

mobile media and the strategies of urban citizenship: discipline, responsabilisation, politicisation

Kurt Iveson
School of Geosciences
University of Sydney
NSW 2006 Australia
kurt.iveson@sydney.edu.au

Forthcoming 2010 in Foth, M. et al (eds) *From Social Butterfly to Engaged Citizen*,
Cambridge: MIT Press.

1. introduction

In cities around the world, a range of experiments are under way to explore the new possibilities mobile media technologies might offer for urban governance. Many of these experiments involve establishing new channels of information from urban authorities to urban inhabitants, in the hope that city life can be made better by providing people with useful information where and when they need it. In such efforts, government and commercial information is made available on the World Wide Web, and the networked and location-aware attributes of mobile media devices are enlisted to enable people to access this information while they are ‘on the go’. But experiments are also underway which seek to enhance the flow of information in the *other* direction, from urban inhabitants to urban authorities. Here, efforts are underway to extend the participatory practices and cultures associated with social media and ‘Web 2.0’ to urban governance, by helping people to engage with one another and with urban authorities as *citizens*.

As these experiments gather momentum, it is important that we establish clear frameworks to inform their development and evaluate their performance. This is not only a matter of predicting and evaluating the ‘successes’ and ‘failures’ of experiments with mobile media and networked sensing according to established aims and objectives. It is also a matter of considering their wider implications, by critically reflecting on the aims, objectives and assumptions of different applications of mobile media in the realm of urban governance. Such critical reflections and frameworks are beginning to emerge, offered by scholars and activists coming from a range of disciplinary backgrounds including urban geography and sociology, cultural studies, human-computer interaction, urban planning, and legal studies (see for example Crang and Graham 2007, Galloway 2004, Greenfield and Shepard 2007, Kang and Kuff 2005, Paulos, Honicky and Hooker 2008, Williams, Robles and Dourish 2008).

In this chapter, I draw on recent debates about the changing nature of urban governance and citizenship in order to identify and evaluate different ways of using social and mobile media as tools for citizen engagement in urban governance. The central claim of the chapter is that the forms of participation and engagement enabled by mobile media can be put to use for very different purposes, not all of which will necessarily result in a more empowered citizenry. As such, participation and engagement are neither progressive nor oppressive, neither just nor unjust. The crucial evaluative question for mobile media applications in the field of urban governance is not so much ‘do they facilitate citizen participation and engagement?’, but rather, ‘what is the vision of the vision of the good citizen and the good city that they seek to enact?’.

The chapter proceeds in four steps. First, I describe three applications of social and mobile media in a particular field of urban policy – graffiti. My purpose here is to show some different ways in which the role of citizens armed with smart phones have been scripted in the contentious field of graffiti policy. What model of citizenship and engagement informs these different applications? In order to answer this question, the next section of the chapter considers these three applications through the lens of recent discussions about urban governance and citizenship in contemporary cities. I argue that these three applications nicely illustrate three different ways that social and mobile media can be mobilised in urban governance: discipline, responsabilisation, and politicisation. The third section of the chapter elaborates on these three concepts, and considers their relationship to each other. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of participation, politics and the good city. Here, I argue

that participation does not equal empowerment, although empowerment will certainly involve participation.

2. mobile media, citizen engagement and the ‘graffiti problem’

Applications of mobile media concerned with the place of graffiti in the urban environment provide us with an excellent window onto the wider debates about participation, urban governance and citizen engagement which are the subject of this chapter. Graffiti is a feature of city life which polarises urban populations. Urban authorities in many cities devote significant resources to eradicating illegal graffiti, on the grounds that graffiti detracts from urban quality of life (Iveson 2010). On the other hand, there are those that argue that (good) graffiti can make a significant contribution to urban aesthetics and creativity (Iveson 2009, Burnham 2010). On the surface, these disagreements about the place of graffiti in urban life and the nature of ‘the graffiti problem’ may appear to be only matters of aesthetic taste. But in fact, such disagreements tend to become the very stuff of urban politics and citizenship. Disagreements over issues like graffiti are underpinned to competing visions of the good city, and they inevitably come to be expressed through competing efforts to realise these visions in reality. These efforts to shape and order cities make use of a variety of different techniques and technologies of urban governance. This is precisely how mobile media technologies come to be enmeshed in urban governance and politics – their affordances and possibilities are explored in the service of different visions of the good city. Applications of these technologies are developed to solve problems that have been framed with reference to one or other vision of the good city and the good citizen. So, let’s take a look at some different examples of how the kinds of citizen engagement afforded by mobile media (in combination with other sensing technologies) have been put to work in order to solve ‘the graffiti problem’.

First, consider the *graffiti-e-nose*, a device which has been developed as a new weapon in the ‘war on graffiti’. Developed by the E-Nose company based in Sydney, Australia, the *graffiti-e-nose* is a smell-sensing device that can detect aerosol paint fumes at a distance of 45 metres. Upon detecting these fumes, the device then sends real-time alerts to security agencies via SMS.¹ The smell sensor technologies on the *graffiti-e-nose* is based were first developed by NASA, and then adapted for use against graffiti by its university-based

inventors, who have now established a consortium to commercialise e-nose technologies for further security and military purposes. The *graffiti-e-nose* is designed to address the limitations of conventional CCTV for graffiti prevention. Conventional CCTV at best offers a visual deterrent and an ‘after the fact’ documentation of graffiti that might assist in convicting a graffiti writer who has been apprehended. New surveillance technologies such as the *graffiti-e-nose* promise to assist with the ‘real-time’ detection and apprehension of graffiti writers, by helping authorities to catch graffiti writers ‘in the act’. Since its development, the *graffiti-e-nose* has been picked-up by several local authorities and urban infrastructure providers across four capital cities in Australia, and is attracting positive press coverage internationally.

Citizens Connect is my second example of the use of mobile media technologies in addressing the graffiti problem. *Citizens Connect* is a Boston-based service designed to help citizens connect to their local government. The key feature of *Citizens Connect* is an iPhone application which enables users to log requests for urban maintenance with the City. So, for instance, if a citizen comes across a piece of graffiti or a hole in the road, they can take a geo-tagged photo of the offending graffiti or hole, and then submit this photo directly to the City’s maintenance team via their iPhone (see Figure 1). According to the City of Boston:

The Citizens Connect iPhone app is part of Mayor Menino’s and the City of Boston’s strategy for Citizen-to-City transactions called Citizens Connect. The Citizens Connect iPhone app is targeted at enlisting Boston residents and visitors to gather information about the physical state of the city.²

In one sense, there is nothing radically ‘new’ here. A concerned citizen could always have taken note of the offending graffiti, and called the City from a land line at a later time (many cities including Boston have established graffiti ‘hot-lines’ for precisely this purpose) – they might even have written a letter! The point of *Citizens Connect* is that citizens armed with smart-phones might be more likely to connect with the City if this can be done ‘on the go’ and in real-time, with little inconvenience and investment of precious time. With *Citizens Connect*, then, the City is hoping new technology can help create more conducive conditions for what it calls “citizen sourcing”, thereby bring government closer to the citizen.

Unlike the *graffiti-e-nose*, which is a stealth technology designed to work on behalf of citizens, *Citizens Connect* is designed to involve citizens directly in taking responsibility for urban governance. Indeed, *Citizens Connect* has been cited as one example of how mobile

computing technologies might be deployed to enhance urban life through facilitating citizen *participation* in urban governance, to the mutual benefit of both municipal authorities and citizens (Hirshberg 2009). For authorities, citizens can be ‘enlisted’ as eyes and ears on the street. For citizens, direct channels of communication with authorities are enabled, and (hopefully) this will also make those authorities more responsive and accountable to their citizens.

[Figure 1 here]

Third, consider the City of Perth’s *ReFace* project. From a technical perspective, this project is quite similar to *Citizens Connect*. For *ReFace*, citizens armed with digital cameras and smart-phones were similarly asked to take geo-tagged pictures of graffiti and submit them to a web address. But in this project, the purpose of this citizen participation was quite different. Pictures were uploaded to an interactive online gallery on the *ReFace* website, and could be viewed (and sorted by artist, location, or photographer) and rated by members of the public. In April 2009, during the City of Perth’s International Arts Festival, the most highly-rated images were projected onto the walls of prominent buildings in the city at night, using ‘Projector Bombing’ technologies pioneered by the Graffiti Research Lab (see Figure 2). Audience members on the night also had the chance to participate in real-time laser tagging and digital painting activities. The purpose of *ReFace* was described in the following manner on the project website:

Watch bare city walls transform into vibrant public art sites as curated galleries of stick-ups, stencils and freehand Street Art are projected on buildings across town as part of the Perth International Arts Festival’s *ReFace* project.

As the city throbs with an influx of nocturnal visitors, *ReFace* investigates whether public perception changes when the artwork is impermanent, providing street artists with a legal means to get their work shown on some of the most notorious walls in Perth.³

As Jerrem, one of the members of the Graffiti Research Lab (Australia) involved in *ReFace* noted, “It’s interesting how people react to the non destructive copies of real world “vandalism””.⁴

[Figure 2 here]

3. making cities better? models of citizen engagement in the *graffiti-nose*, *Citizens Connect*, and *ReFace*

Now, each of these three uses of mobile media claims to make the city better by *engaging its citizens*. But how should we critically evaluate these claims? Clearly, these three examples are informed by quite different visions of the good city and the place of graffiti within it. And they also image quite different visions of the good citizen. We can turn to recent debates about the nature of urban citizenship to help us think through the important differences. As we shall see, these three applications of mobile media are illustrative of three quite different models of urban governance and citizenship.

The concept of citizenship refers to “a bundle of entitlements and obligations which constitute individuals as fully fledged members of a socio-political community, providing them with access to scarce resources” (Turner 1994: i). The study of citizenship brings into focus the rules and norms by which members of a political community are identified and governed. Of course, in a *democratic* political community, participation is simultaneously an entitlement and an obligation of membership as a citizen:

Citizenship in a democracy consists in the participation of citizens in the ways in which their conduct is governed by the exercise of political power in any system or practice of governance. Citizens participate by 'having a say' and 'negotiating' how power is exercised and who exercises it (Tully 1999: 170).

We will return to this double-edged nature of participation shortly. First, however, I want to elaborate on the *urban* dimensions of citizenship.

Recent years have witnessed a rekindling of interest in the city as a site and subject of citizenship (see for example Holston and Appadurai 1999, Isin 1999, Isin 2002, Iveson 2007, Staeheli 2003, Varsanyi 2006). This renewed focus on the relationship between cities and citizenship is indicative of a growing recognition that questions of citizenship are no longer (if they ever were) settled exclusively at the scale of the nation-state. Even as the nation-state remains crucial to the setting of the juridical or formal dimensions of citizenship (such as nationality and immigration rules), the more substantive matter of how we live together and govern our conduct as citizens is often worked out in the context of everyday urban interactions and contestations.⁵

Of course, the question of how we live together as citizens in cities is contested. Crudely, we can divide the kinds of disagreement that emerge among citizens into two categories. First, citizens disagree about how to respond to issues and problems of agreed importance. Here, citizens may contest the merits of different policy solutions to problems which are identified by various governing institutions. But the scope of disagreement over urban citizenship also has a broader dimension. Second, citizens may also disagree about *how they conduct their disagreement*. Here, citizens may contest the rules which define who has the right to be heard *as a citizen* and who does not, and/or they may contest the rules and norms about how citizens should properly engage and political debate (Rancière 1999). James Tully (1999) has applied the analogy of the ‘game’ to these different aspects of disagreement over citizenship. As he puts it:

the study of any game will involve, first, the analysis of the rules in accordance with which the game is routinely played and the techniques of government or relations of power that hold them in place. Second, it will involve the ‘strategies of freedom’ in which some participants refuse to be governed in this way, dispute and seek to modify the rules, and thus think and act differently to some extent (1999: 167).

Using this analogy, we might say the first kind of disagreement identified above is conducted within the existing rules of the game, while the second kind of disagreement is about the very rules of the game.

Because of these disagreements, configurations of citizenship have been subject to change across time and space. Different configurations of citizenship rules and norms become entrenched in particular times and places, only to be challenged and modified through politics along the two axes identified above. This politics is often highly charged, precisely because different configurations of urban citizenship (or ways of ‘playing the game’) work to privilege certain people and certain interests over others. Power is exercised through the normalisation, institutionalisation and contestation of different configurations of citizenship. Indeed, the pursuit of social control can be thought of as the effort to stabilise a particular configuration of urban citizenship. Attempts to challenge these configurations by changing the ‘rules of the game’ have variously been referred to as exercises in ‘insurgent’ (Holston 1998) or ‘dissident’ (Sparks 1997) citizenship.

So, with this brief discussion of urban citizenship in mind, let's return to our three examples in the field of graffiti policy. What different configurations of urban citizenship are privileged by our three different applications of mobile media and networked sensing to the graffiti problem?

The *graffiti-e-nose* is premised on the notion that the interests of the city and its citizens can be advanced through the identification, apprehension and punishment of those who write graffiti. Here, technology is envisaged as a new 'weapon' in the 'war on graffiti' which is being waged by urban authorities on behalf of a beleaguered citizenry, said to be sick and tired of the damage caused by vandalism (Iveson 2010). Graffiti is a problem to be solved, and the *graffiti-e-nose* is offered as a new technological solution. This approach rests on a categorical distinction between the good citizens and the graffiti writers. Those who write graffiti are the targets – by breaking the law and violating someone else's claim to property ownership, they are considered to be *anti-social*. The *graffiti-e-nose* is designed to enlist sensing technology and mobile media on behalf of property owners both to prevent and to punish this anti-social behaviour.

Citizens Connect embodies a related but slightly different configuration of urban citizenship. Certainly, it too is premised on the dominant conception of the 'graffiti problem', where graffiti is a problem to be eradicated, and citizens are imagined to be locked in a conflict (often described as a 'war') with anti-social graffiti writers. But the solution offered by *Citizens Connect* scripts a different role for the good citizen. Rather than being a passive victim on whose behalf urban authorities act, in *Citizens Connect* the good citizen is imagined as an active, participating partner in urban governance. The iPhone application is designed to facilitate this participation. As the City of Boston puts it, the citizen is 'enlisted' in the maintenance of good urban order. By downloading the application for his or her iPhone, taking a picture of graffiti and submitting it to the City, the good citizen exercises *responsibility* for their neighbourhood in partnership with the state.

In their conceptions to urban citizenship, I would argue that the *graffiti-e-nose* and *Citizens Connect* are examples of the use of mobile media applications to advance *neoliberal* projects for urban governance and citizenship. While neoliberal approaches to urban governance continue to unfold in different ways across time and space (Peck and Tickell 2002), it is nonetheless possible to sketch out some shared characteristics of these emerging

‘neoliberalisms’. In many areas of urban and social policy, we have seen the introduction of privatization, marketization, consumerization and securitization, with governments ‘steering’ and regulating rather than ‘rowing’ and providing (Rose 2000b: 324). All this is informed by scepticism about the capacity of political action through the state to bring about the good of individuals and communities. The best regulatory mechanism for social activity is thought to be the market, which encourages autonomous actors to size up the available information and make informed choices about what is good for them. The state has been reconceived as:

merely one partner in government, facilitating, enabling, stimulating, shaping, inciting the self-governing activities of a multitude of dispersed entities – associations, firms, communities, individuals – who would take onto themselves many of the powers, and the responsibilities previously annexed by ‘the state’ (Rose 2000a: 96).

Individuals, families, organizations, communities and entire cities are said to know what is best for themselves, not government – they must find a way to be autonomous in a competitive world, and they must take responsibility for pursuing their own best interests. Of course, this does not mean the complete withdrawal of ‘the state’, but a recasting of its role. The state simultaneously ‘rolls back’ its involvement from some areas of social provision, and ‘rolls out’ a set of incentives and assistance packages designed to encourage the formation of these autonomous and responsible citizens who are capable of governing themselves (Peck and Tickell 2002).

Newly emerging measures in the domain of social control are firmly enmeshed in this neoliberal policy agenda. Social control and urban order are to be achieved by urging and enabling citizens and communities to “take upon themselves the responsibility for the security of their property and their persons” (Rose 2000b: 327). Government through responsibility is as dominant here as in other dimensions of social and economic policy. How is this to be achieved? According to sociologist Mitchell Dean (2002), government in the service of good order and social control becomes a matter of both:

- punishing those who refuse to take responsibility for themselves, who have rejected the opportunities provided for them to take their place in the community and thereby constitute a threat to civility and good order.

- assisting those individuals and associations who are willing to take responsibility for their own security and the civility of their community, through partnership and the provision of ‘opportunity’;

Drawing on this analysis of neoliberal urban governance, we can label these two families of social control strategies as *discipline* and *responsibilisation*.

The *graffiti-e-nose* and *Citizens Connect* are good examples of how property owners and citizens equipped with mobile media are being mobilised in neoliberal social control strategies. In the case of the *graffiti-e-nose*, mobile media devices are connected with networked sensors in a *disciplinary* technology which seeks to capture and punish ‘anti-social’ graffiti writers who have failed to take their place in the community. In *Citizens Connect*, mobile media devices equipped with Web 2.0 applications are enlisted to assist individuals to take *responsibility* for their own communities. In both cases, the discourse of ‘community’ is central – its ties, bonds, and values become the very means of neoliberal government and social control (Rose 2000b: 329). Some years ago, Stanley Cohen (1985: 116) noted this emerging centrality of the discourse of ‘community’:

It would be difficult to exaggerate how this ideology – or more accurately, this single word – has come to dominate Western crime-control discourse in the last few decades.

In the cases of the *graffiti-e-nose* and *Citizens Connect*, then, the forms of citizen engagement enabled by mobile media are put to work “in the name of good citizenship, public order and the control or elimination of criminality, delinquency and anti-social conduct” (Rose 2000b: 324).

However, we must not succumb to the tendency to see these neoliberal strategies of social control as all-powerful or beyond contestation (Larner 2003). As noted earlier, dominant configurations of citizenship never have things all their own way. This is certainly true of neoliberalism, as neoliberal ideologies compete with others to shape the strategies of urban governance. Giving citizens more responsibility for their own governance, helping them to take charge of their own destiny, is a risky strategy. There is always the chance that citizens might deploy their autonomy in unpredictable ways. As Nancy Fraser (2003: 165) has pointed out in her discussion of neoliberalism, we should not be too quick to “reduce its autonomy-fostering orientation to a normalizing regimentation”. Neoliberalism is far from a cohesive program, and is prone to all sorts of “internal fissions and contradictions” (O’Malley

1998). Most importantly for our discussion here, the techniques and technologies developed in the service of neoliberal governance efforts are by no means guaranteed to work, nor are their applications exclusively bound to neoliberal projects. ‘Autonomous’, ‘responsible’ citizens might mobilise these very same techniques and technologies for alternative ends. To return to the language used earlier, they might try to change the ‘rules of the game’. Indeed, O’Malley (2009: 277) notes that:

many features of neoliberalism were fought for by both the political left and right. ... Responsibilization owes at least some of its nature and impetus to politically left demands to take back control from the state and expertise – even if the result has not always been as intended.

This is why *ReFace* is significant. Unlike both the *graffiti-e-nose* and *Citizens Connect*, the aim of *ReFace* is not to offer a new ‘solution’ to the ‘graffiti problem’. Rather, it seeks to *redefine* the very nature of graffiti problem which is to be solved, by provoking a debate about the place of graffiti in the city. Here, systems and processes for participation are not designed to enlist the citizenry in the on-going war on graffiti, they are instead designed to engage citizens in debate and dialogue about the aims and objectives of graffiti policy. *ReFace* thereby contests the notion that graffiti is nothing but anti-social behaviour, by focusing on its artistic and provocative qualities. It even invites citizens to see their own art and writing projected on walls in the city, if only temporarily. Here, we see social and mobile media used not so much in the service of discipline or responsabilisation, but in the service of *politicisation*. My use of the term *politicisation* here is based on the particular understanding of the political discussed above, as a kind of practice which disrupts existing norms and rules of citizenship. As Tully (1999: 170) put it: “Politics is the type of game in which the framework - the rules of the game - can come up for deliberation and amendment in the course of the game” (see also Rancière 1999; Iveson 2009). *ReFace* is an example of politicisation in action, as ‘insurgent’ or ‘dissident’ citizens use it to make the claim that graffiti and graffiti writers (not to mention graffiti lovers) might actually have a proper place in the city (as both a physical environment and a political community). Citizen engagement and participation is not premised on playing by the rules of the game in the ‘war on graffiti’, as it is with the *graffiti-e-nose* and *Citizens Connect*.

4. mobile media, urban governance and citizenship: discipline, responsabilisation, politicisation

Drawing on the analysis above, let me now consolidate this basic typology of different uses of social and mobile media technologies for urban governance and citizen engagement. I have argued that we can distinguish between three families of governance strategies which make use of the participatory possibilities of mobile media:

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Associated uses of mobile media</i>
Discipline	Securing the city on behalf of ‘good citizens’ through the identification and containment of ‘anti-social’ urban inhabitants who are either unable or unwilling to be part of the city	Surveillance, identification and sorting of populations and activities
Responsibilisation	Assisting urban citizens to take responsibility for their own quality of life through the good governance of their communities	Provision of better information to inform/shape choice in context, consultation of citizens about pre-defined policy options, new lines of communication between citizens and urban authorities
Politicisation	Claiming of new ‘rights to the city’ by contesting the rules and norms of belonging, in order to include people/practices that have no proper place in the city	‘Making the invisible visible’, harnessing autonomy to network with other participants in political projects, forging displacements through interruptions to everyday routines and arrangements of space

Now, it is important to note that this typology (like all typologies) is quite crude, and is offered only as an heuristic device. The messy reality of urban life and the rapid mutation of technology have a happy habit of exceeding such attempts at containment and categorisation! Indeed, the distinctions between the different purposes, characteristics and applications I have sketched out in this table are not nearly so neatly differentiated in practice.

For instance, there is a very fine line between the use of mobile media and networked sensors in the service of politicisation and their use in the service of discipline, because *both* of these citizenship strategies involve ‘making the invisible visible’ (Iveson 2007: 213-218). Being seen (and heard) is a fundamental condition of making political claims and participating in political life as a citizen. Furthermore, the politicisation of an issue frequently involves efforts to expose something that was previously hidden to wider public attention. As Sandercock (2003: 224) put it, insurgent urban politics involves “making the hitherto invisible visible” in order to “also make it discussable”. But visibility is also a condition of discipline. Indeed, the history of efforts to control the city is a history of efforts to render people and practices visible to the ‘eye of power’ (Certeau 1984; Foucault 1980). Given that ‘making the invisible visible’ is frequently used to describe the aspirations of applications in the burgeoning field of urban informatics,⁶ then clearly different applications of mobile media are going to be caught up in a highly fraught politics of visibility (Crang and Graham 2007; see also Barnes 2009). Think of our three examples above, each of which mobilise mobile media and networked sensors to make graffiti more visible but for quite different purposes. *ReFace* seeks to contest and politicise urban places by haunting them with visual projections of their hidden potential to be surfaces for graffiti. But the *graffit-e-nose* seeks to expose graffiti writers to security agencies, and the images collected through *Citizens Connect* can be used to map the activity of individual graffiti writers to assist with their prosecution. Beyond these considerations of graffiti, Nathan Eagle’s (2009) work on slum-mapping in Nairobi also illustrates this tension between visibility for politicisation and visibility for discipline. He has used data provided by mobile phone companies to map the extent of slum populations and the times and locations of economic activities. Such efforts to make slum populations visible are absolutely crucial to facilitating the political claims of slum dwellers for rights to the city, as this information can be used by government to better target services to slum populations (Appadurai 2001). As such, ‘making the invisible visible’ is a valuable tool for politicisation. On the other hand, if the current administration were to be

replaced by a more repressive regime, the very same map could be used to direct the bulldozers for the kinds of slum clearance operations which we have witnessed in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa (Davis 2004). In other words, 'making the invisible visible' could also be put to work for disciplining urban slum dwellers who were previously 'off the radar'.

Similarly, there is also a fine line between responsabilisation and politicisation: the facilitation of participation/collaboration through mobile media may look quite similar even if the purposes are quite distinct. We saw that this was the case with the *Citizens Connect* and *ReFace* applications. We could further illustrate this with some consideration of Web 2.0 applications such as user-generated review pages. Armed with networked mobile media devices, we might be able to access information about restaurants which has been provided by previous patrons or government inspection agencies. If we are in an unfamiliar neighbourhood looking for something to eat, this could be very handy indeed (Greenfield and Shepard 2007). Such an application of mobile media is designed to enable us to make better market choices as individuals by accessing information, and as such as a fairly straight-forward example of responsabilisation. But the very same applications could be modified to help us share information about the labour practices of different restaurants, or the sustainability of the produce they use to produce their food. Connected as they are to collective efforts to change the nature of urban life, these applications might be considered as examples of politicisation which make the invisible visible. In the USA and UK, for example, so-called CarrotMobbers deploy the 'carrot' of consumer buying rather than the 'stick' of boycotting or bad publicity to encourage ethical business, using the networking capabilities of mobile media devices to assemble crowds at establishments that have embraced ethical and sustainable business practices (Taylor 2008).

Finally, we should also note that the implications of different mobile media applications for citizenship will inevitably escape their intentions. In this chapter, I have focused mainly on the intentions of the examples under consideration in order to construct my typology. But we can well imagine how these intentions might fail to be met. Perhaps the aspirations of the *graffiti-e-nose* for stealth surveillance (whereby it senses graffiti writers but remains invisible to them) will come unstuck thanks to politicians seeking to promote their use of the device in the media. And surely a picture of the closely-guarded device will eventually find its way onto the internet. Perhaps the aspirations of *Citizens Connect* will not be met because the kinds of people who like to complain to the City of Boston about graffiti

are not the kinds of people who carry iPhones. And perhaps the effect of projecting virtual graffiti in order to *ReFace* a wall will only reinforce for some people the destructive nature of 'real' graffiti.

5. mobile technologies and citizen engagement: participation ≠ empowerment (but empowerment = participation)

Let us now return to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter – how should we evaluate the impact of experiments designed to extend the participatory practices and cultures associated with Web 2.0 to urban governance, by using of social and mobile media to help people to engage with one another and with urban authorities as *citizens*?

The analysis I have offered in this chapter suggests that there is no single answer to this question. I have argued that different applications of social and mobile media technologies will have different impacts urban life, depending on the model of governance and the strategies of citizenship they embody. For those of us who want to make the city more democratic, the challenge is to identify and exploit the possibilities of social and mobile media for the *politicisation* of existing exclusions and inequalities. I hope that I have demonstrated in this chapter that the concept of urban citizenship provides a useful conceptual tool through which we can approach this task.

In conclusion, one of the most important implications of the discipline-responsibilisation-politicisation framework I have advanced here is this -- if a mobile media application deployed in the service of urban governance is participatory and engages citizens, this does not make it inherently progressive or empowering. Or, to put it another way, empowerment must involve participation, but the reverse is not necessarily true. The active participation of citizens in the gathering and analysis of digital data about their own activities and the cities they inhabit does not necessarily signal the emergence of a *politics* of the good city. Rather, such participation may well be bound up with projects of social control through discipline and responsabilisation which are characteristic features of neoliberal cities. As Greenfield and Shepard (2007) have observed, some visions of participation embedded in urban informatics technologies position the citizen as little more than a collector or provider of information on behalf of urban authorities. We therefore need to ask critical questions

about the kinds of participation that are enabled by applications of mobile devices and their associated visions of the city. Are we participating in enacting someone else's vision of the good city? Or are we participating in struggles to make the game of urban citizenship more just?

references

- Appadurai, A. 2001. "Deep Democracy: Urban Governmentality and the Horizon of Politics." *Environment and Urbanization*, 13, 23-43.
- Barnes, S. 2009. "Sydney Sidetracks: Listening in to 'history where it happened' using the ABC's television and radio archives." Paper presented to Australia and New Zealand Communications Association conference *Communication, Creativity and Global Citizenship*. Brisbane, July, available at http://www.cpe.qut.edu.au/conferences/2009/anzca/proceedings/Barns_ANZCA09.pdf.
- Burnham, S. 2010. "The Call and Response of Street Art and the City." *City*, 14(1-2): 133-139
- Certeau, M. de. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cohen, S. 1985. *Visions of social control: crime, punishment, and classification*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Crang, M. & S. Graham. 2007. "Sentient Cities: ambient intelligence and the politics of urban space." *Information, Communication and Society* 10(6): 789-817.
- Davis, M. 2004. "Planet of Slums." *New Left Review* 26: 5-34.
- Dean, M. 2002. "Liberal government and authoritarianism." *Economy and Society* 31(1): 37-61.
- Eagle, N. 2009. "Engineering a Common Good: Fair Use of Aggregated, Anonymized Behavioral Data." Paper presented to *Engaging Data Forum*. MIT, Boston, October 12, available at <http://senseable.mit.edu/engagingdata/program.html>.
- Foucault, M. 1980. The Eye of Power. In *Power/Knowledge - Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977*, edited by C. Gordon. Brighton: Harvester Press.
- Fraser, N. 2003. "From Discipline to Flexibilization? Rereading Foucault in the Shadow of Globalization." *Constellations* 10(2): 160-171.

- Galloway, A. 2004. "Intimations of everyday life." *Cultural Studies* 18(2-3): 384-408.
- Greenfield, A. & M. Shepard. 2007. *Urban Computing and its Discontents*. New York: Architectural League of New York.
- Hirschberg, P. 2009. Keynote Address. Paper presented to *Engaging Data Forum*. MIT, Boston, October 12, available at <http://senseable.mit.edu/engagingdata/program.html>.
- Holston, J. 1998. "Spaces of Insurgent Citizenship." In *Making the Invisible Visible: A Multicultural Planning History*, ed. L. Sandercock. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Holston, J. & A. Appadurai. 1999. (eds) *Cities and Citizenship*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Isin, E. 1999. (ed) *Democracy, Citizenship and the Global City*. London: Routledge.
- Isin, E. 2002. *Being political: genealogies of citizenship*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Iveson, K. 2007. *Publics and the City*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Iveson, K. 2009. "War if over (if you want it): a new approach to the graffiti problem." *Australian Planner* 46(4): 22-31.
- Iveson, K. 2010. "The wars on graffiti and the new military urbanism." *City* 14(1-2): 112-131.
- Kang, J. and D. Kuff. 2005. "Pervasive Computing: Embedding the Public Sphere." *Washington and Lee Law Review* 62 (1):93-147.
- King, R. & G. Kendall. 2004 *The State, Democracy and Globalization*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Larner, W. 2003. "Neoliberalism?" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 21(5):509-512.
- O'Malley, P. 1998. "Indigenous Governance." In *Governing Australia: Studies in contemporary rationalities of government*, eds. M. Dean & B. Hindess. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Malley, P. 2009. "Responsibilization". In *The SAGE Dictionary of Policing*, eds. A. Wakefield and J. Fleming. London: Sage.
- Paulos, E., R. J. Honicky and B. Hooker. 2008. "Citizen Science: Enabling Participatory Urbanism." In *Handbook of Research on Urban Informatics: The Practice and Promise of the Real-Time City*, edited by M. Foth. Hershey: Information Science Reference.
- Peck, J. & A. Tickell 2002. "Neoliberalizing Space." *Antipode* 34(3):380-404.

- Rancière, J. 1999. *Disagreement: politics and philosophy*. Translated by J. Rose. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Rose, N. 2000a. "Governing cities, governing citizens." In *Democracy, Citizenship and the Global City*, ed. E. Isin,. London and New York: Routledge: 95-109
- Rose, N. 2000b "Government and control." *British Journal of Criminology* 40(2): 321-339.
- Sandercock, L. 2003. *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities in the 21st Century*. London: Continuum.
- Sparks, H. 1997. "Dissident Citizenship." *Hypatia* 12(4): 71-110.
- Staeheli, L. 2003. "Introduction: Cities and Citizenship." *Urban Geography* 24(2): 97-102.
- Taylor, T. 2008. "Meet the CarrotMob." *The Guardian*, September 18.
- Tully, J. 1999. "The agonic freedom of citizens." *Economy and Society* 28(2): 161-182.
- Turner, B. S. 1994. "General Commentary." In *Citizenship: Critical Concepts*, eds. B. S. Turner & P. Hamilton. London: Routledge.
- Varsanyi, M. W. 2006. "Interrogating 'Urban Citizenship' vis-a-vis Undocumented Migration." *Citizenship Studies* 10(2): 229-249.
- Williams, A., E. Robles & P. Dourish. 2008 "Urbane-ing the City: Examining and Refining the Assumptions Behind Urban Informatics." In *Handbook of Research on Urban Informatics: The Practice and Promise of the Real-time City*, ed. M. Foth. New York: Information Science Research: 1-20.

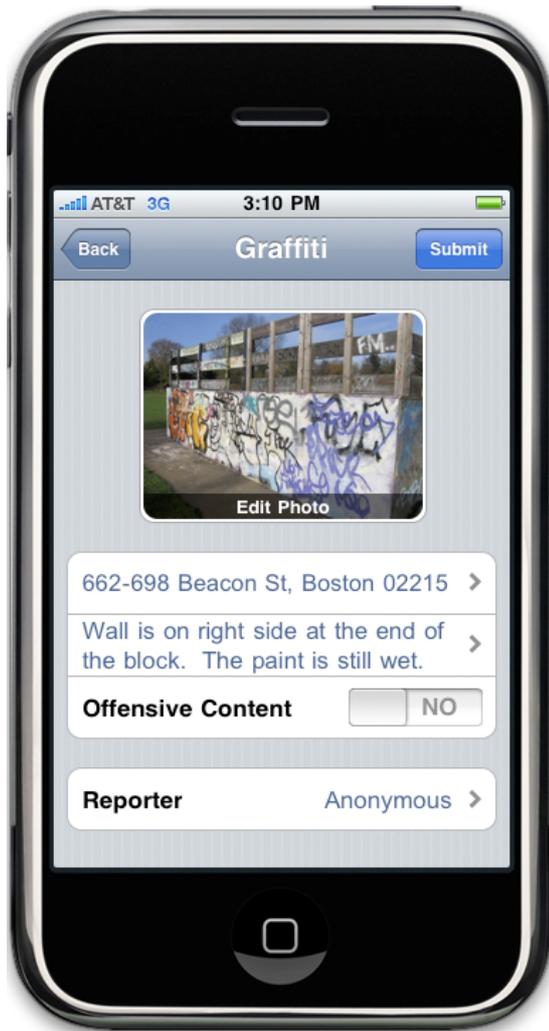


Figure 1: User interface for Citizens Connect iPhone application. Source: www.cityofboston.gov



Figure 2: ReFace Projection, Perth. Source: Jerrem Lynch (jerrem.com)

¹ www.e-nose.info/documents/E-Nose_security.pdf

² <http://www.cityofboston.gov/mis/apps/iphone.asp>

³ <http://reface.abc.net.au>

⁴ <http://www.grlaustralia.com>

⁵ This is particular so in an age of globalisation. While it is frequently observed that globalisation is challenging the dominance of the nation-state as the site of citizenship King, R. & G. Kendall. 2004. *The State, Democracy and Globalization*. Basingstoke: Palgrave., this only reinforces the significance of the city for citizenship. As Isin (1999: 13) has observed, “Cities, particularly global cities, have become political spaces where the concentration of different groups and their identities are intertwined with the articulation of various claims to citizenship rights.”

⁶ Dan Hill has described this term as ‘ubiquitous’ and even ‘massively over-used’ in the field, even as he still finds it useful – see his entries at www.cityofsound.com on 11 and 13 October 2009.