “OPENSOURCEPGH: Optimizing Pittsburgh’s Open Space, Parks, and Recreation,” *Pittsburgh City Planning*, Jul. 9, 2013, 22.

In 2009, Pittsburgh hosted the G20 Summit, a forum for world leaders to discuss and plan for international economic cooperation, where attendees discussed possibilities for economic recovery from the financial crisis of 2008. President Barak Obama praised Pittsburgh as the ideal host city for the gathering.

Pittsburgh stands as a bold example of how to create new jobs and industries while transitioning to a 21st century economy. As a city that has transformed itself from the city of steel to a center for high-tech innovation – including green technology, education, and training, and research and development – Pittsburgh will provide both a beautiful backdrop and a powerful example of our work.”¹²

Obama’s declaration that Pittsburgh had transformed from the steel city to a technologically innovative city reinforces popular narratives that the steel industry’s primary hold on Pittsburgh was through economic means. By doing so, he reinforces narratives that erase the continued environmental and social devastation experienced by the city even decades after economic divestment from steel. Meanwhile, the Summit also drew several thousand anti-capitalist protestors. The environmental activist group Greenpeace hung a banner over Pittsburgh’s West End Bridge declaring “Danger: Climate Destruction Ahead. Reduce CO2 Emissions Now,” demanding the world’s leaders pay more attention climate change and prioritize investment in clean energy.¹³ Obama encouraged that “to avoid being trapped in the cycle of bubble and bust, we must set a path for sustainable growth while steering clear of the imbalances of the past,” suggesting that insecurity and imbalance are behind us.¹⁴ The desire to avoid entirely any future rhetorical entanglement with Pittsburgh’s history of environmental and labor exploitation, ignores

¹² Barak Obama, “President Obama Statement on Upcoming G20 Summit in Pittsburgh,” *Financial Transparency Coalition*, Sept. 9, 2009, <https://financialtransparency.org/president-obama-statement-on-upcoming-g20-summit-in-pittsburgh/>.

¹³ Kate Bolduan, “Greenpeace Protesters Dangle from Pittsburgh Bridge,” *CNN*, Sept. 23, 2009, <https://www.cnn.com/2009/US/09/23/pittsburgh.greenpeace/index.html>.

¹⁴ Obama, “President Obama Statement.”

completely the continued harmful influences of industrialization on the city's economic, social, and environmental landscape.

A recognition of the lingering consequences of industrialization is not to say that Pittsburgh hasn't experienced positive transformation since its days as the Steel City. Efforts to clean up the city and create a new sustainable social and economic system are widespread, as illustrated in the above examples. At the same time, despite decades of focused efforts to clean up the city and undo industrial harm to the land, Allegheny County continues to have some of the worst air and water pollution in the nation. The pollution from over a century of intense exploitation is still materially experienced and embedded in the urban landscape. While the majority of industrial era factories declined within city limits, others relocated to the greater Western Pennsylvania rural region and continue to devastate the local environment and communities. With the visibility of industry removed from city center, Pittsburgh benefits from the illusion of achieving a sustainable urban transformation. Industrial polluters like the U.S. Steel Clairton Plant, Cheswick Power Plant, Carpenter Powder Products, and McConway & Torley Foundry, however, continue to harm the health of local residents, disproportionately effect communities of color, contribute to the region's above average rates of childhood asthma, cancer, and air pollution-related disease and death, and contribute to yet ongoing environmental pollution.¹⁵ If urban officials were to publicly recognize the powerful endurance of such a harmful legacy in a city that is supposed to be not only post-industry, but an innovative and sustainable leader for livable cities, they risk mitigating the significant economic and ecological advances the city has made since deindustrializing. The endurance of industry's impact on the region suggests that Pittsburgh may not be as postindustrial

¹⁵ "Toxic Ten: The Allegheny County Polluters that are Fouling Our Air and Threatening Our Health," *PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center*, Oct. 26, 2015, <https://pennenvironment.org/reports/pae/toxic-ten>.

as seems. A refusal to admit the firm grip industry still has on the region suggests a fear that Pittsburgh could still lose its grasp on its new identity as a most livable city and again fall prey to the Rust Belt imaginary.

4.2 A Parks Master Plan

The PMP is made up of input from various planners, collaborators, and community members who collectively ‘author’ the planning documents to represent the institutional vision for restoring the city’s historic parks system.¹⁶ The extensive planning efforts included input from a diverse range of constituents including the Pittsburgh City Council, donors, multiple City of Pittsburgh department directors, a project team, members of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, management committee, task force members representing each of the city’s four historic regional parks, and numerous citizens of Pittsburgh supported preparation of the document. The text explains, “in the same way that the Regional Parks function as democratic social spaces that sustain city life, so too the master plan had to reflect a broad consensus of public opinion and user needs.”¹⁷ The diverse groups who contributed to the PMP are described as civic leaders of the twenty-first century, united in their collective pursuit of developing an institutionally supported parks master plan. The master plan for Pittsburgh’s parks spans two primary documents, with the updated version designed with the intent of being read as an extension of the original document. In this

¹⁶ These documents are publicly available on the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy’s website. The first Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan, published in 2000, was prepared by landscape consultant firms LaQuatra Bonci Associates / Michael A. Stern, Biohabitats, Inc., Tai + Lee Architects, Landscapes * LA * Planning * HP, and Earthware / Landbase Systems and prepared for the City of Pittsburgh – Department of Public Works and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy.

¹⁷ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” 5-6.

section, I introduce the 2000 Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan and the Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update.¹⁸

4.2.1 Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan

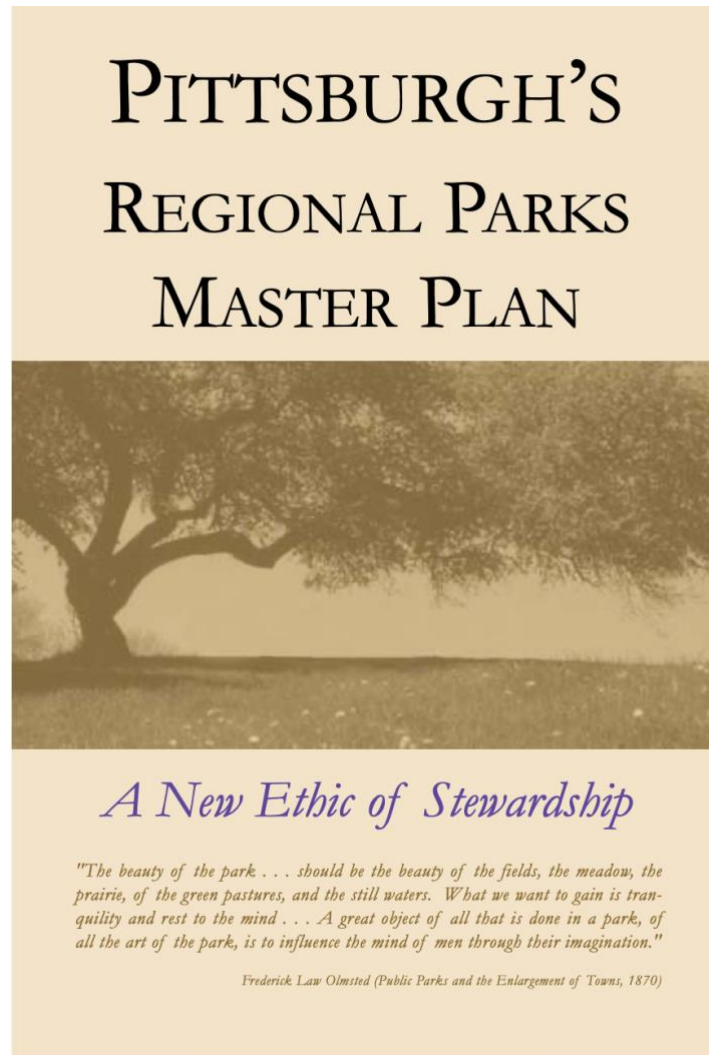


Figure 4.1 Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan Cover Image

¹⁸ At times I reference specific planning documents by name, however, I primarily refer to the collection of these documents as the Parks Master Plan (PMP). While the two parks master plan documents reflect the main focus of my analysis, these documents are also informed by other comprehensive planning initiatives happening in the city, especially those that stem from PLANPGH.

The primary objective of the original Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan was to facilitate "a total park experience that addresses the natural, cultural and educational opportunities that great parks can provide."¹⁹ Its two major elements include the creation of a parks system and renewal of the four historic regional parks, Frick, Highland, Riverview, and Schenley. To facilitate an ideal experience for users, the PPC desired to balance use, history, and ecology within each regional park.

Use is defined as encompassing the facilities that "serve a diverse population [...] within a diverse landscape setting."²⁰ User contributions to the plan's development and priorities come from task forces whose members are identified as largely composed of residents and institutional representatives from the regional parks' adjacent neighborhoods. Those needs however, disproportionately prioritize those who live in closest proximity to the regional parks, which are historically located in higher income areas such as Highland Park, Shadyside, and Squirrel Hill. These populations are recognized as "the most consistent voice of park visitors," excluding voices of communities without closer access to the regional parks and who often come from lower-income and minority populated areas.²¹ The well over 100 smaller neighborhood parks and recreation spaces that serve communities without access to the regional parks do not qualify for the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD) funding that finances the major PMP projects for the four historic regional parks because RAD funding is reserved only for civic facilities and programs that are identified as "regional assets."²² Rather than address the needs of disenfranchised and long-term

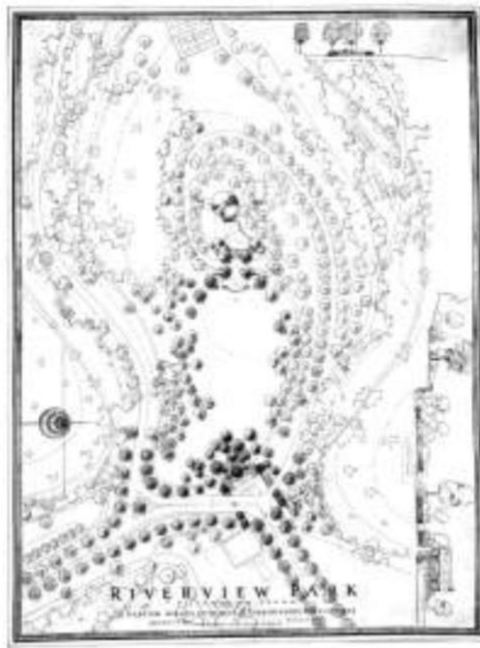
¹⁹ "Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan," i.

²⁰ "Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan," ii.

²¹ "Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan," 8.

²² "Funded Parks," RAD, <https://www.radworkshere.org/pages/funded-parks>. The five regional parks constitute the second largest recipient of RAD funding, following libraries.

community members, young professionals are highlighted as the park system’s target demographic due to their value for contributing to the future economic growth of Pittsburgh. Investment in facilities therefore is confined to enhancing the parks experience only for those who already have the means with which to use and benefit from the regional parks and their recreation facilities.



Understanding the original design intent is critical when renovating significant landscapes. Historic drawings, like this one of the Observatory, gives many clues to the arrangement and planting.

Figure 4.2 Historic Blueprint for Riverview Park (Taken from the Pittsburgh Regional Parks Master Plan)

Historic preservation considers existing historic integrity, historically significant landscapes, and reclaiming diverse historical landscape types. This perspective emphasizes the material assets of the parks system, as based on historic models of earlier decades in the parks. The “historically significant landscapes” and “lost historic elements” that are preserved only reflect the history of design and planning for the parks and do not include a reflection of their historic uses that often prioritize wealthy recreation practices like driving and horseback riding or ecological

treatment like intense smog pollution. The focus for restoration is tied to historic intent for landscape design that leaves out a historic legacy rooted in industrial exploitation of people and the environment, offering only a limited understanding of the parks' material history.

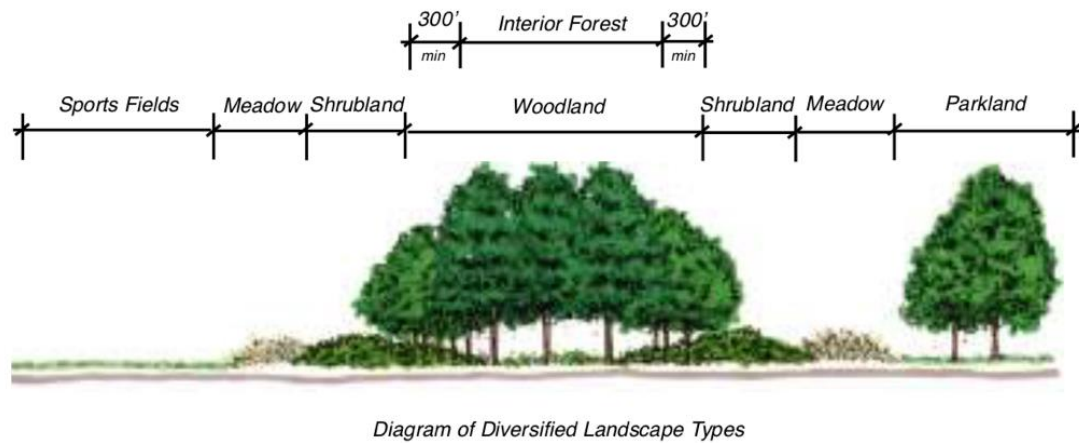


Figure 4.3 Diagram of Plans for Establishing Diversified Landscape Types (Taken from the Pittsburgh Regional Parks Master Plan)

Finally, ecological integrity of the parks entails a recognition that “all landscape types in the parks have an ecological value,” and therefore “a framework for preservation, enhancement and restoration will be established” and maintained through sustainable landscape maintenance and practices.²³ Ecological assessment looked at vegetation, topography, geology and soils, hydrology, landscape management, and wildlife habitat. To plan for a balanced approach to ecological preservation and enhancement, the PMP highlights the importance of natural resource management and sustainable landscape maintenance. The emphasis on greater ecological engagement reminds readers of the very manufactured nature of parks as human-constructed

²³ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” ii.

nature spaces. In the late 1800s, Director of Public Works Edward Bigelow and Parks Superintendent William Falconer created a large-scale planting program where they grew well over 10,000 trees and shrubs to fill grassy areas and develop a carefully curated image of nature in the parks. As unnatural spaces, continued maintenance and human intervention is necessary to maintain the health of those constructed ecosystems. Parks provide human communities with environmental benefits such as clean air and green storm water infrastructure, and in return, integrated management practices are necessary for maintaining a balanced ecological system. This includes improving conditions of Pittsburgh's many streams and waterways and managing invasive, native, and non-invasive exotic plant and animal species.

4.2.2 Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update

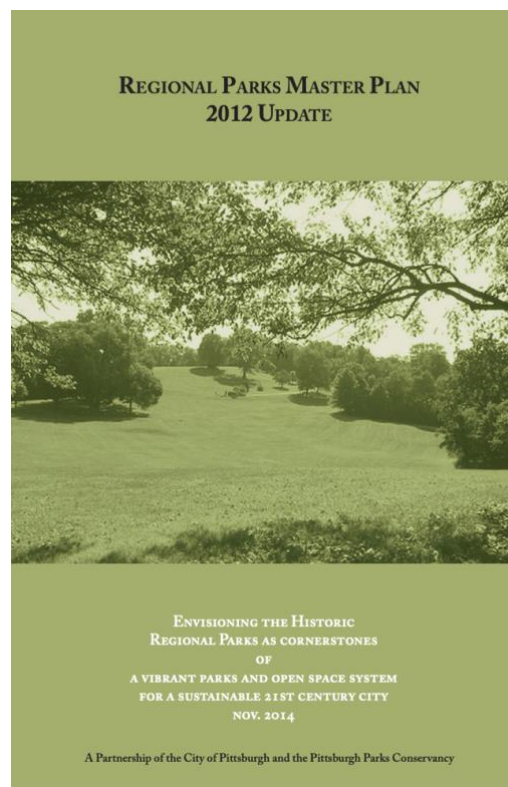


Figure 4.4 Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update Cover Image

The PMP was designed to be a “living document” that changes over time to be responsive to needs of the parks and the people of Pittsburgh.²⁴ In the decade following the 2000 PMP publication, numerous projects aimed at restoring park use, history, and ecology were successfully completed, such as the Riverview Park Chapel Shelter, the historic Frick Park Gatehouse, and the green infrastructure Babbling Brook at Highland Park project to naturally dechlorinate and clean water authority waste water. During this time, the city experienced other significant changes that impacted parks planning needs. A fifth regional park, Emerald View Park, was adopted in 2007. In 2010, the City of Pittsburgh began developing its first ever official comprehensive plan for the city, PLANPGH. At that time, former Mayor Luke Ravenstahl requested that the PPC expand the Parks Master Plan restoration projects to account for other city parks beyond the four historic regional parks and produce a new plan for parks restoration to be adapted for inclusion in PLANPGH’s initiative for addressing open space, parks, and recreation, OPENSOURCEPGH. In response, the Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update was published as a supplement and amendment, rather than replacement for the 2000 PMP. Its new subtitle, “Envisioning the Historic Regional Parks as cornerstones of a vibrant parks and open space system for a sustainable 21st century city” redirected the focus of planning from an emphasis on restoration of the four historic regional parks, to newly consider how those four parks might aid in the advancement of a comprehensive parks plan that better accounts for all of Pittsburgh’s open green spaces. The effort began with analyzing the projects and processes of the initial plan. Public talks were held to identify new user needs. The update refined goals and objectives for restoration and offered recommendations for new projects, initiatives, programs, and standards. The update demonstrates

²⁴ Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan, iii.

the PPC’s commitment to park planning that is responsive to changing needs in their public-private partnership with the city of Pittsburgh.

The 2012 updated plan highlights achievements and lessons of initial parks planning. It also explores new ideas for reimagining the role of the city’s four historic regional parks for the twenty-first century sustainable city. The original three-prong approach of balancing use, history, and ecology was replaced with a new update “framed by an expanded understanding of sustainability, applied at multiple levels to stewardship of the park system.”²⁵ It addresses the following values: environmental stewardship, historic preservation, scenic quality, health and amenities, flexible use, fiscal alignment, functional and durable landscapes, excellent maintenance, and community support. These new objectives were designed with the ambitious goal of creating a holistic and “high-performing” parks system that reflects changing urban values surrounding sustainable stewardship.²⁶ A high-performing parks system is defined as balancing the biological, cultural, and structural needs of the city at micro and macro scales. A balanced approach to sustaining park values and principles necessarily requires tradeoffs to maintain balance. The scenic quality of parks, for example, needs to be balanced with environmental stewardship. Prioritizing equitable parks planning cannot occur at the risk of development that might minimize historic preservation and create an imbalanced approach to planning. By emphasizing a strictly balanced approach to stewardship, the civic leaders responsible for planning and development are forced to grapple with possibilities that there may be times where certain values and principles necessitate higher priority and attention than others.

²⁵ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 18.

²⁶ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 18.

The update offers greater insight as to the different public and private interests in establishing a contemporary parks system. Public events and workshops, such as “Walks in the Woods,” invited members of the Pittsburgh community to provide feedback to the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy that could shape how planners understand the expectations and needs of park users. Public opinions in the 2012 planning document include concerns for access, aesthetics, mobility, neighborhood connectivity, safety, historic restoration, and environmental improvement. Their feedback prioritizes narrow project development including addressing specific monuments, intersections, and plazas for individual parks, for example, the unattractiveness of Riverview’s pool, difficulty crossing Commercial Avenue in Frick Park, off-leash dogs, Lake Carnegie’s potential to be a destination location in Highland Park, and the inaccessibility of Hawkins monument in Schenley Park.²⁷ In contrast with the micro-concerns provided by residential feedback, official discourse includes macro-concerns for how the parks serve the city nationally and internationally, for example, increasing property value, diversifying Pittsburgh’s tax base, improving public health, rendering significant environmental benefits to the greater urban area, giving the city a competitive edge in enticing tourists and boosting local businesses, and enhancing the city’s global significance. The potential tensions present in competing micro and macro interests suggest the difficulties planners may face in enacting holistic decision making that seeks to balance the restoration of parks for fulfilling both public and private interests. They reflect a critical difference in the shift from thinking about parks as supplemental to life in the city to one of parks as a central element of urban life.

The PMP explains that despite the renewed ethic of environmental care and interest among citizens, successful stewardship has only been made possible through long-term public-private

²⁷ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update, 11-13.

cooperation between the City of Pittsburgh and its civic institutions. While the PPC began as a concerned group of private citizens, their ability to enact stewardship, and thus material change in the parks, is framed as directly connected to their partnership with the public City of Pittsburgh officials. The PMP update declares, “the results are clear – the parks have been improved and the quality of life for the people of Pittsburgh has been enhanced by 16 years of partnership between the Conservancy and the City of Pittsburgh.”²⁸ The public-private partnership is designated a key factor in reinvigorating the parks by enabling “consistent and strong stewardship” for maintaining the parks as civic institutions for the future by supporting the PPC’s environmental education programs, volunteer training, and building relationships with the public and other local institutions to support restoration projects. The PPC explains that for it to preserve “a strong and effective” partnership between the city institutions and citizens of Pittsburgh, it must attend to “organizational needs, maintain[] the quality of the investment, and increas[e] access to these parks as reservoirs of personal, social, environmental, and economic health for the region.”²⁹ By not specifying organizational needs, standards of quality, or what increased access look like, the planning document makes evaluating what constitutes a strong and effective partnership both flexible and responsive to unexpected need for change, and at the same time, a moving target that can shift over time.

²⁸ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 7.

²⁹ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 47.

4.3 A Legacy of Care

The new ethic of stewardship for civic leaders models an idealized historical legacy that promotes a powerful set of shared “ideas, images, feelings about the past.”³⁰ Early park stewards are described as thoughtful, caring, and forward-thinking, suggesting the perception that the parks were developed with great foresight for the value of a well-kept urban parks system. In examining what he describes as a new obsession with the past, David Lowenthal suggests that we “select, distil, distort, and transform the past, accommodating things remembered to the needs of the present.”³¹ Andreas Huyssen too identifies how “inevitably, every act of memory carries with it a dimension of betrayal, forgetting, and absence.”³² In order for collective memory to reflect the shared and selective experiences and memories of a group, they necessarily rely on deflecting certain memories in favor of constructing a coherent and desirable dominant narrative of the city’s past.³³ The “urban imaginary” of a return to the idealized historic parks system represented in the PMP envisions a future parks system responsible for positively shaping the future of the city.³⁴ To unpack the foundation for this legacy of care, I examine how the texts rhetorically construct civic leaders, I identify discourses of industrial nostalgia, and I identify how the PMP seeks to find what planners perceive as having been lost in order to lay the foundation for parks of the twenty-first century.

³⁰ Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 4.

³¹ David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 184.

³² Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 4.

³³ See Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera’s Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian Ott, *Places of Public Memory: Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010).

³⁴ Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 7.

4.3.1 Civic Leaders

The PMP represents possibilities for transformation of space and place that support public-private rebranding narratives of Pittsburgh as a most livable city. To achieve this goal, the primary purpose and process for advancing a new ethic of stewardship for Pittsburgh's Regional Parks system emphasizes the need to "preserve, restore, and enhance Frick, Highland, Riverview, and Schenley Parks."³⁵ As the first sentence of the 2000 Master Plan suggests, "Pittsburgh's great 19th and 20th Century parks are a wonderful collection of landscapes and special places that need to be renewed."³⁶ In a sense, the once great parks must be made great again. The PMP emphasizes that the historic decision to create Pittsburgh's parks system exhibited a high caliber of care and enhancement for the city's environmental landscape that has since been in decline. Discursive representations of the early parks' era illustrate how collective memory romanticizes the green vitality of the parks' creation, expansion, and public services, while failing to recognize the violence of industrialization that contributed to and was supported by parks' development.

³⁵ "Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan," i.

³⁶ "Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan," i.

A core value of life in Pittsburgh is the abundance of parks set among green hillsides and flowing rivers. Our civic leaders in the late 19th and early 20th centuries gave us this legacy as an act of foresight – toward economic growth and competitiveness, public health and well-being, and the simple pleasures of shared space and community spirit.

**Figure 4.5 The First Paragraph from the Introduction of the Regional Parks Master Plan
2012 Update**

The PMP frames parks as a core value of life for Pittsburgh. Twenty-first century citizens of Pittsburgh are envisioned in the text as having inherited a legacy of caring for the maintenance of Pittsburgh’s historic parks system. Dominant planning narratives describe this legacy of care as being passed down by civic leaders of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in order to maintain “economic growth and competitiveness, public health and well-being, and the simple pleasures of shared space and community spirit” in the city of Pittsburgh.³⁷ Importantly, these early leaders are credited with having the foresight of laying a foundation for renewed care of the broader urban environment beyond the physical parks, to also include economic, cultural, and social competitiveness. Notably, this legacy excludes mid- to late-twentieth century citizens who by contrast, “have not been good stewards.”³⁸ They are blamed as neglecting to carry on the historic parks legacy, making them responsible for not only the deterioration of the parks, but also for the

³⁷ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 5.

³⁸ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 5.

unnamed but significant economic decline and loss of civic identity the city experienced following industrial decline and deindustrialization that impact the region.

The PMP's uncritical celebration of early historic civic leaders paints an incomplete picture of the foundation of Pittsburgh's parks legacy. It also ignores the complicated factors that enabled the strength of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century civic leaders to develop a parks system especially when compared with the perceived weakness of their mid- to late-twentieth century counterparts, who by contrast, inherited a violent legacy resulting from the declining steel industry. Nostalgia for a return to stewardship at the creation of Pittsburgh's parks system ignores the countless unsustainable practices that cannot be separated from the heavy cost of industrial progress, including devastation of the environment. In his edited collection, *Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and its Region*, editor Joel A. Tarr vividly describes how progress came to profit a select few and exploit many more in recapping the disturbing history of pollution and environmental devastation in Pittsburgh and its impact on urban life both human and more-than-human.³⁹ The consequences of such actions held adverse effects on the mid- to late-twentieth century city and continue to harm the city well into the twenty-first century, bringing to question the utility of early parks planning to offer a viable model of stewardship and care to be emulated in contemporary efforts to create a sustainable twenty-first century city parks and open space system.

Pittsburgh's parks were developed to provide relief from the urban industrial condition. Their design played a critical role in visually masking the intense environmental and societal harms of industrialization by elevating elite cultural values of aesthetics and recreation. The methods

³⁹ Joel Tarr, *Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and its Region* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003).

described in the PMP for how the historic character of Pittsburgh's parks was analyzed for preservation decisions reveals that only select historical elements are accounted for. The historic restoration projects emphasize design qualities including "spatial organization, topography, vegetation, circulation, water elements, park use structures, site furnishings, and other objects."⁴⁰ The PMP's emphasis on preserving aesthetic qualities of the parks' history obscures the environmental and social cost that enabled the creation of an elaborate parks system in the first place. In their examination of Pennsylvania public memory of industrialization, Carolyn Kitch identifies how "nature is increasingly the thematic focus of industrial heritage."⁴¹ Removed from the highly sensorial affective qualities of industrialization, including factory noise, smoke, pollution, and labor exploitation, post-industrial sites can be peaceful and even beautiful historical sites, that mask the devastation of their history, and "make it very hard to remember what they were born of."⁴² Left out of PMP preservation efforts is consideration for historic factors including park use, culture, audience, politics, and role in promoting industrial elite who profited off the exploitation of laborers and the environment. Instead, the PMP emphasizes an understanding of the parks as designed landscapes, praising park space for containing "a rich collection of historical elements" that ultimately preserves and promotes an incomplete history of how parks shape public life in the city.⁴³

⁴⁰ "Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan," 9.

⁴¹ "Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update," 71.

⁴² Carolyn Kitch, *Pennsylvania in Public Memory: Reclaiming the Industrial Past* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2012), 69.

⁴³ "Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan," 7.

4.3.2 Industrial Nostalgia



The pedestrian underpass in Highland Park typifies the rugged craftsmanship of features in the parks



The Pedestrian Underpass today - unfortunately many wonderful elements are in need of repair.

Figure 4.6 Contrasting Images of Highland Park to Illustrate Park Care in the Past Verses the Present (Taken from the Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan)

Institutional discourse in planning documents reveals how the production of space is used in service of imagining stable place-based boundaries, including urban history. Henri Lefebvre explains that conceptualized space, like planning documents, reflect the visions of those including planners, urbanists, or social engineers that shape the “dominant space in any society.”⁴⁴ By reflecting discourses of power, planning documents are significant rhetorical objects for better understanding how the PMP envisions human management and mediation of the environment in pursuit of advancing Pittsburgh as a sustainable twenty-first century city. Dorina Pojani and Dominic Stead identify that planning processes involve negotiating the past, present, and future,

⁴⁴ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 39.

making “the complex interplay of these diverse rhetorics” quite telling “as a flow of competing discourse and imagery” for imagining the future parks system.⁴⁵ The PMP envisions parks restoration as built on a great historic parks system that foregrounds economic investment and an ethic of environment care; it leaves out a history of environmental devastation that contradict desired discourse and imagery of renewal narratives. The ways in which the PMP does and does not represent the influence of history on contemporary planning initiatives bares significant consequences for how environmental justice is accounted for in planning a sustainable parks and urban system of the twenty-first century. Contemporary narratives of the parks highlight early park years as representing a high standard of excellence for the “care and enhancement” of the city’s nature spaces, seen for example in orate gardening and development of public resources on park grounds (see, for example, Figure 4.6).⁴⁶ In this way, the green hillsides, woods, and rivers of Pittsburgh are “a core value of life” in the city.⁴⁷ Kitch argues that by citing only the glamorous parts of the parks’ historic creation, “today’s heritage projects pay tribute to a lost industrial life, a twenty-first century idea about the twentieth century” that are driven by nostalgic tendencies.⁴⁸ A failure to recognize the role of early civic leaders and the early parks development in contributing to social and environmental exploitation and its ongoing effects makes it difficult to address the complex solutions needed for creating a sustainable and equitable future parks system. Ultimately, the PMP advances an uncritical approach to the history of the parks system that does not recognize the contradictory forces that contributed to the parks development and decline. By doing so, the PMP reinforces broader narratives that describe Pittsburgh as “most livable,”

⁴⁵ Dorina Pojani and Dominic Stead, “Urban Planning and Design as Verbal and Visual Rhetoric,” *Journal of Urban Planning*, 20, no. 5 (2015): 582.

⁴⁶ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” 13.

⁴⁷ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 5.

⁴⁸ Kitch, *Pennsylvania in Public Memory*, 179.

covering up the perpetuation of inequality, pollution, and injustice that make the “livable” city unlivable.

When considered alongside the cultural and economic factors that accompanied the rise and fall of the parks system, park greatness cannot be understood as separate from its paralleling the rise and fall of the steel industry. As industry expanded, green space became increasingly privatized and less accessible to city dwellers. Overwhelming pollution and overcrowding brought disease, discomfort, and threatened the livability and viability industrial urban living, necessitating change to the built environment. OPENSOURCEPGH credits the Pittsburgh’s historic parks system as “created through a combination of forward thought, civic philanthropy and design, and physiographic features and limitations.”⁴⁹ My analysis of early parks discourse in Chapter 2 illustrates how Director of Public Works Edward Bigelow’s expansion of the parks system was supported by immense concern for the historic present; namely, the need to quell criticism over the unsustainability of a rapidly expanding industrial city.

As I argue in Chapter 3, the rapid and disjointed development of the parks system that followed its initial creation was criticized in the early twentieth century for its fragmented development and lack of foresight, as industrial elite displayed their capital wealth through the uncoordinated donation of public resources in the parks. Further, parks were primarily created in spaces that had no commercial value, often encompassing the region’s hilliest ravines, which were deemed unusable. OPENSOURCEPGH suggests how,

To the credit of Edward Bigelow and Allegheny City, Pittsburgh’s park system was conceived as part of the broader movement of the late nineteenth century to enhance quality of life and economic competitiveness by integrating parks and green spaces into the urban fabric of industrial cities. Many of the city’s larger parks such as Frick Westinghouse and

⁴⁹ “OPENSOURCEPGH,” 11.

Schenley were gifted by wealthy landowners, private citizens, and the giants of industry past.⁵⁰

In fact, the city's first regional park, Schenley Park, was donated by a woman who had not lived in the city for decades. The text assumes that the parks enhance quality of life and economic competitiveness equally for all urban inhabitants. Parks played a complicated role in aiding wealthy elite's ability to sustain industry. The connection between parks donations and wealthy industrial elite masks the inequality and exploitation hidden and enabled by the gifting of resources for the city's parks system. A significant impetus for the creation of a parks system arose due to the devastating social and environmental consequences of industrialization, and their threat to continued industrial production and progress. Elite construction of a parks system provided breathing spaces and public resources designed to satisfy laborers and attract new capital investment. The linkages between a robust parks system and a robust economic infrastructure was clearly illustrated in the economic investment and then divestment in parks that paralleled the rise and fall of the steel industry. Over time, industry declined as the new neoliberal city moved away from reliance on a labor economy, and with it, investor care for the parks, suggesting that care is tied to economic viability. It is not until the new narrative of Pittsburgh as a sustainable, livable city gains public notoriety that the parks obtain economic utility in the city again.

The ability of the historic parks creation to attract new capital investment lay in their ability to provide a visible place for public demonstration of the economic viability of steel, aiding in the successful progression of industry, including its environmental devastation and exploitation of human labor. Scholars have illustrated how marginalized communities frequently experience environmental injustice in the name of progress, for example, Danielle Endre's examination of

⁵⁰ "OPENSOURCEPGH," 11.

how American Indian nations at Yucca Mountain are subjected to high levels of nuclear waste or Phaedra Pezzullo's examination of toxic tourism in Louisiana's Cancer Alley.⁵¹ The creation of a contained parks system to provide clean air for urban inhabitants justified industrialists sacrificing other places and people in the city that enabled industry's continued pollution of riverbanks and air, exploitation of immigrant and labor populated neighborhoods, and industrial factory landscapes because in the parks, nature could be preserved and experienced. The exploitative reach of industry is not limited to the past, however. Braddock, Pennsylvania's Mayor John Fetterman recognizes the continued injustice impacts of industry's relocation to the broader Western Pennsylvania region, identifying his city as a "zone of sacrifice," referencing the fracking and cracking plants in his region.⁵² In this way, the "ecological history" of the parks "becomes re-imagined history" through a failure to recognize the continued influence of industry on environmental injustice.⁵³ PMP narratives that restoring the parks can make the city green and thus great again, reinforces the transformative narrative circulated by those like Mayor Peduto that the steel city *becomes* the livable city. This narrative fails to recognize the ways in which the Western Pennsylvania region, including Pittsburgh, is already still very much a Steel City, even if it no longer resembles its former self. It instead suggests Pittsburgh's transformation has been so radical that the city has left behind completely the environmental and inequitable gloom and doom of its

⁵¹ Danielle Endres, "Sacred Land or National Sacrifice Zone: The Role of Values in the Yucca Mountain Participation Process," *Environmental Communication* 6, no. 3 (2012); Phaedra Pezzullo, *Toxic Tourism: Rhetorics of Pollution, Travel, and Environmental Justice* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007).

⁵² Donna Carole Roberts, "Pittsburgh Has Glaring Environmental Problems. So Why the Greenwashing?" *Public Source*, Dec. 26, 2017, <https://www.publicsource.org/pittsburgh-has-glaring-environmental-problems-so-why-the-greenwashing/>.

⁵³ Margaret R. LaWare, "Defining a 'Livable City': Parks, Suburbanization, and the Shaping of Community Identity and Ecological Responsibility," in *Communicative Cities in the 21st Century: The Urban Communication Reader III*, eds. Matthew D. Matsaganis, Victoria J. Gallagher, and Susan J. Drucker, 13-34 (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2013), 14.

Steel City heyday and brought forth a greener but similarly great and economically viable plan for urban renewal.

4.3.3 Finding What Has Been Lost

There is an assumption in PMP rhetoric that something in the parks has been lost since their creation. The text describes “crumbling infrastructure, conflicts between users and general deterioration” as “symptoms of management problems that have, for too long, been left unresolved,” contributing to the PMP’s emphasis on a need to return to the earlier parks’ era.⁵⁴ Narratives of how the parks experienced decline in infrastructure and quality of community engagement also align with broader urban systems in Pittsburgh during the twentieth-century. As I illustrate in Chapter 3, fragmented development made it difficult for the city to maintain quality of investment in its urban landscape and placed increased stress on urban planning in the early twentieth century. Projects related to Pittsburgh’s two renaissances became the central focus of these civic leaders who were forced to correct the unsustainable nature of early civic leaders’ lack of foresight for how the city could thrive without industry. The decline of industrial investment, suburban flight, and general deterioration in infrastructure such as roads and bridges contributed to the experience of losing early industrial wealth that had both exploited and propped up the city’s vitality. The PMP imperative that “we must begin again to think of these Parks as their creators did – as precious, valued landscapes that are assets to the community” illustrates the persuasive material and symbolic qualities of a return to the collective memory of Pittsburgh’s historic built

⁵⁴ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” 5.

environment.⁵⁵ The text suggests that if urban leaders can just care about their parks again, they might help the city escape further urban decline.

Park planners describe the mid-twentieth century as reflecting a marked decline of the parks system resulting from failed stewardship that contrasts with the perceived height of good stewardship seen at the parks' creation in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. While the parks' creation is framed through specific, particular, and spectacular narratives of early Pittsburgh parks stewards, the parks decline is framed through vague and broad narratives of national decline that carefully avoid mention of de-industrialization. In fact, specific mention of industrialization, deindustrialization, or the post-industrial city is entirely absent from both PMP documents, with only broad reference to the need to redevelop industrial sites. Instead, decline in Pittsburgh's parks is generically portrayed as reflecting a lack of stewardship following economic, geographic, and cultural barriers. Despite the many unique challenges faced by the City of Pittsburgh, the PMP makes clear that, "like many park systems, Pittsburgh parks fell into a cycle of decreasing funds, a decline in the skilled labor force, an emphasis placed on suburbanization and the priority of needs other than parks," separating the parks decline from other issues of decline in the city.⁵⁶ Importantly, despite its unique economic challenges, the Parks Master Plan frames Pittsburgh as "not alone" in their parks decline, aligning Pittsburgh with dominant national narratives in which it parallels the decline of other great parks in other great cities, not just its industrial counterparts. By linking parks decline with broader urban systems rather than with specific and localized de-industrial narratives, the city experiences some relief from the need to resolve yet another hardship with recovering from the loss of its economic cornerstone. Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian

⁵⁵ "Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan," 5.

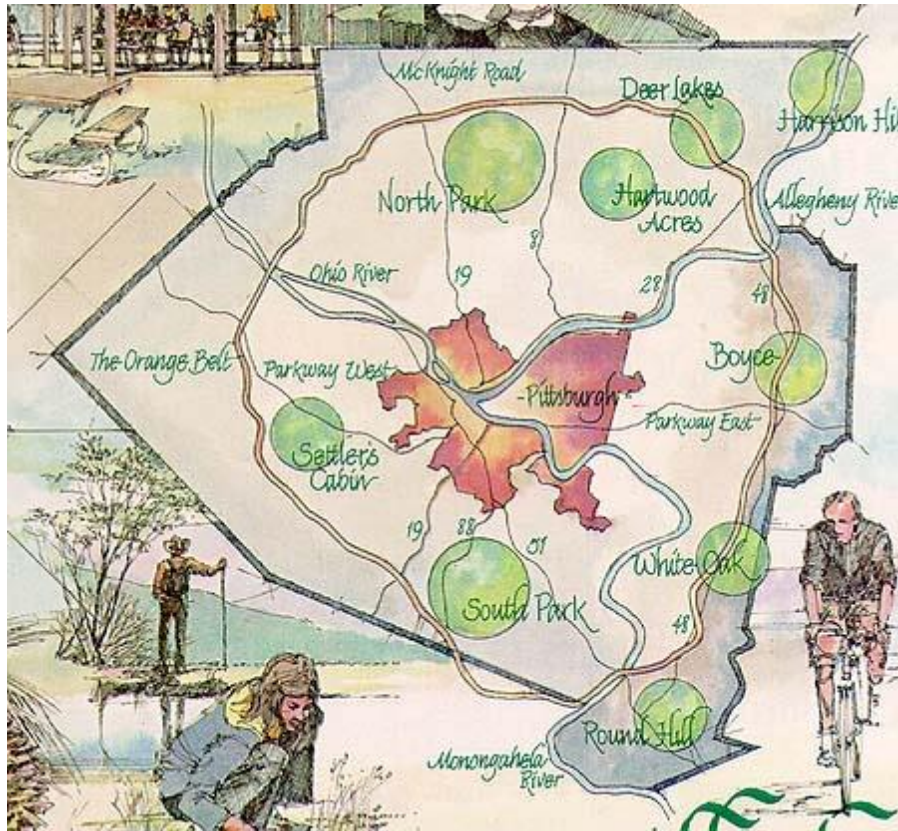
⁵⁶ "Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan," 13.

Ott explain how “groups tell their pasts to themselves and others as a way of understanding, valorizing, justifying, excusing, or subverting conditions or beliefs of their current moment.”⁵⁷ The rhetorical move to connect Pittsburgh’s declining parks system with a national wave of declining parks systems effectively alleviating the city from responsibility for its turn to poor stewardship. Similarly, the move to restore the parks is also framed as coming at a time that is aligned with the actions of other cities as well, establishing the significance of Pittsburgh’s ethic of stewardship as not only new, but reinforced by promise of other great cities also forging public-private alliances to invest in their parks.

In Pittsburgh, the faltering steel industry contributed to the reorganization of wealth and decline in investment in urban living, including its parks. In the recreation era of the mid-twentieth century, new parks facilities were acquired such as playgrounds, parking lots, parkways, and small parklets in cities around the country, however, care for large historic parks and the creation of additional large open spaces declined.⁵⁸ This sharp departure from prior investment in the city’s parks reflects the felt urban crisis of white middle-class flight to the suburbs.

⁵⁷ Dickinson, Blair, and Ott, *Places of Public Memory*, 6.

⁵⁸ Galen Cranz, *The Politics of Parks Design: A History of Urban Parks in America* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982).



**Figure 4.7 An Emerald Ring of Parks (Image Taken from R. Jay Gangeware’s Article
“Allegheny County Parks,” in Carnegie Magazine, July/August 1986)**

With the departure of the middle-class, investment in parks shifted in Pittsburgh to emphasize the creation of a new regional parks system that would form an “emerald ring” around the city of Pittsburgh, located in greater Allegheny County (See Figure 4.7). This system was designed “to provide for all citizens a leisure-time retreat, free from big-city influences” through an emphasis on family recreation, alluding to the growing tensions over racial disparity, a shrinking economic base, and general inability to successfully alleviate crises of urban renewal, contributing to the unlivability of the city.⁵⁹ The new Allegheny parks system emphasized “low-cost maintenance

⁵⁹ Philip D. Simonds, “The Birth of a Regional Park System,” *Landscape Architecture*, April 1963.

conservation areas suitable for simple outdoor recreational and education activities rather than costly man-made facilities,” pointing to the costly nature of maintaining the historic regional parks system in the city.⁶⁰ While the early open space system for recreation of the 1960s suggests a resurgence in attention to parks as nature expands, both the PMP and the comprehensive city planning document OPENSOURCEPGH, highlight that “suburbanization, out-of-region migration, and economic conditions” have uniquely “created a number of challenges and opportunities for the City” that contributed to parks decline within city limits.⁶¹ It is from that period of “neglect, deferred maintenance and inappropriate interventions,” that the PMP positions the need to renew Pittsburgh’s parks within city borders.⁶²

The PMP describes how “given the current state of these parks,” as forgotten, neglected, and inappropriately managed spaces, “the task of restoring them to meaningful civic spaces seems daunting.”⁶³ The presumption here suggests that prosperous times of the past are synonymous with increased civic participation. Rhetoric that characterizes the parks as valued historic civic spaces illustrate what Shackel describes as using “heritage to create collective memory, to look for more innocent and carefree days.”⁶⁴ In doing so, the PMP illustrates the tendency of urban planners to “remember what we perceive as good and forget the rest.”⁶⁵ Through the act of preserving and restoring the historic character of the parks to enhance their current value, the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and City of Pittsburgh describe that the best of the past becomes “part of the present” and foundation for the future of the city.⁶⁶ Throughout the text, however, it is never clearly

⁶⁰ Simonds, 208.

⁶¹ “OPENSOURCEPGH,” 11.

⁶² “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” 5.

⁶³ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” 5.

⁶⁴ Paul Shackel, *Myth, Memory, and the Making of the American Landscape* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 10-11.

⁶⁵ Shackel, 11.

⁶⁶ Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 1.

articulated what exactly it is about the past that is recognizable as civic, as caring, or as desirable for revitalization other than an emphasis on the high caliber of aesthetic park design. As once thriving nature spaces, Pittsburgh's parks are significant memory sites for preserving and promoting nostalgia of industrialization in an era where Pittsburgh is seeking to assert itself as a thriving post-industrial city. Shackle explains: "Nostalgia for things that are a reminder of earlier days has replaced the early American Republic's ideals of progress and development. Nostalgia is about nurturance and stewardship. Beleaguered by loss and change, Americans remember a bygone day of economic power."⁶⁷ Through careful avoidance of recognizing any potential for continued exposure to risk, loss, or insecurity, the PMP creates a strawman of an early parks system that supports an illusion of a strong foundation on which to build the twenty-first century sustainable city.

4.4 The Future City

Pittsburgh's future is framed as reliant upon the ability of the city to radically transform its material and symbolic landscape to escape the consequences of its historic and ongoing environmental devastation. The urgency of the need for change is clearly illustrated in the rationale for the significance of restoring the parks. When contrasted with the rusty imagery of the city's past, popular emphasis on Pittsburgh as a green city establishes Pittsburgh as a city reborn; out of the industrial smog and pollution, comes the future Pittsburgh, a "city within a park."⁶⁸ The PMP envisions a strong parks system as a crucial component in understanding the city's changing urban

⁶⁷ Shackle, *Myth, Memory, and the Making*, 11.

⁶⁸ "Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update, 12.

identity for the twenty-first century, namely, the need to “create a foundation for a sustainable future.”⁶⁹ I examine three key frames for how the texts envision parks in building the future Pittsburgh. First, I examine the rhetorical construction of a Green Web. Second, I articulate the new open space system for green living. Last, I explore how regional parks are rhetorically constructed as flagships of Pittsburgh’s Parks System.

4.4.1 A Green Web

This master plan comes at a time of intense interest in Pittsburgh on issues of sustainability, green development and the need to capitalize on the “green assets” of the landscape setting of the city. Preservation of open spaces and green hillsides, expansion of greenways and trail systems, wetland and waterway restoration and a new focus on the opportunities of the three rivers all combine with this plan to argue for a larger view of the City’s “green infrastructure”. The opportunity must be seized to establish a Green Web that extends throughout the City that will establish an interconnected Parks System.⁷⁰

The PMP gives great attention to a sustainable economy and environment. Identifying the current moment for sustainability as “[coming] at a time of intense interest” compels readers to develop a shared sense of urgency for action. This action is further made compelling through highlighting the economic value of park restoration by calling on the public to capitalize on the landscape. Through seizing the opportunity for preservation, expansion, and restoration, the parks become believable as a crucial component of the city’s sustainability initiative. In the same way that the parks illustrated the sustainability of the steel industry in the late nineteenth century, a renewed parks system illustrates the sustainability of a new green economic system of the twenty-first century. The PMP describing the parks as a “Green Web” of urban infrastructure suggests the

⁶⁹ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” i.

⁷⁰ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” 6.

significance of the park as literal veins that pump life into the city, framing them as crucial for greater city operations. Further, the restoration plans' framing of the parks as constructing a "green web" of the city demonstrate their value in sustaining a relationship between urban green spaces and community engagement.

Envisioned as a green web, the parks become a singular system that connects all of the urban environment, nature and otherwise. In doing so, industrial air and water pollution, gentrified neighborhoods, and a new technology-based economy are absorbed in a singular narrative of Pittsburgh as a sustainable ecosystem, overpowering any potential threats to the city's economic future, and solidifying popular narratives of Pittsburgh as emblematic of a successful post-industrial urban transformation. The symbolic returning of the city to a "natural" environment reinforces long-held beliefs in the civilizing and wholesome qualities of nature. Significantly, the PMP constructs nature as so powerful that it is able to overcome and offset any potential harmful consequences of an urban environment's corrupting influence, including any remnants of industry. In this way, in addition to contributing to the erasure of the worst aspects of industry, the PMP justifies industry's continuation and expansion, adoptable for the twenty-first century needs, seen in the relocating of industrial sites into poor, marginalized, and rural communities. The PMP's revitalization of the city's nature sites imagines the parks as a way to care for, manage, and treat the harmful side effects of urban progress while maintaining its desirable aspects.

The very topographical characteristics that contributed to the establishment of large, vast parks in Pittsburgh have also become the very things that have made difficult the preservation of an open space parks system. Public open spaces in Pittsburgh are importantly described as "components of a valuable network of cultural landscapes, shaped by humanity and nature,"

recognizing and reinforcing their constructed rather than natural characteristics.⁷¹ Steep topography and highly human-cultivated landscaping have places increased burden on maintenance needs. The “lush vegetation” seen by park visitors today gives an appearance of naturalness communicated through its maturity, however very few spaces in the park are natural environments. Green flora makes seeing nature become synonymous with being natural. To read the parks as a natural system suggests they possess the innate ability for self-care, thus justifying their neglect during periods where otherwise unnatural urban infrastructure has competing needs. Decades of human intervention and creation of a human-constructed landscape, however, requires intense maintenance and management. The RPMP identifies that “years of over-use, lack of maintenance and a belief that the forest cover will return if left alone has resulted in erosion, degraded waterways and a proliferation of exotic and invasive species.”⁷² The fragmentation and lack of consistent leadership regarding construction and maintenance, coupled with a decline in funding and oversight of the parks over the mid to late 20th century, resulted in an overall degradation of park character and quality.

⁷¹ “Regional Parks Master Plan 20120 Update,” 10.

⁷² “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” 13.

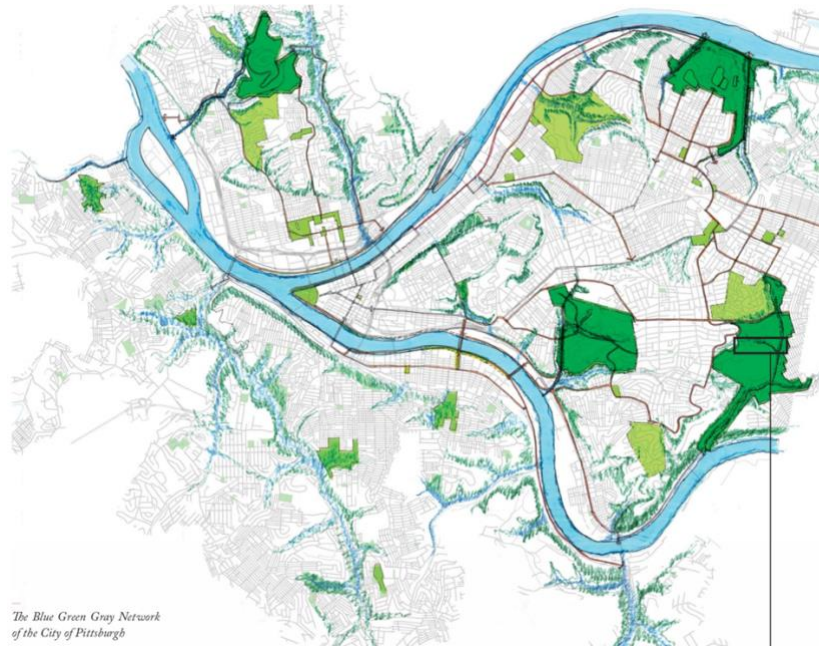


Figure 4.8 Image of the Blue Green Gray Network of the City of Pittsburgh (Taken from the Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update)

The parks constitute physical infrastructural components that enable and constrain movement in the city. In multiple planning documents, the parks are framed as being an integral component of an overlapping systems movement and connection, identified as the blue (water) – green (land cover) – gray (circulation and infrastructure) system. The 2012 update shifts conceptualization of project planning away from the idea of a balancing act of use, history, and ecology, instead striving to take a more holistic approach to parks in the city, addressing a range of values from environmental stewardship and historic preservation to excellent maintenance and community support. Here, planning documents imagine the parks as an infrastructural fabric of the city, where movement and interconnectivity are understood through a web of parks, solidifying the desired frame of Pittsburgh as a city within parks. The PMP envisions an interconnected Parks System as connecting regional parks not only to one another, but to the three rivers, the city and

its neighborhoods, offering aesthetic, recreational, and environmental benefits to all communities. Additional color-coded maps disclose suggested linkages between diverse areas of the city, that can mask the perpetuation of inequitable development so long as all neighborhoods are linked together.

4.4.2 An Open Space System

Pittsburgh's open space encompasses a wide range of environments, including parks, hillsides, rivers, vacant lots, and community gardens, all of which import social and economic value to the city. Establishing Pittsburgh as a green city relies on the physical transformation of its landscape by creating a parks system "that will physically and organizationally connect them throughout the City."⁷³ Parks, boulevards, waterways, and open spaces are envisioned as the cornerstones a vibrant system for establishing Pittsburgh as a sustainable twenty-first century city.⁷⁴

Open park space is valued as both a natural and cultural resource for the city. The blurred natural/cultural landscape carries inherent tensions in decisions about restoration, preservation, and enhancement. The Parks Master Plan recognizes this tension, identifying that "the urban landscapes of Pittsburgh are cultural landscapes, the combined works of humanity and nature, as they were shaped and have evolved over time."⁷⁵ The challenge faced in establishing a new vision of integrated sustainability then lies in the desire to "express the continuum of the past, recognize the challenges and opportunities of the present, and aim toward a resilient future for the park and

⁷³ "Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan," 6.

⁷⁴ "Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update," 11.

⁷⁵ "Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update," 15.

open space system.”⁷⁶ Representative of “a valuable network of cultural landscapes,” parks are shaped by both humanity and nature that together comprise and represent the broader landscape of Pittsburgh.⁷⁷ By weaving humanity and nature together, the parks become a vital component to shaping the fabric of the modern and future sustainable city. Significantly, the Master Plan update outlines a vision of integrated sustainability, recognizing how, “the sum of the public landscape is indeed more than the pieces of the quilt that make up our system.”⁷⁸ This threading together of the varied components of the parks system is described as creating a stronger, more sustainable, and more resilient city, prepared to meet the challenges of the future.

Parks are valuable “spaces of attention” that highlight Pittsburgh’s history and culture through a focus on “interpretative elements” that might “convey information about Pittsburgh’s history through signs and other visual displays (monuments, murals, and public art) and forms of modern media, particularly in parks, along trails, and in other public gathering areas” that “can bring history alive and increase the appreciation of local heritage.”⁷⁹ In characterizing parks as valued components for understanding how Pittsburgh’s natural environment holds cultural and historic significance, PRESERVEPGH situates future park development as creating space for publics to “interpret and experience the rich history of Pittsburgh.”⁸⁰ One component of PLANGH, PRESERVEPGH, focuses on the future of Pittsburgh’s cultural and historic resources. The ambiguously referenced “cultural” and “historical” material features of Pittsburgh are noted by the City as “valuable, non-replaceable assets that contribute to a unique and distinct sense of place.”⁸¹

⁷⁶ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 15.

⁷⁷ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 11.

⁷⁸ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 15.

⁷⁹ Kenneth S. Zagacki and Victoria J. Gallagher, “Rhetoric and Materiality in the Museum Park at the North Carolina Museum of Art,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 95, no. 2 (2009): 172; “PRESERVEPGH: Preserving the Character of Pittsburgh and its Neighborhoods,” *Pittsburgh City Planning*, July. 24, 2012, 125.

⁸⁰ “PRESERVEPGH,” 127.

⁸¹ “PRESERVEPGH,” 6.

PRESERVEPGH outlines how preservation of the past contributes to developing a comprehensive plan for the attractiveness, economic growth potential, and living and working environments of Pittsburgh's future without making clear what of Pittsburgh's culture or history will be commemorated. In responding to "Goal 6" of PLANPGH, "respect and enhance the relationship between nature and the built environment," preservation plans reinforce the notion of Pittsburgh's new identity as a "sustainable, environmentally-sensitive city."⁸² The historically rooted "inseparable relationship" declared of culture and nature in the city becomes evidence for the city's authority to "reclaim" open space in the name of creating a stronger, more balanced relationship through the proposed preservation program. When describing the future of the city's four historic regional parks, PRESERVEPGH further identifies how "there are opportunities to attract more people to the parks by preserving their historic features and adding new amenities that complement and interpret the historic designs."⁸³

The value of open space restoration projects extends beyond environmental anxieties, to also include concern for commitment to understanding an open space system as critical to civic identity and a high quality of life. Pittsburgh's parks are framed as fundamental sites for maintaining an image of the city as "livable, memorable and attractive."⁸⁴ With such an emphasis on livability, it is not until mid-way through the 171-page document that park quality and equity comes under scrutiny. Community input identified that there continues to be an uneven distribution of quality for parks care, reflecting issues of inequality and disparity in Pittsburgh dating back to the parks' inception over a century earlier. Despite findings that neighborhood parks in predominantly African American, low income, and working-class neighborhoods are among the

⁸² "PRESERVEPGH," 9.

⁸³ "PRESERVEPGH," 33.

⁸⁴ "PRESERVEPGH," 72.

most frequently used, they consistently rate in lower quality than other park types such as the historic regional parks, which are primarily accessible to the wealthiest areas of the city. At the same time that Pittsburgh is topping national charts as a most livable city, it is also topping charts as the least livable city for black women, begging the critical question of, most livable for who?⁸⁵ The “green premium” associated with properties near Pittsburgh’s large regional parks reveals an economic system that encourages a strong relationship between quality park maintenance and high property value that forecloses possibilities for equitable distribution of a quality park system to all communities. This system of inequitable parks development is further reinforced through financial arrangements, as neighborhoods are eligible for receiving economic support from the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD) funding that provide the primary support for the city’s Regional Parks.

4.4.3 Regional Park Flagships

Regional parks in particular are described as the “flagships for our common wealth of public open spaces.”⁸⁶ Originally used as a naval term used to identify the most important vessel in a fleet, the identification of the regional parks as flagships for the city’s public open spaces demonstrates the value attached to their visibility for leading the city into a green future. In developing the parks system, the text envisions green space in the city as forming an interconnected

⁸⁵ Brentin Mock, “Pittsburgh: A ‘Most Livable’ City, but Not for Black Women,” *Bloomberg CityLab*, September 20, 2019, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-09-20/how-pittsburgh-fails-black-women-in-6-charts>. For the original report, see the City of Pittsburgh’s Gender Equity Commission Report “Pittsburgh’s Inequality Across Gender and Race,” 2019, https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/7109_Pittsburgh%27s_Inequality_Across_Gender_and_Race_09_18_19.pdf.

⁸⁶ Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 11.

web, with the regional parks as the anchor points for holding together, indeed, creating, the very pathways for movement and circulation of bodies, goods, services, and the natural world. In this way, the Green Web “will link each citizen to the wealth of recreational and ecological opportunities the City has to offer.”⁸⁷

Identified as flagships, cornerstones, and anchors for a system of open space, references to the parks as the essential component of developing a sustainable city are repeated throughout the Master Plan. By establishing the parks as the foundation of a sustainable urban ecosystem, sustained attention to restoration of the city’s public open space promises to resolve other concerns for urban development, including blue and gray infrastructure. The successful reimagining of Pittsburgh as “a City within a Park” redefines the urban landscape as contained within green space, necessarily reclassifying Pittsburgh as a green city.⁸⁸ This reclassification enables the extension of development to include the transformation of Pittsburgh’s streets to multi-modal transportation spaces, accessible to cars, bikes, pedestrians, and other alternative green transportation infrastructure. This includes the reclamation of “non-places,” that must be integrated into the broader green park system.⁸⁹ To build on current initiatives, the PMP highlights the value of establishing connections between the parks and the city for “leveraging the opportunities to capture the vacant lands of the ‘shrinking city’ as neighborhoods and industrial sites are redefined and redeveloped.”⁹⁰ Ultimately, the promise of the green city suggests potential for growth that comes with living public open space like parks to save the shrinking city.

⁸⁷ “Pittsburgh’s Regional Parks Master Plan,” 17.

⁸⁸ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 23.

⁸⁹ Candice Rai, *Democracy’s Lot: Rhetoric, Publics, and the Places of Invention* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2016), 2.

⁹⁰ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 23.

The challenges of establishing Pittsburgh as a green city for are alluded to with great ambiguity. The PMP recognizes the current era as one characterized by “climate change and dramatic weather patterns.” Parks are framed as responsive to problems resulting from an era of climate change, contributing to narratives of Pittsburgh as a place that embraces green space as a solution to those challenges, made possible through stewardship and development of an urban system of green, blue, and gray. While promoting Pittsburgh as “a city that embraces its parks and open spaces as part of the solution,” the specific consequences of those events for the city and how the city’s parks and open spaces are envisioned as resolving those problems are not well described.⁹¹ While little detail is offered to explain the bold declaration of how a green, blue, and gray system will resolve pressing climate change issues, this vision promotes Pittsburgh as an actor and leader on the global stage for environmental sustainability. The ambiguous nature of the threat to the city enables a lack of clarity in justifying the particularities of advancing “stewardship and ongoing extension of an urban system of green, blue, and grey.”⁹² Rhetoric of the Master Plan relies on the notion that as cornerstones of a city-wide system, fixing the parks “enriches the whole” of the city.⁹³ An interconnected landscape system suggests that focus on the flagship components of a sustainable urban system will naturally benefit marginal spaces that do not receive focused attention on restoration or revitalization, justifying their exclusion from direct city planning. Instead, they become absorbed by major infrastructural fixes.

The Parks Master Plan describes the relationship between the parks and the city by incorporating the city’s new OPENSOURCEPGH vision, which defines the city by:

...our parks, greenways, and reclaimed urban wilderness. These lands serve as our common green space, weaving together all Pittsburghers and our neighborhoods through a **system**

⁹¹ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 11.

⁹² “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 11.

⁹³ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 11.

of green that advances stewardship, equity, and our economy. We care for our system to provide access to natural and historical assets, opportunities to be active and healthy, and places to play and celebrate.⁹⁴

This vision of the parks makes clear the connection between environmental sustainability and greater economic and cultural sustainability of the city and its inhabitants. The idea of “reclaiming urban wilderness” recalls debates of the late nineteenth century over the establishment of the first national parks and the preservation of “wilderness as an idea that transpires out of and in opposition to the rapacious pillaging of the planet by industrialism.”⁹⁵ Drawing upon the concept of the parks as a “green web” described in the 2000 plan, the parks’ value is made stronger in its role of weaving together the literal and metaphorical systems of the city.

The parks restoration project not only succeeds in city aims to revitalize its urban parks; rather, it is reflective of broader urban goals for designing Pittsburgh to meet expectations for life in in a twenty-first century city. Therefore, the Regional Parks Master Plan should also be understood for how it contributes to broader city planning narratives for an ever-changing future that develop in the late-2000s. The 2012 update conceives of parks as “an essential part of the city’s economic and cultural infrastructure.”⁹⁶ This document links park value to economic means as well, arguing that, “parks offer cities both a tremendous return on investment and a competitive edge. City parks and open spaces strengthen our communities, and make our cities and neighborhoods more attractive places to live and work.”⁹⁷ To allow the parks to continue to deteriorate represents not only the decline of environmental wellbeing, but of community and economic wellbeing too. A strong linkage is made between a sustainable parks system and a high

⁹⁴ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 5.

⁹⁵ Kevin Michael DeLuca, “Salvaging Wilderness from the Tomb of History: A Response to *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*,” *Environmental Communication* 4, no. 4 (2010): 485.

⁹⁶ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 14.

⁹⁷ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 14.

quality of life for Pittsburgh inhabitants both now and looking to the future. Framed as “the green web,” regional parks, their trails, and smaller neighborhood parks, are described as desirable places in making Pittsburgh a livable city by young professionals moving into the area. Not only does that incentivize the restoration of parks in order to retain new economic industry, but it also invites new opportunities “to capture the imagination of the people of Pittsburgh, and the political, business, and philanthropic communities in creating an integrated park system.”⁹⁸

In addition to the economic infrastructure, parks develop the city’s cultural infrastructure. The value of parks as providing cultural infrastructure is qualified by the understanding that “the American majority now living in metropolitan areas need places of renewal in the experience of nature.”⁹⁹ The PMP’s emphasis that “civic leaders increasingly understand that parks are necessities, rather than ‘amenities,’” harkens back to turn of the twentieth century progressive rhetoric of the necessity of nature to save virtuous citizens from urban corruption.¹⁰⁰ The framing of parks as not merely a tool of leisure, but an urban necessity signifies their value to the city. Recurring narratives of the desirability of green space for offering “places of renewal in the experience of nature” revive earlier frames for the invention of city parks.¹⁰¹ The reframing of parks from “amenities” to “necessities” for city inhabitants reflects an increased value placed on parks in the city. The significance of parks for greater city initiatives is made clear in declaring that “green space becomes the economic driver as it weaves together housing, commercial development, transportation, the arts, and community services.”¹⁰²

⁹⁸ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 10.

⁹⁹ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 14.

¹⁰⁰ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 14.

¹⁰¹ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 14.

¹⁰² “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 9-10.

4.5 Conclusion

Deindustrialization pressured Pittsburghers to create a new economic and social culture. At the turn of the twentieth century, a group of Pittsburgh citizens united in their shared concern for the deteriorating conditions of the Pittsburgh Parks System and created the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy. With the City of Pittsburgh, a public-private Parks Master Plan was created to re-envision the historic parks system. The original Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan was published in 2000 and aimed to balance use, history, and ecology. Just over a decade later, the Pittsburgh Parks Master Plan 2012 Update was published as a "living document" that aimed to be responsive to changing needs over time. My investigation of such planning documents illustrates how civic leaders and official institutions envisioned the function of park space before it becomes material, revealing cultural imaginings that both pre-date and prescribe material change. I found that the PMP builds off what they perceive to be a legacy of care, passed down by early park visionaries. It describes an uncritical industrial nostalgia, whereby great parks and great citizens are empowered in the industrial era and the decline of both can be found parallel to deindustrialization. It articulates a master plan that forges a new path for the future of Pittsburgh that is built off a return to civic ideals at the heyday of industrialization. The future city expands upon the borders of the historic regional parks to create a city-wide Green Web. In this way, park borders become blurred through an open space system that connects large and small green spaces alike. Different from earlier years, the Regional Parks are developed to become identifiable flagships for sustaining a robust Pittsburgh Parks System.

The formation of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and creation of a Parks Master Plan illustrate how the parks "have experienced cycles of care and neglect" that are tied to civic

engagement and the boom and bust of industry.¹⁰³ The PMP emphasis on returning to an earlier state of care suggests a return to something that never really was and never really can be again. The irrepresentability of the past in the present suggests a narrative that selects the desirable nostalgic tendencies of historic remembrance, and leaves behind industrialization, pollution, labor strife, and inequity that are inseparable from the history of Pittsburgh's parks. The efforts of the Master Plan have resulted in numerous projects for restoration of the material infrastructure of the historic parks, however, remain bureaucratically limited in the scope of their capacity. From an environmental standpoint, there have been several noteworthy improvement PMP projects that have created wetland habitats and improved watershed corridors. Others have focused on cosmetic improvements to restore social park features like fountains, playgrounds, and plazas. Samuel Hays notes that like many cities, "despite the limited level of its environmental culture, and perhaps because of it, the city and the region have sought to perpetuate a myth of vigorous levels of environmental achievement."¹⁰⁴ In greening the city, it is imperative to remain critical of what creating a livable city means and for whom.

¹⁰³ Samuel P. Hays, "Beyond Celebration: Pittsburgh and its Region in the Environmental Era – Notes by a Participant Observer," in *Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and its Region*, ed. Joel A. Tarr, 193-215 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 196.

¹⁰⁴ Hays, 200.

5.0 Conclusion: Forging a New Path

Industrialization had devastating effects on the natural environment, creating a catalyst for early environmental movements. Dorothee Brantz and Sonja Dümpelmann identified that “as cities grew and became industrialized, calls for the integration of natural elements into the fabric of urban environments also intensified.”¹ City officials and concerned civic leaders turned to public parks as one means of responding to public discontent over increased pollution, labor conditions, and overcrowding at the end of the nineteenth century. Public parks were introduced as places where any urban inhabitant could go for fresh air, rejuvenation, and social gathering. Further, parks enabled the integration of nature in industrial cities. While parks were embraced by many urban inhabitants, my dissertation reveals how parks also contain a complicated legacy for understanding urban citizenship. The enduring belief in the value of public urban parks in public memory reveals their significance as rhetorically powerful places, both symbolically and materially.

Over a century after the first public parks were created, publics and officials continue to see parks as essential democratic city spaces necessary for a flourishing civic life and culture, even in a post-industrial era. Cities like Pittsburgh, Detroit, Toledo, and Cincinnati, once prominent industrial producers of steel, cars, glass, and manufacturing, have worked vigorously to rebrand themselves in response to their collapsed respective industries around the 1980s. Their vulnerability to change is made prominent in the dominant cultural re-characterization of those spaces from industrial to rusty. While many “rustbelt” cities are seen as having failed to rebuild,

¹ Dorothee Brantz and Sonja Dümpelmann, “Introduction,” in *Greening the City*, ed. Dorothee Brantz and Sonja Dümpelmann (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 2.

Pittsburgh has gained national attention by those who believe it has proven able to shake off the rust. Diversified economic investments all contributed to the public's perception that Pittsburgh has moved beyond industrialization. These are seen in industries including: healthcare, with UPMC and the Children's Hospital; technology, with Uber and Google; education, with the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon; and in banking with PNC Bank. Such perceptions are also reinforced visually, seen in Pittsburgh's vast green parks system that quite literally, transforms Pittsburgh's landscape, challenging popular memories of Pittsburgh as a smokey, smoggy city. Pittsburgh's successful reinvention has earned it widespread attention as one of the most livable cities in the United States, and even in the world.²

Pittsburgh is faced with an interesting paradox, however, whereby it is now recognized simultaneously as a most livable city and most unlivable city, depending on who you ask. Pittsburgh boasts of affordable housing and a growing job market, and at the same time, faces vast and deeply rooted issues of gender and racial disparity, crumbling infrastructure, and devastating environmental pollution that continue to endure from its days supporting the steel industry. The "Pittsburgh's Inequality Across Gender and Race 2019" report produced by the City of Pittsburgh's Gender Equity Commission finds that Pittsburgh is among the worst cities to live for black residents.³ As Joel Tarr recognizes, "from an environmental justice perspective, the working class, immigrant groups, and African Americans have often borne the heaviest burdens from the pollution of the air, water, and land."⁴ Pittsburgh's turn to a green economy and green environment

² Luke Torrance, "Report: Pittsburgh Named One of the Most Livable Cities in the U.S.," *Pittsburgh Business Times*, Sept. 5, 2019, <https://www.bizjournals.com/pittsburgh/news/2019/09/05/reportpittsburgh-named-one-of-most-livable-cities.html>.

³ "Pittsburgh's Inequality Across Gender and Race 2019," *City of Pittsburgh's Gender Equity Commission*, accessed Sept. 13, 2020, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6417271-Pittsburgh-s-Inequality-Across-Gender-and-Race.html?embed=true&responsive=false&sidebar=false>.

⁴ Joel Tarr, "Afterword," in *Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and its Region*, ed. Joel Tarr, 216-220 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 218.

can be understood as an attempt by civic leaders and urban planners to distance the city from the traumatic memory of industrialization's horror and deindustrialization's loss.

In this dissertation, I have attempted to unpack some of the ways in which civic leaders have addressed tensions of urban progress and preservation by planning Pittsburgh's Parks System. I have analyzed how citizenship is rhetorically figured in, with, and through Pittsburgh's Parks System in my critical rhetorical analysis of historic and contemporary newspapers, magazines, planning documents, and more. I have argued that parks are rhetorical borderland apparatuses for civic leaders who aspire to shape urban life. In this way, parks offer scholars a useful heuristic for examining citizenship as a social construct, responsive to and reflective of changing ideologies for the livability of cities. The fragmented establishment of the Schenley Park region discussed in Chapter 2, the elite Citizens Committee for City Plan of Pittsburgh efforts to develop a comprehensive plan for urban reform described in Chapter 3, and the public-private citizen-driven Parks Master Plan for contemporary parks restoration analyzed in Chapter 4, all encourage greater scholarly consideration for how rhetoric of parks are connected with citizenship enactments. My dissertation reveals how rhetoric of parks were deployed in service of upholding hegemonic ideals of citizenship in planning, as parks have been intentionally and carefully constructed by select concerned citizens to facilitate certain types of engagement, behavior, and inclusion of desired good citizens. Rhetoric of parks further extends to physical park spaces, accounting for a critical consideration of their geographic locations, public resources, and social events. Despite competing national narratives of Pittsburgh as steel city or sustainable, most-livable city, I have found that rhetoric of parks demonstrates how both interpretations of the city continue to be intertwined in, with, and through public space. In this concluding chapter, I identify three key frames for better understanding how citizenship is rhetorically figured in, with, and through Pittsburgh's Parks

System: the concerned citizen, the imagined citizen, and spaces for citizenship. Next, I offer implications of this research for scholars and urban planners alike. Finally, I close with my remaining questions and possible directions for future research.

5.1 Concerned Citizens

The concerned citizen includes those who see their civic responsibility as tied to the act of directly planning for institutionally sanctioned parks improvement projects. This category contains a multitude of different actors, including business leaders, civic leaders, city officials, wealthy elite, progressive reformers, and nongovernmental workers. Power differentials between these multitudes further implicates the ways in which the concerned citizen is empowered or constrained in their capacity to enact citizenship. Notably, this category's connection with institutional projects aligns concerned citizens with governing bodies of power that exclude those who may express concern for people and place that does not align with dominant discourses. Additionally, it creates a distinction between those who are leaders and those members of the general public who may provide assistance to concerned citizens, but ultimately do not hold any power in exacting decisions about change. For the groups and individuals who align with institutional systems, changing the material landscape is directly connected to changing broader social, economic, and ecological systems. Throughout history, Pittsburgh's Parks System has been shaped by citizens who have voiced concerns for the urban environment. In many ways, the city has relied on leadership from businesses and professional organizations to guide environmental reform through their voluntary formation of civic organizations aimed at urban wellbeing and their ability to financially support such work. From polluted air and water, to corrupting city influences, to

economic precarity of industry, these individuals and groups have identified parks as valuable resources for bringing about positive change to urban livability. I identify this group of potential actors as concerned citizens by drawing upon discourse used by those governing bodies that describe themselves as citizens and as acting in the interest of bettering their city. In this way, concerned citizens see themselves as taking on the role of civic leaders for change or acting as stewards of the environment. My dissertation's focus on how these civic leaders sought to enact change in, with, and through Pittsburgh's Parks System illustrates the power of planning to shape urban life.

Both formal and informal means of planning illustrate Robert Asen's "mode of engagement" for enacting citizenship.⁵ Private organizations like the Citizen's Committee for City Plan of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy utilized formal urban planning documents to outline, map, and ascribe a vision for the urban landscape. Ritualistic events such as the Fourth of July celebrations and organized recreation further reinforced institutionally managed public attachment to place. Wealthy elite citizens had economic means to informally participate in public planning guided by the Director of Public Works because of their ability to contribute financially to influence what sorts of public institutions and resources were created. Early newspaper commentary about the Carnegie cultural complex at Schenley Park reveals how powerful bodies were also challenged in their pursuit of changing public space by everyday inhabitants who resisted institutional planning initiatives. Each of these citizen enactments, and more, are guided by discourses of care for people and place. Concerned citizens who took an active role in shaping Pittsburgh parks describe their choices as guided by an imperative to intervene. These reasons

⁵ Robert Asen, "A Discourse Theory of Citizenship," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90, no. 2 (2004): 191.

include moral obligations, democratic responsibility, or inheriting a legacy of environmental stewardship.

Each of my case studies illustrate how citizen enactments are conditioned by social status, relations of power, institutional factors, and material constraints. Wealthy social network, political relationships, lack of institutional enforcement, and regional bordering, for example, all impact possibilities for place. I have found that early park planning efforts were driven primarily by middle-class progressive reformers and financed by wealthy private citizens. Rhetoric of their planning initiatives frequently invoked their civic duty to provide for those poorer inhabitants most in need of clean air, opportunities for wholesome recreation, and an imbued spirit of patriotism. The material parks improvement projects, however, suggest that by and large, it was the wealthy private citizens rather than immigrants or laborers who benefited most from urban planning. I have also found that even elite status can be constrained when it does not carry political support. This is prominently seen in the CCCPP's failure to materially enact comprehensive urban reform when city officials did not take up the plans the concerned citizens created. Political parties often benefit from the spirit of civic organizations by discursively supporting such planning initiatives, without actually investing political capital in their enactments. In the mid- to late-twentieth century, wealthy white families moved out to suburbs in droves, causing further economic divestment in urban development, revealing how a failure to invest in public space disproportionately affected communities of color, especially for Pittsburgh's African American communities. When concerned citizens experienced a renewed interest in parks restoration at the turn of the twenty-first century, the Parks Master Plan reveals how civic organizing relied on building a public-private partnership with the City of Pittsburgh to gain political backing for the over 100-million-dollar investment in parks restoration projects.

Consistent in each of these cases is the tendency toward understanding planning as a venue for citizen enactment as planners of place. Planning for place necessarily entails the transformation of passive concerned citizens into active civic leaders, who construct and capitalize on a need for change to impact their environments. Contained within planning discourses is an opportunity for scholars to better understand how civic leaders envision good citizenship by imagining improved publics and public spaces.

5.2 Imagined Citizens

I identify imagined citizens to be those who are envisioned by civic leaders as the ideal citizen-subjects impacted by urban planning decisions. The imagining of concepts like “citizen” or “citizenship” “serve a central role in structuring societies” by constituting a collective vision for shared assumptions, beliefs, values, and attitudes of people and place.⁶ “Citizens” are repeatedly referenced by civic leaders in planning documents, debates, and discussions as evidence for the desirability of change and as in fact the impetus for change. Citizens are imagined as using the parks in specific ways that will resolve specific vulnerabilities identified by concerned citizens. For example, parks providing relief from the urban condition, being used to produce more productive workers, providing space for immigrants to practice Americanism, or inspiring citizens to be environmental stewards. Importantly, imagined citizens are just that; they are imagined, fictional versions of their real-world counterparts, much like characters in a story. As such, actual citizens and non-citizens are subject to misrepresentation. Planning rhetoric most often reflect the

⁶ Robert Asen, “Imagining in the Public Sphere,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 25, no. 4 (2002), 350.

interests of those with power of creation, concerned citizens, rather than those who they described as intended to serve, imagined citizens. As James Scott notes, even the best intended planning benefits from the standardization of citizen-subjects.⁷ The consequence of concerned citizens imagining citizens in service of planning, is that imagined citizens come to stand in for a particular vision of a people in place. However well intended, such imagined visions do not always serve the best interest of those actual inhabitants. The imagined laborers found only in the language of planning recognized the value of clean air and green space in Schenley Park to provide wholesome cultural values and restore their productivity. By contrast, actual laborers expressed frustration with urban planners for not recognizing more pressing needs like free bridges, access to clean water, and the creation of smaller parks located closer to their homes.

Civic leaders frequently imagine citizens as those who are in need of superior leadership and guidance to become better urban citizens. That urban citizens stand to benefit from public improvement is used as justification for civic leadership to intervene in place through urban planning. These “vulnerable” citizens are often imagined to be children, immigrants, poorer inhabitants, or laborers who do not share the same cultural beliefs, values, or ideologies of concerned citizens. When planners’ prescriptive visions of imagined citizens do not match up with real-world citizens behavior, those real-world individuals are often identified as threatening or unruly. As such, civic leaders tend to believe that such unruly bodies threaten security of urban progress and therefore require surveillance and control. When individuals spoke against Carnegie’s Library, supporters declared their opposition foolish. In the 1920s, anyone who opposed playgrounds were labeled wicked, and with no place in America. Even in earnest attempts

⁷ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like the State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999).

to include ordinary citizens' participation in the imagined world of the planner, action will always be constrained by institutional factors and competing interests, rooted in power and privilege. As Robert Asen explains, "representing is not a disinterested process, but one that implicates social judgments and relations of power" making even seemingly non-political projects politicized.⁸ This can create the illusion of public participation that becomes filtered through the lens of only a select few. A belief in unruly and threatening imagined citizens allows concerned citizens to imagine their targeted publics as "infantile citizen[s]" who sees themselves as reliant on informed civic leaders to make decisions about their wellbeing.⁹ Concerned citizens argue that public reliance on civic leaders provides evidentiary support for various planning initiatives. My examination of Schenley Park reveals how progressive reformers described the corrupting influence of urban vice as a reason why parks were needed to instill civilizing qualities found in nature and elite culture in otherwise morally vulnerable industrial laborers. Consequently, urban planners desired to cultivate a public image of a relationship between planners and publics that was based on reducing possibilities for unruly acts through careful planning and select control of the general public by those in power.

A disproportionate emphasis on carefully created space often suffered from too narrow a focus on select urban investment without recognition of broader social, economic, and environmental structures that shaped lived experiences. The 1892 Homestead Strike coinciding with the groundbreaking of Carnegie's Library complex during the Fourth of July Celebration in Schenley Park illustrates one such instance of planners disconnect from the places and peoples they sought to change. Progressive reformers largely embraced Carnegie's cultural district for its

⁸ Asen, "Imagining in the Public Sphere," 353.

⁹ Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 27.

imagined potential for civilizing laborers. However, the numerous debates that followed the strike demonstrate how such institutional planning failed to recognize actual laborer concerns about abusive labor conditions, economic insecurity, and social strife that lay at the heart of their very real needs for a different kind of urban planning.

At other times, imagined citizens more closely mirror the shared values, beliefs, and ideology of urban planners. In these instances, failure or success in achieving the planners' specific vision of good citizenship becomes a measurement for identifying who is or is not capable of being a civic leader for otherwise infantile or unruly citizens. Those imagined citizens hold great potential to become future civic leaders themselves. This is especially present in planning strategies of the CCCPP and their work with the Junior Citizens Committee. The CCCPP idealized the youth as future citizens who would carry the responsibility for ultimately enacting comprehensive urban reform. This narrative was discursively constructed through repetitive accounts of the youth as vulnerable, threatened, and at risk, thus necessitating their careful education as future citizens. Even though explicit citizenship narratives became less prominent in more recent park planning initiatives, they were replaced with an emphasis that a return to the past will offer concerned citizens guidance for the future. Carrying on the legacy of care left behind by historic civic leaders was described as providing a valuable model for good environmental stewardship. However, in the Parks Master Plan's uncritical promotion of a historic model for good citizenship, the plan risks replicating a harmful ethic of care. In the PMP, new young business professionals are described as the type of citizens who park reform was imagined as attracting to the city. In this way, the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and City of Pittsburgh imagine citizens of the Most Livable City who are a different type of inhabitant than ones already present in Pittsburgh, who by contrast, may not be seen as fit enough citizens for the task of sustaining urban growth.

Participatory opportunities to provide input for the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Parks Master Plan are cited throughout the PMP as further evidence that civic leaders provide valuable public instruction on how to act as environmental stewards. The sharing of select support for the actions of planners allows concerned citizens to filter out criticism that does not fit desirable PPC narratives for stewardship, potentially creating an illusion of planning consensus.

Civic leaders often envisioned their planning would translate seamlessly to the real-world. However, such visions of passive citizenry failed to recognize that democracy is inherently unpredictable, and as such, planning can never fully account for daily lived experiences and actions of urban inhabitants. Instead, creating imagined citizens who best reflect a particular vision of place explains how civic leaders were able to justify making decisions for shaping of space that could never satisfy all their potential imagined and actual publics.

5.3 Spaces for Citizenship

So far, I have identified concerned citizens and imagined citizens as two types of subjects present in rhetoric of parks and planning. In this third section, I look at how rhetoric of parks and planning rely on space itself, both imagined and actualized, as a different means of understanding urban citizenship as a social construct. Concerned citizens used planning discourse to imagine how park space itself could be inherently civilizing. Especially in the late nineteenth century, parks were understood to be pleasure grounds, where families could find comfort relaxing in green space or be educated through cultural performances like free outdoor music concerts. Concerned citizens imagined how they could use park space to reach vulnerable citizens by creating a carefully curated environment, suggesting that even nature itself could be improved upon with the right civic

enactments. The reform park era highlighted the creation of controlled, orderly environments as essential to keeping unruly citizens in line. In both instances, however, I have found that democracy itself can frustrate even the best laid plans of urban designers. Laborers rejected Bigelow and Carnegie's plans for transforming Oakland as a cultural district and smaller neighborhood reform parks often served as ethnic enclaves that limited immigrant exposure to progressive visions of Americanizing recreation.

Planning for parks entails recognizing the ways in which space actively shapes possibilities for citizenship enactments, making consideration of how space can create staged experiences a key task for urban planners. As public spaces, parks are ideal technologies for national memory and cultural transformation that can help planners manufacture a particular kind of Americanism to be embraced by good citizens.¹⁰ Rhetoric of parks powerfully cultivates narratives of the built environment that help facilitate what Edward Casey describes as an ethic of localized care.¹¹ Casey Schmitt too recognizes the utility of designated nature places for planners' cultivating politicized representations of social systems that at a first glance, may appear to be neutral.¹² Schmitt explains, "though the popular frames for nature have changed over the past hundred years, the conceptual constraints of vocabulary and public experience still guide policy and still steer future implacement for future nature place visitors."¹³ Importantly, once such frames for understanding nature spaces like parks become repeated frequently enough and grounded in foundational planning documents, they can powerfully impact public experiences with space. My dissertation illustrates how planners

¹⁰ See Berlant, *The Queen of America*; Barbara A. Biesecker, "Remembering World War II: The Rhetoric and Politics of National Commemoration at the Turn of the 21st Century," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 4 (2002).

¹¹ Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009).

¹² Casey Schmitt, "The Hiker and the Trail: Rhetoric and Implacement in Designated Nature Areas," (doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2015).

¹³ Schmitt, "The Hiker and the Trail," 160.

draw upon such “popular memories” to envision the future of public space. They do so through a selective memory of the history of the parks system to construct an argument about their interpretation of reality as animated by present concerns, issues, and anxieties.¹⁴

Civic leaders invested in park planning frequently framed the urban environment as inherently immoral and threatening, which supports their case for creating parks as bordering spaces that are inherently safe and moral. Such discourse relied on rhetorically constructing parks as key regional features for livable cities. Planners’ naturalization of park spaces often fails to recognize that parks are in fact highly symbolic spaces shaped by human, non-human, and more-than-human ecosystems. Parks further become bordered and bordering apparatuses for urban citizen enactments through planners’ power to institutionally shape legally and culturally constructed expectations for public use or misuse of space. Because they are public, because they are sites for nature, civic leaders can easily construct parks as naturally democratic spaces by relying on already existing tropes of nature as carrying inherently civilizing qualities. In this way, concerned citizens call upon parks to civilize potential citizen-subjects who otherwise risk being permeated by corrupting urban influences.

The tendency in popular discourse is to normalize rhetoric of parks as inherently democratic spaces where visitors appreciate and embrace difference. It is important to recognize the many ways in which throughout history parks haven’t just minimized difference, they have been used to erase it. From the earliest days of Schenley Park, repeat claims of the value of parks for exposing people of different social and economic backgrounds have proven to be primarily about exposing lower classes to elite culture for elevating effects rather than true mingling across

¹⁴ Ekaterina V. Haskins, *Popular Memories: Commemoration, Participatory Culture, and Democratic Citizenship* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2015), ix.

difference. Their geographic concentration in primarily white areas of great wealth make them largely inaccessible to immigrant and poor labor communities. Racial division in parks is even more apparent, as Galen Cranz notes how discussions of race are almost entirely absent in the history of urban planning discourses, which was also found in my own archival work.¹⁵ To this day, parks in non-white neighborhoods are among the least funded, most neglected, and significantly smaller than parks serving majority white communities.¹⁶ Planners who see parks as naturally democratic spaces for encounter with difference may be well intentioned, however, they run the risk of failing to comprehend how place is shaped in the interest of those with power, including the planners themselves.

Whereas earlier planning narratives emphasize the division of nature and culture, contemporary parks narratives have gravitated toward new narratives that see urban and nature as culturally intertwined, overlapping, and necessarily multiple. Carlos Tarin, Sarah Upton, and Stacey Sowards recognize that, “living in the in-between space means existing within multiple, often contradictory, cultures, languages, and worldviews, and, while it is not always comfortable to live in this space of contradictions, it comes with ‘certain joys’ as ‘dormant areas of consciousness are being activated, awakened.’”¹⁷ A new open space parks system challenges culturally-constructed borders by blurring boundaries between perceived natural and unnatural environments. This expands possibilities for citizens to extend practices of care for self, others,

¹⁵ Galen Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982).

¹⁶ Laurel Wamsley, “Parks in Nonwhite Areas are Half the Size of Ones in Majority-White Areas, Study Says,” *NPR*, August 5, 2020.

¹⁷ Carlos A. Tarin, Sarah D. Upton, and Stacey K. Sowards, “Borderland Ecocultural Identities,” in *Routledge Handbook of Ecocultural Identity*, ed. Tema Milstein and José Castro-Sotomayor (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2020), 56.

and the environment beyond park borders, to the rest of city space as well. These shifting narratives of urban planning across time illustrate the permeability of borders, both natural and cultural.

Planners also envision parks as valuable spaces for citizenship by reinforcing what types of events and enactments are encouraged or discouraged. Ritualized performances encourage potential good citizen-subjects to recognize themselves in relation to a larger public. From early Fourth of July celebrations, to organized recreation, to environmental stewardship, parks are used by civic leaders and urban planners to direct the enactments of those who dwell in their borders. Even informal rituals reinforce parks' value as powerful places for memory, seen in their popularity for family picnics, community gatherings, recreation, concerts, and protests, functioning to organize civic behavior. Careful, orderly planning, such as the scientific approach taken by the CCCPP suggests that if only the right environmental conditions are curated, productive urban systems can naturally flourish and good liberal citizen-subjects will naturally adapt to dominant ideals of citizenship. The CCCPP imagined that a surveillance environment where every action was carefully controlled could cultivate the creation of good orderly citizens, however, actual park usage quickly became territorialized, a reflection of continued social strife. When park planners are successful, however, their imagined representations of space can materially illustrate the potential good that comes from public control and ownership of park norms and expectations. This includes those that are problematic for non-conforming citizens and non-citizens or other ecosystems that rely on park environments.

Connections between memory and place powerfully impact imagined possibilities for place. The PMP is an exercise in placemaking that relies on the erasure of the ways in which Pittsburgh's economic and environmental exploitation is linked with the creation of Pittsburgh's parks system. To recognize a complex narrative in which the civic leaders who benefited from the

development of the parks system as anything other than concerned with the wellbeing of the city and its people would entail a recognition that corrupt industrial wealth financed much of the parks development. Further, it would suggest that the city cannot endure without industry, and in turn, a culture of environmental injustice and exploitation necessary to sustain industrial progress that is at the same time opposed to and reliant upon a sustainable urban parks and open space system. In the same way that the parks system distracted attention from the harms of industrialization at the turn of the twentieth century, the twenty-first century parks restoration project aids in rebranding Pittsburgh as a sustainable and most livable city by distracting from the ongoing pain of pollution and injustice the city and its people continue to experience since deindustrialization. This is not to say that Pittsburgh hasn't experienced significant investment in efforts for environmental protections since the early to mid-twentieth century; it has. However, as Samuel P. Hays argues, the exaggeration of Pittsburgh's environmental achievements and minimalization of its continued challenges risks limiting Pittsburgh's potential for advancing sustainable progress in the future.¹⁸

5.4 Implications

Planning is a rhetorical process that seeks to persuade audiences to accept planners' visions for people and place. Following suit with Doreen Massey, a key aim of this project has been to "unearth some of the influences on hegemonic imaginations of 'space.'" ¹⁹ By examining change in the development of Pittsburgh's Parks System, I identify how parks are rhetorically figured in

¹⁸ Samuel P. Hays, "Beyond Celebration: Pittsburgh and its Region in the Environmental Era – Notes by a Participant Observer," in *Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and its Region*, ed. Joel A. Tarr, 193-215 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003).

¹⁹ Doreen Massey, *For Space* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2005), 17.

service of dominant citizenship enactments that rely on rhetoric of parks as simultaneously bordering and borderless sites. What my research reveals is that far from being inherently open democratic sites, parks are highly controlled and regulated spaces, necessitating scholars' critical attention to how parks contribute to our understanding of urban citizenship. Hegemonic influence over space must always be struggled over. Greater scholarly attention to parks can also reveal more subtle techniques used in service of power management of people and place found in city planning, planning documents, public debates, and even seemingly neutral public works projects.

In parks, dominant discourses and enactments of citizenship can be upheld as well as challenged. Green urban space creates a paradoxical effect; while created with the intent of providing public space for engagement, access to is rarely equitable, with "income, ethno-racial characteristics, age, gender, (dis)ability, and other axes of difference" being "often highly stratified."²⁰ The history of green inequity in urban landscapes can be linked to "the philosophy of park design, history of land development, evolving ideas about leisure and recreation, and histories of class and ethno-racial inequality and state oppression" that together complicate the democratic park ideal.²¹ Attempts to correct resulting "park-poverty" for communities of need, however, is complicated. Jennifer R. Wolch, Jason Byrne, and Joshua P. Newell note that, "as more green space comes online, it can improve attractiveness and public health, making neighborhoods more desirable," at the same time resulting in gentrification and often pushing out the very same communities they were designed to support.²² The development of the Pittsburgh's Parks System reveals how such issues of inequity are institutionally created, addressed, and otherwise struggled

²⁰ Jennifer R. Wolch, Jason Byrne, and Joshua P. Newell, "Urban Green Space, Public Health, and Environmental Justice: The Challenge of Making Cities 'Just Green Enough,'" *Landscape and Urban Planning* 125 (2014): 235.

²¹ Wolch, Byrne, and Newell, 235.

²² Wolch, Byrne, and Newell, 235.

over by concerned citizens. I find that these discourses do recognize that there are significant costs to too much capitalism and reveal how civic leaders attempt to resolve resulting tensions between capital and labor, although their motives and calculations in doing so may not always be so clear, and their solutions not always the most effective.

Despite my critical attention to planning discourses in each of these cases, the work that goes into the creation of place or the motivating factors behind it are never entirely legible. Place and space and citizen enactments happen in intended and unintended ways and the goals of urban planners and civic leaders are not always achieved as envisioned. What is illustrated in these cases is how throughout history, concerned citizens have relied on an ethos of care to guide how they imagine shaping the urban landscape to impact livability and possibilities for shaping the people that engage with those spaces as well. I argue that public parks are valuable sites to for border rhetoricians to better understanding the ways in which citizenship is social constructed in urban space. As Gloria Anzaldúa recognizes, borders are places where cultural differences are contested, confronted, and otherwise become critically engaged.²³ While planning discourses aspire to bound civic imaginary to that of the planners' imagination, actualized civic enactment in place can offer possibilities for expanding these constraints to draw oneself into our outside of social citizenship as envisioned in parks. Such rhetorical practices can shift borders, literally and figuratively, seen in contemporary initiatives to blur cultural boundaries of urban and nature. Scholarly examination of borders and conflicted, tensional, and oppositional dualisms like nature-culture can help explain why public perceptions of cities like Pittsburgh can vary so widely across dualisms of industry and sustainability or debates surrounding its livability.

²³ Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco, CA: Spinsters / aunt lute, 1987).

An enduring legacy of the Pittsburgh's Parks System becomes rhetorically configured as a regional asset for rhetoric of urban change; an asset for good citizenship, a flourishing economy, and the health and livability of the city's many ecosystems. While parks may not have started out as vital city spaces, over time they have quickly become expected and vital "spaces of everyday life" for urban inhabitants.²⁴ These chapters illustrate the numerous ways in which parks shift from supplemental spaces to critical infrastructural components that are quite literally necessary to sustain life as "lungs of the city." In the best instances, parks can be valuable resources for teaching people to experience care for their fellow urban inhabitants, human, non-human, and more-than-human. Parks provide spaces for care and encounter with nature and with other citizens and non-citizens. This dissertation suggests the importance in being critical of places that claim to be inherently inclusive. Public sites will always be struggled over in processes of meaning-making and representation. When considering the role of urban planners in meaning-making of place, Jenny Rice explains, "we always write from a place, and our writing itself creates spaces."²⁵ A planner's region is always about a language of possibility, however, suggesting that planning is not static, but always entails an ongoing process of working toward the creation of a best vision of a place and its people, even as the formal production of planning documents may suggest otherwise. Particularly in moments when a regional culture is threatened, people tend to seek attachment to place to feel more secure. I have found that parks offer both a space and a language through which people are able to create such attachments to other inhabitants, to the environment,

²⁴ Greg Dickinson, "Joe's Rhetoric Finding Authenticity at Starbucks," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (2002): 6.

²⁵ Jenny Rice, *Distant Publics: Development Rhetoric and the Subject of Crisis* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012), 12.

and to the cities in which they live. This dissertation reflects a different permeability of borders; I argue that it is not only nature that is permeable, but culture and sense of place as well.

Parks provide sites for the cultural construction of a region that are continuously shaped and reshaped by the “practices of its inhabitants,” thus transforming the political, social, and cultural ideology of place by playing with scale of identity that creates connections between the local, national, or even global. Through this possibility for (re)invention of regional identity, “a critical regionalism works in solidarity with the historically disempowered populations of its communities to transform their local material circumstances while linking their particular struggles to larger ones.”²⁶ My rhetorical approach to critical regionalism of parks reveals how publics come to situate themselves in relation to public space through making discursive appeals to regional commonplaces that affect sense of belonging. Pittsburgh’s parks are vital to popular narratives that seek to authenticate the city as an at-the-same-time, sustainable, (de-/post-) industrial city in past, present, and future public iterations by flattening, masking, or even erasing the worst of industry. Throughout the history of the Pittsburgh’s parks system, it is clear that parks are linked to the rhetorical construction of regional identity of the city and its locatedness in a once thriving industrial region turned “rust belt.” Out of such dramatic changes, the parks provide a visually powerful symbol for the for the city’s ability to rearticulate and refashion dominant regional narratives about its future by ‘greening’ itself out of the industrial, de-industrial, and even post-industrial eras, to newly align Pittsburgh with larger regional and even global narratives of prosperous, sustainable, and livable cities that contrast with narratives of unsuccessful, unsustainable, and unlivable rust-belt cities. Such “spatial differentiation” turns Pittsburgh into a

²⁶ Douglas Reichert Powell, *Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in the American Landscape* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 26.

“counter-region[]” of sorts, whereby Pittsburgh became distinct from the other once industrial cities with which it was once aligned, and which, without the same access to philanthropic backing and economic revitalization, could not access the same resources to regional rearticulation necessary for their economic flourishing when faced with change that Pittsburgh could.²⁷ Especially for smaller cities such Pennsylvania’s Erie and Bethlehem or Ohio’s Youngstown, Cleveland, and Toledo, it has proven much harder to disrupt the spatial narratives and shake the rust of their nostalgic and uncritical, regionally bound industrial identities in public imagination. Trump’s demand to effectively make Pittsburgh industrial again begs the question of whether industry has even left. While it is unlikely that we can make Pittsburgh industrial again as it once was, it doesn’t mean that the grips of industry have left Pittsburgh. I argue that it through my study of the parks, you can see some of the ways in which industry is transformed. Today it is almost unrecognizable, especially against the backdrop of a livable city; but even absent the present of fiery steel plants in the downtown districts, industry remains firmly rooted in the city materially and in public memory.

Despite the finality of a published planning document as a “finished” product, a planners work is never complete but always in progress, particularly for those who are civically engaged. As the 20 years of the Parks Master Plan comes to a close, the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and City of Pittsburgh are already well underway with the next steps of park planning, including conducting Parks Listening Tours to reach thousands more urban inhabitants and receive community input from diverse regions of the city, creating an Equitable Investment Plan, working to pass a new parks tax, continuing park projects, hosting events, and facilitating educational programming. With

²⁷ Dave Tell, “The Meanings of Kansas: Rhetoric, Regions, and Counter Regions,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (2012): 216.

these ongoing planning projects, new conceptualizations of citizenship, borders, and parks continue for today and well into the future.²⁸ New York City without Central Park, London without Hyde Park, Paris without the Luxembourg Gardens, or Pittsburgh without Schenley Park, would undoubtedly change the culture of those cities. Indeed, the Parks Master Plan recognizes that “great cities [...] are defined by their park systems” in arguing for the significance of park restoration in elevating “Pittsburgh on the national and international level as the new ‘City in a Park’ of the 21st century.”²⁹ While the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy’s founder and former CEO Meg Cheever recently retired, the newly hired Jayne Miller has already declared her mission will be “making Pittsburgh parks the envy of cities around the world,” suggesting that the significance of urban parks as valuable public spaces for Pittsburgh will continue well into the future.³⁰

5.5 Directions for Future Research

My dissertation reveals how rhetoric of parks offers scholars a useful heuristic for better understanding urban life, including possibilities for citizenship enactments, cultural constructions of urban-nature borders, and the role of green space in industrial cities. This foundation provides numerous possibilities for future research stemming from this project. It can look at how parks are conceptualized as bordered or bordering spaces in different environments, including other industrial cities, sustainable cities, or international cities, as well as in rural or suburban spaces. While my project emphasizes analyzing the process of planning for space, future iterations can look

²⁸ To learn more about the newest parks plan, visit: <https://www.pittsburghparks.org/parksplan>.

²⁹ “Regional Parks Master Plan 2012 Update,” 21.

³⁰ Jennifer Baron, “NEXT Up: Jayne Miller is on a Mission to Make Pittsburgh Parks ‘the Envy of Cities Around the World,’” *Next Pittsburgh*, June 13, 2018.

beyond the intentions of planners to better understand the implications of different projects developed out of civic leaders' concern for citizens. The exploratory archival foundation of this project contributed to my project's emphasis on institutionally linked citizen projects, suggesting that there is rich work still to be done on the ways that rhetoric of parks serve various counter-publics or counter-cultural aims. Research could also focus on different ways of understanding representations of parks beyond that of their connection to citizenship, looking additionally at constructs of nature, culture, environmental justice, or practices of urban development. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light new public considerations for what a renewed meaning of public space might look like. In addition to different fodder for case studies, this project lends itself well to expanded methodological approaches for examining citizenship, borders, and parks. Outside of the archives, oral histories, *in situ* rhetoric, participatory critical fieldwork, and other place-based studies can help illuminate the numerous ways in which parks are understood as valuable, contested public resources. Finally, the multidisciplinary nature of my research suggests that this project can provide a foundation for thinking beyond the discipline, inviting possibilities for transdisciplinary collaborations that can invite historians, urban planners, geologists, ecologists, and more to the table with communication scholars and rhetoricians to think through new possibilities for place, space, and publics.

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