Chapter 4

THE DIFFERENCE THAT THEORY MAKES

... our lived time, time as imbued with symbolic meaning, is caught in the throne of forces of which we only have a dim understanding at present. The many 'powers', the 'phantommen' circulating in our individual and cultural lives, are at one level only expression of a deeply shared sense that certain aspects of our social, symbolic and political universe have been profoundly and most likely irrevocably transformed.

Soya Fernández (1992)

ON RESCUING DROWNING BABIES

Theory is necessary to figure out who's REALLY going on. People always want to be a saver for the community. It's like they see a baby coming down the river and want to jump in and save it. We need to stop being so reactive to the situations that manifest in saving babies in fox holes (other organizations/paradigms) but we want to know who's throwing the goodman babies in the water in the first place.

Michael Izumi

The concern about drowning babies offers a crucial insight into the importance of theory and the role of occurring in the daily life of a community-based activist. Without a theory that suggests why these babies are coming down the river, they will keep right on coming, and activists will be powerless to affect the course of the problem. Those of us who wish to work for social change first need to articulate the problem, a counter-analysis to that of the status quo, and a theory of social transformation. For activists, theory is not a static, unchanging doctrine but an understanding that is informed by practice and enriched by reflection on daily life.

This chapter outlines a counter-hegemonic theory for planning, linking our knowledge of insurgent planning theories (Chapter 2) with our appreciation of the need to replace the Enlightenment epistemology which has underpinned modernist planning with a multiplicity of ways of knowing (Chapter 3). I begin by analyzing the need for a rearticulation of planning theory, and a recognition that a counter-hegemonic planning theory cannot be neutral with respect to race and gender. I then explore six significant shifts within the modernist planning paradigm since the 1940s: from the rational comprehensive model to advocacy planning, from radical political economy to equity planning, and from communicative action to radical...
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Can any one planning theory encompass this diversity of task and orientation? Or do we need a range of theories at our disposal— theories of power and theories of knowledge; theories of justice and inequality; theories of social transformation; theories of interpersonal relations; theories of good city form and theories of the good society; theories that are context-dependent rather than theories that are context-neutral? In the past, planners have pursued the holy grail of the one theory, arguing that their overall concern is with the public good. But in the past two decades of critical studies of planning practice, by Marcuse and Sennett, communautarians and communicative action theorists, have exposed the hollowness of that claim. Within the modernist paradigm, there have in fact been a succession of competing theories, each claiming the intellectual or moral high ground at different times over the past fifty years. What follows is a brief sketch of an emerging strategy for developing theories and traditions of good planning practice, suggested in the form of a chronicle of learning. The interesting point is that as each new theory emerges, it seeks to redefine precisely what it is that planners ‘do’, not so much in terms of substantive ends but in terms of approach, process, and allegiance. And each contains, subtle epistemological skills.

The rational comprehensive model

For two full decades after the Second World War this model, shaped by and exported from the University of Chicago planning programme, dominated the field. Rooted in its origins in Enlightenment epistemology, an underlying faith in the possibility of reason in public life characterized this model. The focus is on the need for intervention by the state in markets and in ‘spontaneous’ social processes, and a central question is the appropriate form of social guidance. Belief in the possibility of greater rationality in public policy decision making has informed this mode of structuring ever since Herbert Simon first proposed his synthetic model of decision making in 1947. Theorists from Simon (bounded rationality) to Luhmann (instrumental decision making, mutual purpose adjustment) to Etzioni (mixed meaning) have shared a faith in instrumental rationality. For them it was a given that technology and social science could make the world work better, and that planning could be an important tool for social progress. They worked on policy analysis, administrative behaviour, organization theory, decision theory, public choice theory, systems theory and so on.

The University of Chicago planners, Taussig, Perloff, Bankoff, Merton, and their students (such as John Friedmann), were deeply influenced by this school of thought, in which planning’s central concern was with hierarchy and the laying out of alternative courses of action for those in power at the top. Planners, in this model, are heuristics in power, and in their ideal moments they speak truth to power in Wilde’s punchline proverb. Planners are also part of an ambitious comprehensive public policy process, attempting to coordinate more
and more specialized and narrowly defined activities. Here is planning at its most heroic, confident in its capacity to discern and implement the public interest in specific settings.

In this model, the planner is indispensably 'the knower', relying on 'a well professional expertise and objectivity to do what is best for an undifferentiated public. The notion of 'the public', never critically examined within planning, implied a group in which differences of class, race, or gender, were not considered relevant. This is a decision-centered rather than a control-oriented approach in the sense that planning is defined as 'correct decision making concerning future course of action' (Faludi, 1975), without asking who is in control and with what consequences. It is a model that assumes a benign state, 'above politics', a state whose structure is neutral with respect to questions of gender, sexual preference, race, and ethnicity.

Within two decades this model faced challenges from within as well as from without: from the dilemmas inherent in instrumental rationality, as well as from critiques of this form of top-down planning as anti-democratic. Over the past two decades the range of critiques has expanded. Judith Linn has summarized the critiques from within very succinctly:

"Bratt and Walker (1973) ... pointed out 'wicked problems' which could not be solved because the problem definition kept shifting and there was no way to aggregate incongruent values. The accessible patterns were merely, including the tragedy of the commons (Hardin 1968); the presence of a commons (Hardin and Graeber 1972); the failure of collective action (Ostrom 1965); the limitations of cost-benefit analysis and other economic methodological methods (Kripke 1971); the indeterminacy of the implementation process (Hardin 1976); Persson and Willmott 1978), the inevitability of uncertainty in goals and technologies for planning problems (Christensen 1980), the impossibility of aggregating the public interest so that no operation can be amenable to rational economic analysis (Abbott 1969), and the impossibility of relying on the large-scale model for social policies (Law 1972).

(From 1986: 104. The reference are those cited therein.)"
supported by technical-experts rather than political advocates emphasizing technical analysis. Finally, ARCH dropped the advocacy label altogether and decided to provide the means by which its community could represent itself. In other words, it turned away from advocacy to an empowerment model (Huskin 1980).

Similarly, in Boston, TPA (Urban Planning Associates), a group of predominantly white professionals (including such prominent names as Lisa Pratts, Chester Hartman, and Robert Goodman), wanted to assist the poor by taking their ideas and translating them into the technical language of planning, to make them useful to the policy area. Peabody (1968) later described their work as "the manpower model." Professionals set the agenda, conceptualized the problem, and defined the terms in which a solution to the problem would be sought. She noted that the issues raised were likely to be those that the professionals were most comfortable with, rather than those which were highest on the community's list. Robert Goodman's dehumanization was equally evident, in "After the Harvest" (1972), in which he described planning professionals as agents of social control, as the "vilecops" of the system. He argued that taking the poor off the streets and encouraging their participation in planning was not empowering them but robbing them of their power. UP's reaction to the loss of power was to recognize internally and externally, to change the focus of their activities in that of a radical political action group (Huskin 1980).

Clearly, advocacy planning represented a significant expansion of the definition of what it is that planners do. Under this model some planners now explicitly think about and represent the poor in the planning process—without, however, actually giving the poor a voice in that process. Instead, advocates became the spokespersons for poor communities. Advocacy planning expanded the role of professionals and left the structure of power intact, confident in the workings of plural democracy.

Both ARCH and UP's came to recognize that the advocacy model was, after all, just an expert-centered model. Three new directions emerged out of these critiques of the advocacy experience: Some planners drew the conclusion that there was a need to focus on the development of participatory mechanisms which would include the poor and hierarchy encountered in the planning process itself. A major literature has resulted from this line of thought, developing and refining techniques of public participation. Sherry Arnstein's article, "A ladder of citizen participation," was a landmark of its time (Arnstein 1969), setting out eight ascending steps in the participation process, from manipulation to participation in planning to, eventually, citizenship control. There was a period in the early 1970s in which the very idea of public participation was seen as the solution to all the problems of planning (Handbook 1975b, 1976). But UP and ARCH learned different lessons. They came to recognize the key problem as political, and that members of poor communities had political skills often superior to those of planners. They had been thinking their job was to educate the community about planning, but discovered that it was the planners who had the lessons to learn, including the basis of the limits of their professional competence (Huskin 1980).

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From this experience with advocacy, different planners drew different conclusions. Some, like Norman Knetschel and Robert Blake, were deeply impressed and saw the possibility of pursuing the advocacy concept by planners allowing themselves with progressive politicians and doing "equity planning" (Her 1993, Knetschel 1994; Chavis 1994). Others drew lessons that focused more on process, and either became advocates for citizen participation, like Arnstein, or began to rethink the role of planners as experts, and to formulate new ideas of transactive planning, mutual learning, and social learning (Friedmann 1973). A third group drew the more radical lessons of UP and ARCH, and moved towards an empowerment model (Huskin 1980, Lopatit 1994, Peabody 1968, 1967, and, much later, Friedmann, 1992). But before I tell those stories, there is another model that emerged in the mid-1970s, partly in response to what some perceived as the failure of advocacy planning, but more in response to new theoretical analyses of the structural relationship between planning and capitalist society. It is to the Marxist political economy critique of planning that I now turn.

The radical political economy model

Just as Achsens about participation, mutual learning, and empowerment began to preoccupy the planning profession in the early 1970s, an entirely new narrative and analysis emerged on the periphery of the planning world. With the publication in 1977 of geographer David Harvey's Social Justice and The City, and the British translation of urban sociologist Manuel Castells' The Urban Question in 1975, the story of planning began to be rewritten. In the Marxist story, planning was no longer the hero but something more the the divine fool, naive in its faith in its own extraordinary potential, ignorant of the real relations of power which it was serving and in which it was deeply and inextricably implicated. The works ofHarriet urban sociologists in university departments of geography, sociology, and urban studies enjoyed a decade or so in the sun, as a powerful critique of mainstream planning, focusing on planning as a function of the capitalist state. Manuel Castells produced one of the first (and much imitated) case studies of the role of urban planning in the development of the growth pole of Dunkirk (Castells 1970). He arrived at three functions of planning: as an instrument of rationalization and legitimization; as an instrument of negotiation and realization of the differing demands of the fractions of capital, and as a regulator of the pressures and protest of the dominated classes. Richard Fudge's Planning the Capitalist City (1986) summarized the contradiction of planning in a capitalist society in one sentence: planning is both necessary and impossible.

The function of urban planning: three authors argue, springs from the continuous attempt to reorder the chaos of individual decisions more orderly by means of zoning and other regulatory mechanisms, and by supplying urban goods and
services such as low-income public housing, public transportation, and so on. But both the private ownership of property and the imperative of capital accumulation place real limits on any sort of state intervention on behalf of the disadvantaged classes. David Harvey's analysis has emphasized conflicts between fractions of capital active in the built environment. He has argued that some form of coordination among private investments in the built environment is necessary to ensure that the aggregate needs of individual producers are met. The role of urban planning is to bring about some balance between competing fractions of capital, and between capital and citizens, through a mixture of repression, cooption, and integration by decreasing the risks of long-term investment, by supplying collective goods, and by avoiding the emergence of monopoles in spaces that would have disruptive effects on socially aggregated needs (Cazamir 1987). Whether the focus of these radical political economists is on production or on consumption, on the state's role in capital accumulation or its role in providing collective goods and thereby maintaining legitimacy, the conclusion is the same: respect for the function of urban planning. Far from being the progressive practice that the proponents claim for itself, the Marxist narrative of planning can always and only be in the service of capital.

The emergence of this new literature presented a challenge to planning schools and planners, exacerbating already-existing divisions between theorists and practitioners. While some of the more theoretically oriented planning faculty have sought to import this new work into the planning field, more practice-oriented folks have denied its relevance. The latter reaction is understandable in the sense that Marxist analyses have posed planners a role in social transformation and the too much of this kind of theorizing has a paralyzing effect on policy debates. The lasting value of this model is as the level of critique rather than action. Marxist or radical political economy theory begets planners as an inherently political activity within a capitalist state which is itself part of a world capitalist system. We can no longer ignore this structural reality in our analyses of planning practices and policies. Further, Marxist critique has deepened the idea that planning serves in the public interest, making it very clear that class interests are always the driving force. But there is also a problem with this last insight, for ignoring at the primary of class interests in the counter-analysis, Marxists have either ignored, or tried to subsume into their class analysis, other forms of oppression, domination, and exploitation, such as those based on gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual preference.

But the ultimate weakness of this model has been its inability to provide an alternative definition for planning, and for what planners can do. Generi or bifurcated answers such as "the planner can become the revealer of contradictions, and by this an agent of social innovation" (Cassells 1979: 69) have not proved sufficient to inspire a new generation of radical planners. For that, we must turn back to those who have developed the legacy of advocacy planning in the three directions outlined in the previous section.

**The Equity Planning Model**

While the advocacy movement of the 1960s began clearly outside the arena of city halls, one group of planners who see themselves as inheritors of the advocacy tradition have developed the tradition in the direction of making alliances with and working for progressive politicians. The two most prominent practitioners and defenders of this new model of equity planning are Norman Krasnoff and the late Robert Lilie, the former in his career as chief planner for the city of Cleveland for a decade in the 1970s, the latter in his work as Head of Economic Development Planning during the regime of Harold Washington as mayor of Chicago.

Norman Krasnoff was a city planning student in the early 1960s when the national comprehensive model still held sway. He was taught that planning was a political, that a master plan prepared by a public agency was adequate to express the interests of the entire community; and that city planning was the artful planning of land-use in such a way as to improve the quality of city life (Krasnoff 1994: 150). In that context, the arrival of Paul Davidoff's article was a revelation and an inspiration.

His article afforded practitioners the means to express our ideas to the community around us, around the real estate market, and to the public at large. His ideas, along with those of Herbert Gans and others, have had a great impact on my work and on the work of many planning professionals, from the 1960s to the present. (Krasnoff 1994: 150)

Krasnoff defines equity planners as those who consciously seek to redistribute power, resources, or participation away from local elites and toward poor and working class city residents. In his book with John Forester, Making Equity Planning Work (1996), Krasnoff tells his "war stories" from Cleveland as a sort of inspirational tale of how good can be done, and precisely what it is that equity planners do, within given structural constraints. Equity planners begin with an understanding of urban inequalities, taking political economy questions about who is getting what out of local urban policies and plans. Accepting the diametrical that planning is a handmaiden of politics, equity planners choose the policies they want to work for. There are personal costs involved, in the sense of a willingness to be reasonably nimble, not expecting to stay in one job forever, but only for as long as the planner has the support of a progressive regime. Given such a regime, Krasnoff argues that planning within the local state can be both meaningful and ethically defensible. The state isn't a monolithic but rather a terrain of political struggle, and planners with the interests of the poor and unrepresented in mind can do good and constrain evil.

Interestingly, this model retains a belief in the planners' expertise and doesn't say much about drawing on local knowledge. The planner is still the centre of the story, the key actor. But what the planner does is now defined much more broadly.
than in the rational, comprehensive model. Krambl's stresses the importance of "tie-knots" at local meetings, at county and state conferences, speeches to the press, openmeetings, interviews with reporters, and public statements, and engaging in dialogue with other city agencies. The planner is a communicator, a mediator, propagandist, and good communication skills are critical. The planner is a gatherer of information and analysis, a problem formulation. By reformulating a problem, planners have some power to shape debate, to shape public attention in issues on which planners see as important. Planners need to be bold, to seize the initiative, and never accept given definitions of tasks and problems. They should be actively engaged in "opportunity analysis". But planners also need to beware of "vicious" words like "socialising" or "exploitation". Within this sphere of constraints and opportunities, planners can create a "normal community" of reform and resistance in the belly of the hierarchical system.

Interestingly, Krambl and Foster do not offer any analysis of Cleveland's power issue, beyond the level of who holds the office of mayor, and nor do they attempt to locate Cleveland in terms of the global economy. Equity planning is still engaged in speaking truth to power, still engaged in a state-centred planning, only now it is a politically polarised practice, and its allegiances are consciously directed to those who have been excluded. But the excluded, the poor, the marginalised, are not part of the action, and do not feature as active agents in the narrative or theory of Making Equity Planning Work.

A decade later, under Harold Washington's rainbow aliance in Chicago, the story is a little different. The Chicago planners working for Harold Washington, led by Robert Keil, adopted an administrative procedure of "inclusion". Important meetings had to have not only white male but also black, Latin, and female faces present, otherwise the meeting would be postponed. This forced administrators to learn to seek out such representatives from those groups before proceeding (Cleveland and Wovall 1993, Cleveland 1994). This suggests an evolution of equity planning in which, in the past decade, equity planners have learned to respect the social movements that energize the neighborhoods, which is certainly a step forward from previous bureaucratic styles that recognized only the institutionalized power of ward committees and city council members (Cleveland 1994). It also suggests that we must pay more attention to the institutional context - political, social, cultural - in which any attempt at planning takes place, asking insistently who is at the table making decisions, who will carry out whatever is decided, how, when, and where, and what the sanctions are against default. It is not enough simply to get the excluded to the table.

**The Social Learning and Communicative Action Model**

Paul Davidoff believed in opening up the political process, overtly exposing opposition among planners. The first generation of advocacy planners under his influence used their technical skills into poor communities, intending to offer assistance so that alternative plans could be created which took into account the needs of such communities. Some advocates learned a different lesson from this, a lesson about local knowledge and about the political skills that exist within poor communities. Reflection on this lesson by a number of planning theorists and practitioners have led to the emergence of models of social learning and communicative action.

In *Bucking America* (1973), John Friedmann wrote of a specifically American post-industrial society in dead crisis: a crisis which was the result of the breakdown of absolutes under modernity, and the crisis of knowledge, which was reflected in the emerging conflict between expert/profession knowledge and personal experiential knowledge. He described the growing polarity between social planners and their 'clients', a polarity exacerbated by the inaccessible language in which professionals usually formulate problems, and he argued that neither side has all the answers. The obvious solution was to bring the two together to engage in a process of shared learning, to develop a personal relationship between expert and client through the adoption of what he called a "dialogic style of planning". Friedmann characterized this as a process of "social learning". He located social learning in the development of a new social learning in the practice of planning.

What is radical about this approach is its epistemological shift away from the monopoly on expertise and insight by professionals to an acknowledgment of the value of local, or experiential, knowledge. It is a shift away from a static conception of knowledge (as "a body of knowledge") to a more dynamic concept and metaphor of learning. Friedmann's work evolved over the next decade from the initial relatively simple concept of mutual learning to a more complex model of social learning (Friedmann 1973, 1987). This stressed experiential knowledge as the source of action itself, and that moved from a document-oriented and anticipatory mode of planning to a transactional approach between planner and community. The social learning approach turns planning itself into a form of strange action that increasingly takes place in real time. It can be summarised as "learning by doing", and continuously and critically reflecting on that, in what becomes a "learning loop" learning process in which the goals of action are reassessed along with the chosen means (Jorgens and Schon 1978).

Beginning with the same fundamental observation that planning is, above all, an interactive, communicative activity, another group of scholars - notably among them John Foranor, Patsy Hays and Judith Jones - developed in the late 1960s a model of "planning as a communicative practice". Inspired initially by the work of John Rawls, who calls his theory critical planning, building it on the Habermasian concept of communicative action and on philosopher Jürgen Habermas's emphasis on communicative knowledge (Sussman 1990), the work of
this group is a significant departure from the rational comprehensive model. They have moved from the instrumental rationality of the earlier model to an emphasis on communicative rationality. They rely more on qualitative, interpretive inquiry than on deductive analysis, and they seek to understand the unique and the context, rather than make generalizations about a typological, abstract planner (James 1995: 354). These theorists tell stories and look for insights, rather than trying to impose order and definition. They focus on what planners actually do, studying planners’ processes in a micro-analysis of interpersonal interactions, listening to what is said and not said, by whom, why, and in what circumstances. Forester’s fine-grained, detailed observational study of planners at work, Planning in the Face of Power (1989), stands as a primary text for this group. For Forester, planning is primarily a form of critical listening to the words of others, and observing their non-verbal behavior. It is a mode of intervention that is based on speech acts, on listening and questioning, and learning how, through dialogue, to ‘shape attention’. Forester is interested in what is said and heard in any planning situation, because those words embody and exact the play of power, the selective focusing of attention, the presupposition of ‘us and them’, the creation of repertoires, and the shaping of expectations of what is and is not possible as well as the production of politically rational strategies of action. What planners say involves power and strategy as much as it involves ‘words’ (Forester 1991: 23).

Forester’s work has inspired efforts to understand similar studies, each of which brings slightly different emphases, from Sacks and Schufflak’s negotiation and consensus-building (1987) to Thompson’s discourse and rhetoric (1991). Patrick’s attention to representation (1982) and Judith Bennett’s attention to the social construction of knowledge (1993); Bene Flyvbjerg’s ‘science of the contexts’ (1992) and Peter Urry’s ‘institutional analysis and discourse’ (1998, 1992), leading to ‘collaborative planning’ (Urry 1992). Each of these scholars is critically interested in the relationship between knowledge and power, in the potential for oppression inherent in instrumental rationality, and in finding more emancipatory ways of knowing. Here they have been inspired by Habermas’s Theory of Communicative Action (1994), and by Forester’s much darker analysis of the links between knowledge and power, into critical reflection about the appropriate processes for listening and deciding, such as assuring representation of all major points of view, equalizing information among group members, and creating common ground among processes so that the form of argument can be the deciding factor rather than an individual’s power or status in some pre-existing hierarchy. If equity planners can be said to be trying to perfect planning as an Enlightenment project by representing the interests of the poor and the marginalized in any debate, then communicative action theorists might be said to be trying to perfect the Enlightenment’s democratic project by removing the barriers to commitment, by creating a model of open discourse, by removing restrictions. The emphasis is less on how planners think and on how they use and distribute their knowledge, but on their ability to solve problems, more on opening up debate about them. In the

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model, planning is about talk, argument, shaping attention. Forester redefines what goes planning its legitimacy, shifting away from professional expertise and efficiency toward ethical commitment and agency.

These theorists have moved far away from the decision focus of applied rationality to a concern with interactive moral processes. But for both, the primary actor and source of attention is still the formally educated planner working primarily through the state. And for communicative action theorists, the insistence on studying practice and practitioners means that their theory will always conform to the current practice of planning rather than imaging alternatives or calling for social transformation. While this is certainly a more inclusive theory of planning than its predecessors, it does have serious weaknesses from a counter-hegemonic perspective. It does not attempt to address the issue of empowerment raised by the third (above) group of critics of the early adversary model, except in terms of speech acts. It acknowledges, but then brushes, the problem of structural inequalities. And it treats citizenship as an unproblematic concept which is gendered, race-neutral, following the Habermasian and Foucaultian use of universal categories, and in the process suppressing the crucial questions of difference and marginality and their relationship to social justice.

To find a forum for discussing these issues, we need to turn to those who have been trying to elaborate theories of radical planning, or empowerment.

The Radical Planning Model

Among the relatively small community of scholars who have sought to outline a radical or emancipatory practice in the past two decades, many roads have been taken to arrive at this point. While some are direct descendants of advocacy planning (Robins 1980, 1991; Peet 1987, 1994; Lassiter 1994) or other experiment in social reform like the Great Society (Kanter 1987), others have arrived via a feminist critiques (Lassiter 1994, Hayden 1996) and others through engagement in the civil rights movement and ongoing struggles around racism (King 1963; Lavast and Aughey 1996), contemporary debates around multiple forms of oppression and exploitation (Starr and Lee 1992; Rose 1992; Stedman 1997a), or working on problems of poverty and exclusion in an international development context (Frederick 1992). (And, of course, there are overlaps.) Perhaps more than any other model of theorizing, radical planning has been linked into multiple critical discourses about social transformation. I will be concerned with genealogies here than with the actual contours of a radical planning practice, searching for shared perspectives and focusing on what it is that radical planners actually do.

Radical practices emerge from experience with and a critique of existing unequal relations and distributions of power, opportunity, and resources. The goal of these practices is to work for structural transformation of systemic inequalities and, in the process, to empower those who have been systematically disempowered. The
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focus of radical practice will depend on the focus of the critique. In the field of planning, the dominant radical critique of urban inequalities from the 1960s through to the 1990s was that of class analysis, particularly after the rise of Marxist urban political economy and sociology in the mid-1970s. But those white professionals who actively went into poor communities were faced with more complex situations, intersections of race, poverty, sexism, homophobia, anti-immigrant sentiments, to name just a few. It began to occur to some planners that the poor and the oppressed were not a homogenous mess but rather spoke with many different voices. By the 1980s, feminist activism within planning was generating their own spatial as well as social and political analyses of gender inequalities, people of colour (and some white allies) were drawing attention to racist practices within and effects of planning, and gay and lesbian activism was developing a history of oppressive spatial and social practices affecting their lives in cities. Questions about social justice and the city have correspondingly broadened from the earlier formulations of Marxism like Harvey and (the early) Castells to include 'what would a non-racist city be like?' (Hepburn 1988), and, by extension, what would a non-racist and non-homophobic city be like? But the question arises of all of us - what can planners do about these inequalities?

Radical planners have given various answers, in their theory and practice. Most of these responses are related to community organization, urban social movements, and issues of empowerment, rather than to working through the state. Working within these responses is an ever-growing awareness of the relationship between professional identity and radical practice.

Radical planning theory has grown out of and been informed by experiences of oppositional practices and a tradition of social mobilization. The starting point is always a concrete problem. Some of today's radical planners were involved in the advocacy movement of the late 1960s, which served to clarify for them the inadvisability of working as a planner in the bureaucracy. Allen Hebb (1989) and Jacqueline Lavine drew similar conclusions from that experience. In Lavine's words, 'on the one hand, advocacy planning couldn't fight city hall, or the other hand it didn't deal with conflicting interests in the community' (Lavine 1994: 139). For Hebb, and for Lavine, the obvious conclusion was that in order to make a difference in the lives of the poor, this excluded, the marginalized, an empowerment approach was required, and that such an approach could only be practised outside the bureaucracy.

Community-based groups who develop bottom-up programs are engaged in planning that occurs outside the local planning establishment. At some point the people with whom I work will interact with either the planning establishment or other political bodies. They will, however, need to be aware of research I have helped produce with them for their purposes, as well as the planning establishment, or political bodies. The overall impact of this type of practice is not to create a plan as such, but to generate a political process that produces a place or program. (Lavine 1994: 127)

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Lezzer describes what she does as enabling a community, gaining trust, allocating time, investing, including, and letting others speak. The primary requirements of this kind of community-based practice is allocating enormous amounts of time to 'sitting out' with the mobilized community. Hebb's and Lavine's work has revolved around housing struggles in multi-ethnic, multi-racial, poor communities. Other radical practices have been organized around plant closures and worker buy-outs, women mobilizing to get a whole range of women's needs in the city addressed; the establishment of credit unions in previously red-lined neighborhoods, community gardens, child care, bicycle pools. opposing the string of environmental hazards like toxic waste incinerators in poor and minority communities. . . . Taken separately, none of these struggles may seem all that systematic, but together they constitute a challenge, because they have the potential for making people less dependent on global capital, removing their social power, and empowering their own political power, albeit at local level. But as it is precisely through action at local level that people begin to get some handle on how to make a difference in their own lives and concerns as well as those of fellow citizens - concerns about jobs, housing, schools, health.

Working in and with such mobilized communities, planners' roles are not the holistic ones described in the rational model. Rather, in working for social transformation in community-based organizations, planners acknowledge that theory and practice become everyone's concern and that responsibilities for both are multiple and overlapping. Planners bring to radical practice general and specific substantive skills: everything from skills of analysis and synthesis to grantmanship, communication and the management of group processes, as well as specific knowledge of labour markets or environmental law or transportation modelling or housing regulations. But they also recognize the value of the contextual knowledge that those in the frontline of local action - the mobilized community - bring to the issue at hand. And they are open to learning through experience. Above all, radical practice depends for its effectiveness on interpersonal relations of trust (Friedmann 1967: 402; Lezzer 1994), and a social learning approach based on a 'radical openness' (hooks 1990: 148).

Radical practice, then, does not lie on a logical continuum with rational planning for social justice, but is not primarily participatory in process by the state. More often than not, radical planners will find themselves in opposition to either state or corporate economy, or both. This implies an epistemological break with past ways of thinking and doing (Friedmann 1967: 293), of what it means to be a planner, and what it is that planners do. It requires nothing less than a new professional identity. How might that identity be described? There are two somewhat conflicting portraits in the current literature. Radical practitioners like Hebb and Lavine state very clearly that the allegiance of the activist planner is to the community with whom he or she is working. There is a 'turning-over' implied here, in which the professionally educated planner sheds his or her professional status/ identity and choices, instead of loyalty to professional codes, loyalty to the poor
and the oppressed. For Hashin this is a clear choice about class allegiance. A planner cannot claim to have professional class status and hope to be helpful to the community. To overcome in community empowerment, she must not see the community as a client, but see herself in the ally of that community, helping people to clarify their goals, enabling them to achieve collective self-determination.

Here is a dramatic shift from the other five models of planning, in which the planner is still the driving force. In these other models, the professional planner, by definition, works through the state, even if, as an equity planner, for example, her goal is to achieve some kind of redistribution of resources on behalf of the poor. It’s the on behalf of that is the problem for the radical planner. In Hashin’s description of radical planning, it is the community that initiates, and the planner who enables, assists, but never imposes her solutions and only offers advice when asked. Similarly to Leavitt’s work, she immerses herself in the community, hangs out with them, helps them with research and preparation of documents, advises on how to deal with bureaucracies, but never does those things for the community, always with them. This identity of the radical planner in these works is that of a person who has, essentially, given AWOL from the profession, has crossed over to ‘the other side’, to work in opposition to the state and corporate economy. This does not mean that community-based planners have nothing to do with the state. There is a clear acknowledgement in Hashin’s and Leavitt’s work of the need to think strategically about the state, to make alliances with those planners who do work within state agencies, especially those who might be regarded as friendly to the cause. And the knowledge that these activist planners possess of the workings of the state is invaluable to the communities with whom they are working. But there is a clear line being drawn in the sand. Choose the community and you are choosing professional/class death. Choose to work for the state and you retain your professional identity, but don’t delude yourself about whose interests you are serving.

In the radical planning model elaborated by John Friedmann there is a different take on this notion of professional identity. Friedmann asserts that a radical planner has to maintain a notion of critical distance. He or she does not, ultimately, ‘cross over’. Radical planners must not become absorbed into the everyday struggles of radical practice... as mediators, they stand neither apart from nor above nor within such a practice’ (Friedmann 1987: 392). While not denying that radical planners must be committed to the group’s practice and to the global project of emancipation, he nevertheless points to the optimum critical distance between planners and the front line of action’ (Friedmann 1987: 404). Friedmann’s definition of the identity of the radical planner is then someone who reconciles between theory and action and for whom, beyond a certain point, ‘the court they come to the action, the less useful are their mediations likely to be’. And the same holds in the other direction. The further away they move from the immediacy of the action, the less they will be able to be contemporary, in part because this distance may fracture the very bonds of trust upon which their effectiveness depends.

Friedmann’s radical planner is thus a tightrope walker, trying to maintain some autonomy vis-à-vis the radical group or community, and yet certainly not striking any pole of neutrality.

But why is this autonomous critical distance necessary? Why not just jump over? Friedmann’s writing is not clear on this point, but there is a clue in his language. He talks about radical planners working with groups who are ‘buried’ within radical practices. He talks about the relevant actions in the struggle for a new society (the global project of emancipation) as being individual households who have spread for the alternative, organized social groups based in local communities, and larger, more inclusive movements not bounded by territorial limits. Hashin and Leavitt, on the other hand, talk almost exclusively about the struggle for community (Hashin 1991) or ‘community-based planning’ (Leavitt 1994). For Hashin and Leavitt the state is and can only be an adversary. For Friedmann, any social advance achieved through a radical planning that by-passes the state will quickly reach material limits. To go beyond these limits, appropriate actions by the state are essential (Friedmann 1987: 405). Clearly, the state has been the missing ingredient so far in this discussion of radical planning. And while it may well be a contradiction in terms to think of the state engaged in radical planning, it is equally misleading to think that radical planning can do without the state.

Leavitt has argued that ‘there is no such thing as heaven, only reasons’ (Leavitt in Van Reenen and Vuurman 1988). The same might be said about ‘Community’—there is no such thing as Community, only communities. In the writing of most radical planners, the community has been refined and romanticized. If the state is the enemy, the implicit argument seems to be, then the mobilized community can do no wrong. But we are all familiar with specific communities (white, Christian, mentally or physically ill...). Who are we to use planning to exclude specific other communities (gay, Black, Jewish, mentally or physically challenged...)? What rights should communities as collectivities have vis-à-vis individual rights, on the one hand, and the rights of the larger society, on the other? This is a very difficult question in political theory which planners cannot avoid, especially in the contemporary context of the rise of mobilized groups and communities in civil society, asserting and demanding respect and space for their differentness. I will return to this question in the next and subsequent chapters.

Here I want to draw attention to the reinforcing potential of militarized communities, just as, in their past analyses, radical planners have emphasized the repressive practices of the state. Conversely, we need to remember that, in the conflict over legal segregation in the southern United States during the 1960s, the federal government eventually intervened in local affairs and acted against local authorities, at a clear cost of the transformative power of the state. The lesson of this paradox is...
It is the metasituation and yet also dialectical relationship between the state and the mobilized community in which radical planners have yet to address. This is to get beyond the notion of the state as saviour and only the adversary. In the past fifty years we have moved slowly away from the GILB visionaries' embrace of top-down directed futures to an opposing vision of a fragmented metropolis driven by the charter of community self-determination. We must move beyond these utopian dichotomies and begin to think about the complementary as well as antagonistic relationship between state and civil society and of the possibility of social transformation as a result of the impact on the state of mobilized groups within civil society. If we fail to do this we could be seen as the bipolar struggle between capital and Labour, in which the state was allied to capital, then a postmodern urban politics is perhaps best understood as a multiplicity of struggles among multiple sites of oppression, in which the role of the state is not a given (not simply the executive committee of the bourgeoisie), but is dependent on the relative strength of the social mobilizations, and their specific content in space and time. In other words, there is an unresolved, and interwoven tension between the transformative and regressive powers of state-directed planning practices, and their myriad images, the transformative and also regressive potential of the local, the grassroots, the insurgent. In order to work with this tension, perhaps Friedmann's concept of critical distance assumes a new importance. And in maintaining a productive tension between state-directed planning and the insurgent practices of mobilized communities, radical planners do need a different kind of professional practice, different in both form and content. This difference amounts to a reconceptualization of the field and of the notion of professional identity. Rather than the 'crooning-over' outlook in Heilbrun's and Levitt's work, the appropriate image may be that of crossing back and forth, of blurring boundaries, of deconstructing ("Community", the state and reconstrucating new possibilities. In terms of methods, epistemology of social learning and of multiplicity (see Chapter 3) is the theory of knowledge underlying radical practice. This means that action is primary, but that we need to develop new ways of knowing and being as well as new ways of acting. One possible source of guidance for such new ways of knowing and being and acting comes from what I have called the "Voices from the Subtextual" (Sanderson 1995a), the voices of women and people of color, premodern and postmodern voices resonant with experiences of marginality, exploitation, and domination. To feel at home in the multi-ethic, multi-racial world of this new meeting decade, we need to listen to and understand these voices. They will become our guides in the next chapter as we move from the differences that theory makes, in the theory that difference makes for first, some conclusions about where we have arrived at in our own journey through the landscape of planning theory.

In telling the story of the postwar evolution of planning theory through six models or paradigms and arranging the story chronologically, there are two dangers. One is of assuming an order and coherence where there may have been none. The other danger is in appearing to create a progressive and inevitable account of history, from the "half rational" planning model through successive "improvements" to the "good" radical planning model, implying that the latter has superseded the former, like the latest mobile out of the car industry. Neither has been my intention. The chronological account of developments in planning theory was intended to demonstrate relationships between "successive" theories, to indicate that planners do indeed learn from mistakes and examine their own practices critically. But, unlike Thomas Kuhn's account of scientific revolutions, in which, eventually, the new paradigm replaces the old, I would argue that all six paradigms of planning are alive (and reasonably well), and that adhering to one rather than another involves a political choice rather than scientific verification. It involves questions of values and allegiances as much as it involves commitment to the scientific and technical body of knowledge that is supposed to constitute and legitimate any profession. So, there are some planners today who still adhere to the rational model, as they did thirty or forty years ago, and others who have moved over the past thirty or forty years from the rational model to a social learning model and then to an empowerment model, and there are students today who, when presented with this spectrum of ways of being a planner, will choose the rational comprehensive model or preferences to all others, certainly not convinced that radical planning is the highest and best evolutionary form of planning. There are many within the profession who maintain a belief in the "public interest", and only a few who question what has, after all, been part of the justification of the profession. No, rather than implying any necessary (revolutionary) progress in this account, I want to insist that there is a difference in any one of these theories is about all political choices, and also a practical judgment of what planning can and cannot achieve. And in real life, many of us feel ourselves moving between paradigms - this year working for the state as equity planners, next year for the mobilized community, and understanding the availability of funding and of ongoing judgments about what can be achieved in what political arena.

Part of my purpose in elaborating these six models of planning, in setting out how each differs with respect to its definition of what planning is and what planners do and know, is to suggest that there can never be the one true all-encompassing planning theory that explains who we are and what we do. This will and should always be contested terrain, precisely because planning is an inherently political practice. Instead of one planning theory that we can all agree on, we need to acknowledge the usefulness of a variety of theories, depending on the context, depending on the purpose of the planner. We all - rational, or communicative, or radical planners - need theories of knowledge and theories of power, theories of social transformation and theories of intertemporal relations, theories of the state and theories of group dynamics. The list is endless.
Towards cosmopolis

Finally, the need for different kinds of theories shifts as societies change. Theoretical restructuring is a necessary accompaniment to economic and demographic restructuring. For the "tenseur dû" of the modernization project, the model of applied rationality was the perfect instantiation. But that hegemonic project began to be challenged in the 1960s, at the levels of both culture and economy, by those groups who had been excluded from its domain and its fruits, and by others who were concerned about the environmental consequences of the global drive to modernization. The shifts in the paradigms of planning theory need to be situated in these material and cultural contexts, as reflecting economic, environmental and cultural crises in the modernist project, and as attempts to solve those crises from within. It is only the radical model that has looked to a social transformation beyond modernization, and it is only this model which can accommodate the full multidisciplinary implications of the postmodern world into which we are moving. Exploring those implications is the subject of the next chapter, in which I ask about the difference that "difference" makes to an emancipatory or radical theory and practice.