Geographies of radical democracy:

Agonistic pragmatism and the formation of affected interests

Clive Barnett*

and

Gary Bridge**

***** **Faculty of Social Science, The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK.**

****** **School of Policy Studies, University of Bristol, UK.**

Abstract

There is significant interest in democracy in contemporary human geography. Theoretically, this interest has been most strongly influenced by poststructuralist theories of radical democracy, and associated ontologies of relational spatiality. These emphasise *a priori* understandings of the spaces of democratic politics, ones which focus on marginal spaces and the de-stabilization of established patterns. This article develops an alternative account of the spaces of democratic politics, one which seeks to move beyond the stylised contrast of poststructuralist agonism and liberal consensualism. This alternative draws into focus the spatial dimensions of philosophical pragmatism, and the relevance of this tradition for thinking about the geographies of democracy. In particular, the geographical relevance of pragmatism lies in the distinctive inflection of the all-affected principle and of the rationalities of problem-solving. Drawing on John Dewey's work, a conceptualisation of transactional space is developed to reconfigure understandings of the agonistics of participation as well as the experimental institutionalisation of democratic will. The difference that a pragmatist approach makes to understandings of the geographies of democracy is explored in relation to transnational and urban politics.

Keywords; *affected interests; Chicago; democracy; pragmatism; transactional space*

Geographies of radical democracy: Agonistic pragmatism and the formation of affected interests

There is growing interest in democracy in human geography, as a focus of empirical research and a framework of normative evaluation (e.g. Barnett and Low 2004; Stokke 2009). This reflects real-world processes of 'democratization' (e.g. Bell and Staeheli 2001; O'Loughlin 2004; Slater 2009; Springer 2009), and the worldly relevance of electoral geographies to the exercise of power across the globe (e.g. Johnston and Glasmeier 2007; Cupples 2009). It is also a reflection of shifts in the normative paradigms which underwrite self-consciously 'critical' human geography. Democracy now provides the rallying call of even the most radical of geographical analyses of neoliberalizing accumulation by dispossession (e.g. Harvey 2005; Purcell 2008). The absence of robust democratic politics is recognised as a key factor in the reproduction of social injustice and inequality, and the exposure of vulnerable or marginalised groups to serious harm (e.g. Ettlinger 2007). And place-making is presented as a crucial dimension in cultivating and sustaining a pluralistic ethos of democratic culture (e.g. Entrikin 1999; 2002b).

Research on democracy in geography can be divided into two approaches (Barnett and Low 2009). One focuses on the efficacy of institutionalised norms of democratic politics; the other focuses on the potential for transforming and extending these norms. In the first approach, research in electoral geography investigates how the mechanisms of liberal representative democracy are spatially organised (Agnew 1996; Johnston 2002; Morrill, Knopp and Brown 2007). In the second area, research in critical human geography explores the potential for the emergence of more radical democratic practices, a potential which is assumed to lie in the fractures and margins

of liberal-representative polities. From this perspective, democracy is not simply a set of procedures for legitimizing the decisions of bureaucracies or holding elected representatives accountable.

A broadly shared model of democracy as a 'contestatory' regime (Pettit 1999) informs research in geography on radical democracy. This is illustrated by the prevalence of post-structuralist theories of radical democracy in geography. These theories redefine 'the political' as a realm in which new identities are formed and new agendas are generated, and through which the stabilized procedures, institutions, and identifications of official politics are contested and potentially transformed (e.g. Massey 1995; Spaces of Democracy and Democracy of Space Network 2009). The spatialized ontologies that geographers have pioneered have drawn the discipline into debates informed by a distinctive strand of contemporary political theory that focuses on the agonistic, dissensual aspects of democracy (e.g. Massey 2005; Featherstone 2008; Swyngedouw 2009). The ascendancy of post-structuralist theories of radical democracy has in part been justified by reference to the overly consensual vision of politics attributed to theories of communicative and deliberative democracy, not least as these have been translated into practices of urban planning (e.g. Pugh 2005; Purcell 2008). At the same time, post-structuralist theories of radical democracy support the view that a pivotal aspect of emancipatory political action is the de-naturalization of everyday understandings of space, place and nature.

We aim in this article to broaden the frame of reference in which the idea of 'radical democracy' is understood in geography. We aim to do so not least by restoring to view the institutional imagination of theories of radical democracy indebted to the heritage of American philosophical pragmatism. We elaborate the distinctive geographical concerns which inform this tradition. Pragmatism is a living tradition of

thought (Bernstein 2010; Talisse and Aiken 2011), which exceeds the classical canon of Dewey, James, and Pierce (see Wood and Smith 2008). Pragmatism is an important source of current debates in political theory about transnational democratization (e.g. Bohman 2007), urban politics (e.g. Fung 2006), and alternative forms of economy and governance (e.g. Unger 2007a). It has become an important reference point for key thinkers from what is often thought of as a distinct 'Continental' tradition. For example, pragmatism is an important reference for the reconstruction of critical theory as a theory of deliberative democracy (Aboulafia, Bookman and Kemp 2002; Rehg 2001). In turn, the revivification of pragmatist philosophy inspired by Richard Rorty and continued in the neo-Analytical pragmatism of Robert Brandom has informed the democratic theory of Habermas (2000). In a different register, Bruno Latour's (2004a, 2005) reflections on the type of political analysis implied by actor-network theory is indebted to a Deweyian understanding of the formation of democratic publics (see Russill 2005; Marres 2007).

   In widening the scope of intellectual reference through which the geographies of democracy might be theorised, we aim to move beyond the stylized contrast between 'consensual' theories of democracy, often ascribed to John Rawls or Jürgen Habermas, and 'conflictual' theories championed by writers such as Chantal Mouffe, Jacques Ranciere, or William Connolly. The prevalent strains of radical democratic theory in human geography have drawn on post-structuralist understandings of hegemonic politics, autonomous movements, and democracy-to-come, informed by ontologies of antagonism, abundance, and lack (see Tonder and Thomassen 2005). This post-structuralist strand of thought has tended to dominate theoretical discussions of democracy and democratic justice in human geography, lending itself well to arguments in which politics is understood primarily as a matter of transforming the

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political ordering of space (e.g. Dikeç 2007, Soja 2010). Rawlsian and in particular Habermasian strands of thought have tended to be critically applied in more practically oriented fields of geographical research, such as development studies, urban and regional planning, or environmental decision-making.

In large part, then, debates in geography about how best to conceptualise democracy replay the stand-offs evident in political theory (see Karagiannis and Wagner 2008, 328; see also Karagiannis and Wagner 2005). Over-emphasising agonism, conflict, and dissensus detracts from thinking through problems of coordination, institutional design, and justification of the common good which any normatively persuasive and empirically grounded critical theory of democracy needs also to address (see Wright 2010). This over-emphasis becomes all the more serious when we acknowledge that the value of democratic politics is often most at stake in contexts where politics is shaped by intense, even violent divisions (Mann 2004). The challenge of thinking about democratic politics in deeply divided societies militates against the general applicability of post-structuralist agonism to all situations of democratic contestation (see Dryzek 2005; Schaap 2006).

The emphasis on contestation and the de-bunking of ideologically loaded understandings of space has produced a blockage in human geography when it comes to thinking about alternative institutional designs which might flesh out radical egalitarian democratic ideals. The definition of radical democracy as a generalised mode of contestation and disruption lends itself well to the prevalence in human geography of narratives of all-encompassing neoliberal hegemony (e.g. Brenner and Theodore 2002; Harvey 2005). As Ferguson (2010) has recently argued, however, there is an significant political difference at stake in seemingly arcane differences between conceptualisations of neoliberalism as a hegemonic project of class-power,

informed by Marxist theory (Harvey 2010), and conceptualising neoliberalization as a contingent assemblage of varied 'arts of government', informed by governmentality theory (Ong 2006). The latter approach presumes that there is an imperative on critical analysis to think through the possibilities of alternative 'arts of government', rather than restricting analysis to mapping counter-hegemonic contestation and disruption. It is here that we situate our argument for taking more seriously the pragmatist strains in radical democratic theory. Pragmatism interrupts the shared terrain of current debates on the geographies of democracy by bringing an 'institutional imagination' to these debates (see Kioupliolis 2010).

Drawing into focus the pragmatist influences shaping critical theories of democracy helps us restore to view the degree to which 'deliberation' in this strand of democratic theory is not necessarily understood as a medium of rational consensus formation, the view often attributed to Habermas. Rather, a broad range of communicative practices are presented as the spaces for agonistic encounters with others and exposures to power-charged difference (e.g. Young 1993; Dryzek 2000). It is this sense of deliberation as an ongoing transformative practice that underwrites John Dewey's expansive participatory conception of radical democracy as a process of debate, discussion, and persuasion in public and oriented to concerted, collective action (Langsdorf 2002). By focussing on the pragmatist investments of recent democratic theory, we seek to locate the agonistic dynamics of democratic politics in the negotiation of competing rationalities generated by situations which demand concerted public action. In contrast to a view which identifies democracy narrowly with practices of disruption of established orders (see Staeheli 2009), pragmatism accords considerable importance to experimental practices through which alternative institutional designs are developed (e.g. Anderson 2006; Goodin and Dryzek 2006;

Fung 2006; Unger 2007b). This experimental emphasis in pragmatist approaches to theorising democracy opens up an alternative approach to conceptualising the relationship between space and democratic politics. We develop this approach below by reconstructing the principle of 'all-affected interests', and then relate this to a distinctively pragmatist concept of transactional space.

Problematizing the geographies of democratic participation

The concern in pragmatism with thinking through the practical limitations and possibilities of enacting inclusive norms of democratic participation overlaps with a broader tradition of self-consciously radical egalitarian democratic theory that emphasises the instrumental and intrinsic value of *participation* as the central normative feature of democratic politics (Dahl 1970, Pateman 1970). This broad tradition of radical democracy shares is a conviction that democratic politics amounts to more than formal procedures for the aggregation of individualised voter preferences.

We suggested above that pragmatist understandings of democracy are characterised by a two related commitments: first, to a norm of expansive communicative practices as spaces of agonistic encounter; and second to experimenting with institutional designs. Taken together, these two features simultaneously affirm and problematize the value of participation as a fundamental democratic principle. The emphasis on experimentation is indicative of an acknowledgment that participation in complex, differentiated, unequal, spatially and temporally distanciated social formations is necessarily mediated, partial, and reflexive.

It is the commitment to the norm of participation that distinguishes theories of radical democracy from liberal approaches. But radical approaches are themselves

differentiated by divisions over how best to understand practices of participation. We want here to draw into focus the place in which geography becomes an issue in radical democratic conceptions of participation. Once attention is focussed on participation, then inclusion emerges as the central norm of democratic politics. For example, Iris Marion Young's (2000) influential account of communicative democracy, which has been influential in human geography and related fields such as urban studies over the last two decades, is guided by a norm of inclusion: "The normative legitimacy of a democratic definition depends on the degree to which those affected by it have been included in the decision-making process and have had the opportunity to influence the outcomes" (Young 2000, 5-6). The emphasis in Young's work on inclusion is what most immediately appeals to spatial theorists, since it identifies a distinctive form of harm that is easily translated in a geographical idiom: – exclusion based on the maintenance of sedimented boundaries and limits (e.g. Staeheli and Mitchell 2004; Staeheli, Mitchell, Nagel 2009). However, we want to emphasise the prior aspect of Young's principle, which is on being *affected* by decisions. The norm of inclusion implies a commitment to a more fundamental principle according to which "what affects all must be agreed to by all" (Tully 2008, 74). The principle of "all-affected interests" is a basic rule of democratic legitimacy from which contemporary democratic theories of various stripes depart in different ways, including Rawlsian, Habermasian, and ecological approaches (ibid.).

  Thinking of radical democracy in terms of participation, around a norm of inclusion, therefore draws into focus the need to re-think the geographies of the all-affected principle. Without being spelt out, the idea of all-affected interests is an animating principle in claims by geographers and urban theorists that globalisation calls for the need to rethink the political geographies of democracy. For example, Amin, Thrift

and Massey (2005) argue that there is a need to respatialize the democratic imagination to match the scope and complexity of globalized interactions. They claim that current practices of representative democracy exclude some affected actors from decision-making, in so far as these practices are still imagined and institutionalised as territorialised at the scale of the nation-state. Likewise, the all-affected principle is implicit in the attempt to connect arguments about the neoliberalized restructuring of urban and regional governance to the specifically democratic problem of who should be included in decision-making processes (e.g. Swyngedouw 2000; 2009). Political-economic analyses of neoliberalism explain how certain key decision-making processes (particularly over welfare provision, labour market regulation, and capital investment) are being re-located to urban and regional governance structures which effectively exclude those subject to these processes.

A feature of arguments by geographers in favour of re-spatializing democratic theory is an unstated assumption that social science, appropriately attuned to relational ontologies and theories of the production of space, can effectively track the causal chains of contemporary affectedness, and might therefore inform the "re-districting" of democratic practices in more inclusive ways. In the next section, *Rethinking the geographies of affectedness*, by restoring to view the pragmatist inheritance of avowedly communicative understandings of democratic politics, we challenge the sense that the all-affected principle is "geographical" in the straightforwardly causal, explanatory sense that is often assumed in political theory and human geography alike. We then move on in the section on *Transactional spaces of public action* to develop an alternative view of how spatial questions might matter to how we theorise democracy, a view related to a conceptualisation of transactional space indebted to philosophical pragmatism. And in the final section of the article,

Spaces of democratic experimentation, we work through this pragmatist

conceptualisation of the contingent enactment of inclusive democratic spaces in

relation to debates around two distinct "scales" of democratic innovation. We

articulate recent discussions of transnational politics, developed by critical theorists

working a Habermasian vein of deliberative and post-deliberative democratic theory,

with pragmatist arguments about the distinctive role of urban politics as a scene of

democratic experimentation.

Rethinking the geographies of affectedness

As we have already established, the question of how to determine who has the right to

participate in public life is a fundamental problem for democratic theory.

Conventionally, participation in a democratic polity is based on membership as a

citizen of a territorially defined polity (see Dahl 1989; 1999). Geographers have

become highly astute in deconstructing this sort of assumption, on the basis that

territories are far from natural entities, and that criteria of membership can be

arbitrary and exclusionary (e.g. Low 1997; Sparke 2005; Zierhofer 2007). A

spatialized understanding of exclusion underwrites the most influential

conceptualisation of democracy in human geography, the poststructuralist account of

radical democracy developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (Laclau and

Mouffe 1985; Mouffe 1995; cf. Abizadeh 2005; Barnett 2004).

  The same suspicion of territorialized geographies of political inclusion underwrites

the revival of interest in the all-affected principle in theories of global democracy

(Held 1995) and of global egalitarian justice (Pogge 2001). In these debates,

globalization is understood as an exogenous event impacting on places (Sassen 2007),

an understanding which informs conceptual manoeuvres through which key concepts

of democratic theory have been analytically "disaggregated" (Cohen 1999). A preconstructed understanding of globalization is used to establish that territorially defined citizenship is exclusionary, effectively disenfranchising affected parties from involvement in decisions that affect them. The all-affected principle is presented as an alternative criterion of democratic inclusion, one equal to the challenges of globalization, and preferable to the arbitrary exclusions of membership based on shared identity and inherited boundaries. The notion of a "community of affected" or "affected interest" offers an alternative criterion of participation, which shifts attention away from the question of "Who is a Member?" onto to questions of "Who is Affected?" (Shapiro 2003, 223). And in this move, there is a tendency to present the all-affected idea as a *causally based* principle: "The right to participate comes from one's having an interest that can be expected to be affected by the particular collective action in question" (Shapiro 1999, 38).

The all-affected principle therefore seems particularly well attuned to the concerns of human geographers. The relational ontologies of spatiality that geographers have perfected lead almost automatically to a sense that territorially-defined criteria of membership in a democratic polity are *a priori* suspect, on two grounds. First, they are exclusionary of residents or denizens of a territory who do not meet specific identity-based criteria of citizenship. And second, they are exclusionary of those located outside a given territory who might have good grounds to claim a legitimate interest is affected by collective actions decided upon 'democratically' within that territory. The causal understanding has also been used to argue for a thorough-going overhaul of the shapes and scales through which democratic politics should be imagined.

However, the primacy of the causal interpretation of the all-affected principle is not quite as straightforward as it seems. It is actually rather difficult to disentangle simple relations of cause and effect, actions and consequences, when dealing with complex social, economic, or cultural processes (see Dahl 1970; Bohman 2007). Attempts to establish the identity of affected parties cannot avoid the problem of arbitrariness that also stalks the membership-based criterion. Shapiro (1999, 39) suggests that tort law provides a model for practically implementing the causally based model all-affected interests. But this proposal only underscores the impression that what is at stake is a rather complex process of attribution, involving empirical understandings of causal processes, conceptual understandings of effective agency, and moral ascriptions of responsibility. Indeed, understood as a causal principle, the idea of all-affected interests might turn out to be incoherent. It seems to lead inevitably either to an unlimited expansion of the franchise or an increasing restriction of the power of any *demos* (Goodin 2007).

Two things underwrite this pessimistic interpretation. First, it arises from a literalist interpretation of the idea that only those affected by a decision should have a say in shaping it. And second, the apparent incoherence of the all-affected principle arises from focusing on this idea as a criterion for establishing the contours of the demos *in advance* of politics. In short, arguments both for or against applying the all-affected principle as a criterion are intimately related to the idea that social science and political philosophy should be able to determine the scope of democratic participation by a combination of causal analysis and normative reasoning.

It is here that the appeal of pragmatist-inflected theories of democratic justice exerts itself. One feature of this strand of democratic theory is a *dialogical* mode of theoretical reasoning (e.g. Benhabib 2004, 110-114; Fraser 2008, 67-68). From this

perspective, the all-affected principle emerges less as an abstract causal criterion, and more like an animating political intuition, providing reasons to act by implicitly drawing on values of equal moral worth. On this understanding, the all-affected principle should be thought of not as an adjudicating principle, but as a worldly normative force generating political claims and counter-claims. Nancy Fraser's account of the democratic potentials of various 'post-Westphalian' configurations of power, solidarity, and organization most clearly articulates this dialogical way of thinking about affected interests. Fraser argues that even the most participatory and inclusive models of democratic legitimacy conflate two analytically distinct issues: *membership* and *affectedness*. And she claims that "globalization is driving a widening wedge between affectedness and political membership" (2008, 95).

Fraser's argument is that the activism of global social justice movements, which seeks to reframe justice claims contained at one level by articulating them with more extensive, distant networks of solidarity and accountability, deploy the registers of affected interest as rhetorical strategies to challenge the containment of political contention within territorial limits. She argues that membership is a poor surrogate for affectedness, and increasingly so. According to her account, transnational activists themselves apply the all-affected principle directly to the framing of justice claims "without going through the detour of state-territoriality" (2008, 25). They do so by engaging in a contestatory politics of representation which seeks to re-frame the geographical scales at which the subjects, objects and agents of justice-claims are articulated together. This argument about affectedness as a register of claims-making returns the all-affected principle to the more pragmatic interpretation provided by Robert Dahl, for whom the affected interest idea is not likely to settle the question of

the scope and identity of the demos, but who suggests that it is nevertheless "not such a bad principle to start with" (Dahl 1970, 66).

Despite the appearance given by her use of vocabulary of 'scales of justice', the most fundamental contribution of Fraser's dialogical re-formulation of the all-affected principle is not just to extend the scope of democratic legitimacy beyond the confines of the nation-state (cf. Israel 2010). Rather, it is to re-locate issues of legitimacy from one different geographical register, one of the *geographies of causality*, to another, one of *spaces of communicative action*. Drawing into view the communicative dimensions of affectedness suggests that the all-affected interest principle needs to be understood as more than a straightforwardly causal principle whose dimensions can be literally 'mapped'.

The communicative formation of democratic publics

The pragmatist understanding we are developing in this article emphasises the communicative dimensions of affectedness. This makes the idea of all-affected interest central to a geographical conceptualisation of democratic politics, and this in turn requires an understanding of the imaginary constitution of the democratic polity. To develop such an understanding, it is fruitful to consider the account of the relation between affectedness and the formation of democratic publics provided by John Dewey. Dewey defined a public as consisting of "all those who are affected by the indirect consequences of transactions to such an extent that is deemed necessary to have those consequences systematically cared for" (Dewey 1927, 16-17). While this might, at first, look like an affirmation of the causal principle of affected interest, Dewey's primary emphasis is upon the modes of perception and recognition of people's indirect implication in spatially and temporally extensive processes. For

Dewey, a public is primarily an imaginative entity, which is not composed only of all those directly affected by consequences, but emerges only when "the perception of consequences are projected in important ways beyond the persons and associations directly concerned in them" (Dewey, 1927, 39).

Dewey's account of public formation therefore involves a double displacement of the causal interpretation of the all-affected interest principle. First, it emphasises that the recognition of being affected requires the exercise of imagination, not just cognition. And second, it emphasises that it is indirect consequences that enrol people into larger publics, not just an immediate stake or interest in an issue.

In the wake of this double displacement, the causal dimension of affectedness certainly remains an irreducible aspect in understanding the generation of matters of public concern. This aspect helps to account for the potentiality of publics to form around shared concerns to 'take care of' extensive systems of action and their indirect consequences. The actual emergence of a public as a subject of collective action, however, is not simply based on the rational apprehension of chains of cause and effect. To illustrate the difference this double displacement of the causal aspects of affectedness makes to a pragmatist account of democratic public formation, it is worth considering the place of the pragmatist understanding of all-affected interest in James Bohman's (2007) recent account of transnational democracy.

Bohman provides a distinctively pragmatist inflection of the all-affected principle in terms of *indefinite effects* rather than clear causal relations. Bohman holds that globalisation is characterized not so much by its spatial and temporal scope, but rather by its indefinite qualities: "global activities do not necessarily affect everyone, or even the majority of people, in the same way. Rather, the sort of social activities in

question affect an *indefinite* number of people" (2007, 24). Two points follow from Bohman's elaboration of Dewey's emphasis on indirect consequences.

First, as Marres (2005) argues, being affected by some process in a causal way, more or less directly, is not enough in itself to account for the emergence of an issue of shared concern into the public realm. These conditions of affectedness need to be *made* into issues. In this respect, Dewey reminds us that the extension of consequences and interests over space and time is simultaneously also the medium through which people learn to abstract themselves from their own perspectives, as the condition of recognising themselves as participants in a wider public. Likewise, in Bohman's account, the pragmatist insight most at work is the idea that the indefinite extension of communication generates an expanded potential for concerted, cooperative activity.

The second point which follows from contemporary pragmatist thinking, as exemplified by Bohman, is that on its own this vision of expanded communicative potential for the making of public issues runs the risk of reproducing a long-standing worry that pragmatism underestimates issues of power (see Allen 2008). Bohman's identification of the indefinite character of global activities recognises that different actors are differentially affected by global activities. This implies that different actors are differentially empowered to engage with issues (see Young 2007). But more specifically, on Bohman's view, since being affected is indefinite, then some actors are implicated in the activities of others *without having consented to be included*. Even more explicitly than Fraser, who ends up preferring the idea of "all subjected" to that of all-affected as a principle of democratic inclusion, Bohman emphasises *domination* as the primary vector of power around which democratic contestation emerges (see Pettit 2001).

These two points combine to underwrite the distinctive pragmatist sense of all-affectedness as an emergent quality of agonistic, contestatory communicative practices. The pragmatist understanding of the spatial and temporal extension of relations of *indirect consequences* and *indefinite effects* leads to a dual emphasis: on the expanded scope of communicative action through which issue-formation can develop; and on the sense that these processes of making issues public are shaped by power-infused dynamics of recognising and articulating the differential responsibility and accountability of actors for generating and responding to problems of shared concern.

Dewey's formulation of multiple aspects of affectedness in the formation of democratic publics (of being affected causally as well as affectively identifying one's implication in communities of shared interest) helps us see how the all-affected principle is re-configured when it is translated from a narrowly causal principle into an expansively communicative one. This translation is the characteristic move of a broad range of so-called deliberative theories of democracy, informed by critical elaborations of Habermasian discourse ethics. These build on an earlier participatory turn in democratic theory by identifying participatory parity in deliberative practices as a key aspect in the deepening of democracy as a means of promoting justice. But these theories also develop the pragmatist heritage of understanding social practice in terms of plural rationalities of communicative action (Langsdorf 2002; Russill 2005). The articulation of norms of participation with pragmatist inflected understandings of communicative action is a key feature of the radical-democratic tradition (Cohen and Fung 2004). This pragmatist strand of radical democratic theory develops a strongly egalitarian model of democratic justice and political legitimacy as both a critical diagnostic tool and a normatively compelling account of institutional alternatives. In

the pragmatist tradition, the all-affected interest principle is understood as both an instrumental value, in so far as including all interests improves the quality of problem solving in democratic decision-making; and an intrinsic value, as far as participation in deliberative practices enhances democratic virtues, promotes autonomy, and ensures accountability and legitimacy.

We have suggested that there is a tendency to think of the all-affected principle as a causal criterion of evaluation, and that this is related to a particular view of the authoritative role of social science in demarcating the geographies of legitimate democratic inclusion. We have argued that both aspects of this relationship are challenged by bringing into view the pragmatist interpretation of affectedness as a communicative register rather than causal criterion. In the next section, we elaborate on how this communicative idea of all-affected interest provides for a different understanding of how issues of space and spatiality are relevant to conceptualising radical democratic politics. We do so by developing John Dewey's notion of transactional relationships between organisms and environments. We argue that a pragmatist understanding of space leads to a shift in focus when conceptualising radical democracy towards a concern with experimental institutional imaginations as a mode of agonistic problem-solving.

Transactional spaces of public action

In the previous section, we argued that critical theories of democracy transform the notion of affectedness in the all-affected interests principle into an expansively communicative concept, involving interactions between causal processes, processes of identification, learning, and caring, and the exercise of concerted, collective agency. We have also emphasised the pragmatist dimensions of this understanding, because

this assists in avoiding some of the pitfalls inherent in the communicative account. Pragmatist inflected understandings of the all-affected interests idea in terms of 'communicative accountability' (Mason 2001) and public involvement in issue-formation (Marres 2005) challenge strongly 'objectivist' understandings of the problems around which publics form. On such an objectivist understanding, most clearly articulated by Lippmann's (1925) *The Phantom Public*, it is the role of government to manage conflicts of interest arising from externally generated problems which exceed the epistemological competencies of populations. Public opinion is reduced to the function of lending assent to proposed solutions. There is a risk in countering this image of public action by simply asserting the co-constitutive relation of public communication and issue-formation; a risk of lapsing into a nominalist-style of constructivism in which problems emerge as simply contingent discursive articulations.

Dewey provides a route to developing a more robust account of the relationships between generative causal processes and communicative practices of problematization. Dewey's (1927) account of democratic publics explicitly challenges Lippmann's account of the external relationships between problem-generation, public formation, and concerted action (Russill 2008; see also Rabinow 2011). It does so by developing a "problem-responsive" account of action in which the agonism of competing interests is drawn explicitly into processes of public formation, rather than managed externally by government. Recognising this distinctively pragmatist understanding of action as problem-responsive is a central feature of attempts to re-materialise public formation (e.g. Latour 2004b; Latour and Weibel 2005; Marres 2007). As Honneth (2007, 220) observes, the emphasis on the rationalities of problem-solving in Dewey's understanding of action, communication, and democracy

distinguishes it from more assertively communicative accounts of the public sphere. It helps to restore a sense of contestation, conflict and struggle to the process of public formation. In this Section, we draw out the understanding of spatiality upon which this understanding of problem-responsive rationalities of action is based. We do so in order to indicate the distinctive geographical conceptualisation of public formation and democracy that Dewey's work supports. This concept of spatiality is articulated in Dewey's transactional account of perception and action.

As we saw in the previous section, Dewey (1927) defines democratic publicity in terms of the perception or recognition of the indirect effects of activities that must be taken care of in various ways. Activities whose consequences remain circumscribed amongst those directly involved in them are private. But this definition immediately generates a theoretical challenge. It seems to require an account of how people drawn indirectly into the orbit of activities come to recognise their implication in matters of shared, public concern. This is the challenge which Latour (2004a) has dubbed "learning to be affected". This refers to the widening sensitivity to human and non-human in imagining the scope of political community. For Latour, learning to be affected is a normative clarion call to be open to an expansive, pluralist field of impulses and obligations. However, as Russill (2005) argues, understanding processes of learning to be affected in the dynamics of public formation might benefit from greater consideration of Dewey's understanding of the relationship between perception, action and enquiry, and the centrality of problem-solving to the mediation of this relationship. In Dewey's terms, learning to be affected means body-minds learning to being put into motion by a diversity of impulses, out of which a dynamic form of rationality emerges in the process of public formation (see Bridge 2005). And key to Dewey's thinking on this process is the notion of *transaction*.

In Dewey's naturalistic philosophy (1922; 1958), the focus is upon the relations between human organisms and their environment. This naturalism casts humans as organisms in process, having myriad ongoing transactions with their environment. Transaction refers to the various levels of communication (physical through to discursive) between human organisms and their environment. No one organism is complete or rounded out; organisms are understood as always in-process, constituted by the multiplicity of their relations with the environment. In later work, Dewey (Dewey and Bentley 1991) contrasts the idea of transaction to interaction (see Bridge 2005, 22-24; Cutchin 2008). Interaction suggests communication between persons or subjectivities that are complete and then communicate with each other. In the idea of transaction however, communication is understood holistically, as part of the constitution of the communicators themselves along relations with the affordances of environments, objects and processes:

> "The environment/place/world with which persons transact is not limited to physical forms; it includes, for instance, social, cultural, and political aspects as well. A transactional view is inclusive of the full range of experience, and transactional relations may be, for instance, those of a person and a discourse or other cultural form. A transactional view also includes the ''durational-extensional'' set of relations that make up our evolving contexts of action. Said another way, a view of transactional relations should include their temporal and spatial dimensions—how those relations extend through time and space." (Cutchin 2008, 1563).

The idea of transaction can be understood as suggesting that organisms live as much "in processes across and 'through' skins as in processes 'within' skins" (Dewey and Bentley 1991, 119). The idea of transaction indicates "the dynamic, constitutive

relationship of organisms and their environments" (Sullivan 2001, 1), a relationship characterised by "a stability that is not stagnation but is rhythmic and developing" (Dewey 1958, 25).

The spaces of transaction are not limited to the relationship between functional causality and discursive elaboration, but are more pluralised, including fluid, uncertain and temporary spaces of emotional engagement and cognitive response. On a pragmatist view of problem-solving and enquiry, transactional action is cumulative, in the sense that it generates new dispositions to be imaginatively open to indirect or unanticipated consequences. The cumulative nature of transactions has a qualitative aspect, in so far as transactions can thicken or become richer communicatively, taking in aesthetic aspects that are able to communicate in ways that envelope all the senses.

The transactional constitution of public action

The notion of transaction is important for further developing two aspects of the non-causal account of affectedness which is central to reconfiguring conceptualisations of the geographies of radical democratic politics. The first aspect is the need to better understand processes of learning to be affected. And the second aspect is the need to better understand the potential of communicatively formed publics to act as effective agents of change.

With respect to the first aspect, the notion of transaction helps us understand how Dewey's understanding of enquiry integrates objectivist and more communicative aspects of problem-formation. We should not start from the assumption that publics are simply formed causally out of instrumentally generated concerns (see Calhoun 2002). These causal processes can certainly be understood as assembling relevant networks of material connection and functional interdependence. But the formation of

these into public issues requires, as we have already indicated, a process of imaginative identification. What we are calling the imaginative aspect of learning to be affected is informed by Dewey's elaboration of Williams James' (1950) radical empiricism into a logic of enquiry. Enquiry, for Dewey, involved a dynamic give-and-take between causal processes and a pluralised sense of engaged, embodied, responsive capacities to apprehend these processes in their myriad implications. The notion of transaction is related to this pragmatist emphasis on enquiry. Rather than being based on the passive perception and reflection on the world, apperception is transactional in that the objects of enquiry act back on human senses just as those perceptions project onto the world and help shape its processual "substances". The logic of enquiry is thus an ongoing engagement with the world (Dewey 1958, 257-263).

There is one further feature of this transactional understanding of problem-responsive action which is relevant to the conceptualisation of democratic public formation in terms of learning to be affected. An important aspect of Dewey's pluralism is the conviction that competing habits generate better rationalities. Agonism is therefore an integral aspect of problem-solving from this perspective, for both intrinsic and instrumental reasons, binding the resources of what Mead termed mutual perspective-taking into processes of issue-formation and problem-solving (Mead 1934). The agonism of problem-responsive action is not opposed to rationality; it is generative of rationalities geared to contextual situations. Coordination to take care of the indirect consequences of other actions might be fuelled by emotion, affect and discussion and the experience of diversity. The coordination of competing interests and perspectives on a given problem involves abstraction away from the direct functionality of that problem, in a reflexive process of giving and receiving of

reasons. By making problem-solving central to the understanding of action, this transactional perspective means that rational accommodation and coordination between actors is not thought of in terms of strongly validated, discursively coordinated agreements. Rather, it is understood in terms of ongoing transactional rationality (Bridge 2005), one which coordinates various forms of "embodied intelligence in everyday practices" (Bernstein 2010, 85).

The idea that the agonism of interests, opinions and perspectives is instrumental to the generation of coordinating rationalities has implications for how we think of the shape and location of transactional public spaces. The normative impetus of Dewey's understanding of affectedness in terms of indirect consequences appears to support a spatially extensive image of the public realm, expanding outwards from discrete locations through networks of communicative engagement. However, we also need to keep in view the emphasis on the embodied capacities of transactional action, and in particular the sense of transaction as not merely being a medium of communicative action but a cumulative, dispositional competence in its own right. Effective spaces of public formation therefore might well be better thought of as clustered in concentrated environments where conflicting consequences and cooperative impulses are drawn into close proximity – as spaces of spaces of heightened transactional intensity.

For Dewey, the sheer complexity of everyday life means that people have difficulty in recognising common interests and mobilising beyond their immediate concerns. Rather than supposing that the logical response to this problem is to conceptualise an expanded scale of global public of some sort or other, it might be more useful to reconsider the role of situated locations as effective spaces for public formation over issues which extend beyond the local scale. It follows from Dewey's notion of transactional rationality that the most conducive environments to effective

problematization and problem-solving are those which provide for prolonged and ongoing exposure to conflicting consequences, diverse interests, and plural perspectives. The instrumental understanding of public formation as an engaged, embodied process of plural communicative transactions suggests that spaces in which different problems, different consequences, and different responses intersect might be thought of as having particular qualities of "publicness", in the sense of providing opportunities and imperatives for agonistic engagement with diverse effects and consequences.

The city has often been defined as an exemplary public space, in the sense of being an environment where diverse consequences concatenate with plural registers of engagement (e.g. Sennett 1974; Young 1990; Bridge 2005). Urban spaces might certainly be thought of as spaces of relatively high transactional 'thickness' or 'intensity', in which discursive and non-discursive communication orientates certain dispositions to questions of collective coordination. The identification of the democratic qualities of urban public space still often relies, however, on the idea of urbanism as a cultural, communicative domain. It is a view easily aligned with stronger arguments in favour for thinking of the 'the city' as a model for a non-sovereign concept of the political (e.g. Magnusson 2002; Isin 2007). But this view leaves in abeyance the second aspect of the Deweyian understanding of affectedness we identified above. This is the focus upon effective concerted action; or upon democratic will-formation as well as opinion-formation. We need, then, to attend also to the second aspect of affectedness that the transactional understanding of problem-responsiveness throws new light upon. This is the issue of the potential of communicatively formed publics to act as effective agents of change.

In contrast to a Habermasian image of the public sphere as wholly distinct from the state, acting as either "sluice" or "siege" against encroachments into communicative lifeworlds, Dewey envisages a greater continuum between the strongly communicative aspects of the public as a domain of opinion-formation and institutions of will-formation (Barnett 2008). From his perspective, the institutionalisation of public functions, through elected or appointed agents and representatives, is considered quite integral to a democratic public. Representative institutions are not, then, considered a secondary, lesser form of democratic action, but as one medium for institutionalising broad-based participation. For Dewey, different publics can demonstrate different "traits of a state". This idea refers to the different sorts of delegated agency that emerge to systematically take care of indirect consequences (see Cochran 2002). Dewey understood the emergence of the nation-state form of democracy as a response to contingent, pragmatic circumstances, rather than the expression of singular democratic ideal of territorial integrity and unity. The notion of different traits of state therefore acknowledges the open-ended aspects of democracy, as new forms of democratic agency and accountability emerge in relation to new problematizations.

The pragmatist understanding of the transactional dynamics of public formation is, then, well suited to the analysis of the emergent qualities of democratic politics, since it is not beholden to an idealized model of spatial or organisational configurations which best express democratic norms. For example, Davidson and Entrikin (2005) argue that even a city like Los Angeles, often characterised as the anti-city on the grounds that it is decentred, predominantly residential and replete with privatised public spaces, has a space of democratic engagement that constitutes a deliberative pubic realm. Their example is Los Angeles coastline, around which is gathered

institutionalized forms of democracy (in the form of legislation pertaining to coastal protection and public access), but which is also the site of everyday engagements and contestations between beachgoers and beachside homeowners over rights of access. Invoking a pragmatist concept of public formation, they argue that what makes these encounters "Deweyan" in form "is that they are waged occasionally through the agents of the state but more often through the formation of issue-specific, ephemeral coalitions and communal organisations" (Davidson and Entrikin 2005, 580).

Approaching democratic judgement pragmatically

The pragmatist account of the transactional dynamics of public formation supports a pluralist understanding of the generation of democratic spaces. These are understood to be contingently enacted through practices of responsive, reflexive problem-formation; practices of public communication; and through institutionalised forms of concerted action, across the state/civil society boundary. This pragmatist understanding of space does not decide in advance, through a process of ontological deduction, the ideal spatial form for democratic politics, whether this is territorialised, relational, or topological (cf. Lussault and Stock 2010). It focuses on the situations and problems out of which democratic energies arise, and then attends closely to the spaces and spatialities which are performed in ongoing processes of democratization.

We have elaborated Dewey's understanding of transactional, problem-responsive action in order to refine the non-causal, non-functional understanding of the all-affected principle that was introduced earlier in the article. This understanding corrects for the elision of the 'materiality' of issues in the strongest communicative versions of deliberative, dialogic, or discursive democracy. It does so by bringing in to view the role played by contentious problems in generating occasions for publics to

form and coalesce. It also provides a more focussed understanding of what is at stake in focussing on processes of learning to be affected in the formation of publics.

The focus on transactional space also suggests a distinctive way of theorising about the spatialities of democratic politics, one which is consistently pragmatist. In debates on global democracy and cosmopolitanism, it is a default assumption that the extension of consequences beyond the boundaries of nation-states necessarily requires a scaling-up of democratic governance to map onto the same 'global' level. In debates on the spatialities of radical democracy, it is assumed that democratic politics properly inhabits interstitial spaces of relationality, evading capture by the logics of territorialization. In both set of debates, it is presumed in advance that democratic spaces must have a specific spatial configuration – territorial congruence between the scale of problems and the scale of the polity in once case; or fleeting habitation in fugitive, de-territorialised and relational spaces in the other. A transactional understanding of space allows us to suspend any *a priori* determination of the proper spatial forms of democratic politics – whether this takes the form of assertions of the continued importance of the territorial national state, or assertions of the importance of relational networks and topologies.

In contrast, the pragmatist understanding of transactional space we have developed suggests a distinctive agenda for examining the geographies of democratic politics. First, the pragmatist emphasis leads to an open, empirically-minded attention to the particular spatialities enacted through transactional problematization in particular cases. It does not presume in advance that democracy has a proper space or spatiality, whether bounded or open, local or global.

Second, this attention to the contingent spatialities of democratic politics is guided by a concern with understanding the differentiations and combinations of

transactional practices of varying intensities. Different spatial forms might be understood in these terms. For example, as we have suggested, the city is one figure for transactional space, gathering together a complexity and diversity of interests and effects which fuel imaginative capacities into heightened zones of communicative experience and engagement. Territorialised nation-states are more dispersed transactional spaces, with more scope for distanciated engagements, but also for integrating a far greater range of issues and actors. Transactional networks, in turn, might be characterised by a relatively narrow range of issues, while maintaining high levels of communicative intensity, but perhaps amongst a smaller and more predictable range of participants. The qualities of transactional spaces of public action are therefore differentiated by the contingent combination of concentration, dispersal, and distribution.

The pragmatist understanding of transactional space directs attention, in short, to the task of developing pragmatic audits of democratic practices of different shapes and scales, with a focus on understanding these practices as enacting their own spatialities in the transactional give-and-take of problematization, issue-formation, and concerted action. Across this range of democratic practices, the different aspects of public action will be combined in distinctive combinations in specific cases: from 'weak' publics raising issues and generating dissent, through regulatory and monitoring functions, to authoritative decision-making and sanction-enforcing practices. The pragmatist approach emphasises the embeddedness of experimentation in a transactional idea of human life, communication and enquiry. Following Dewey, experimentation does not just relate to the ethos of democracy enacted through diverse forms of participation, but also to experiments in the implementation of democratic will through institutional designs. In the next section, we flesh out this transactional understanding of the

spaces of democratic politics, emphasising the problematizing dimensions of the pragmatist approach we have developed in the previous two sections. We focus on discussions of both transnational and urban spaces of radical democracy, emphasising how these two spaces might both be thought of as enacting practices of institutional experimentation.

Spaces of democratic experimentation

As we have already indicated, appeal to the all-affected principle is central to the break out of concern with geographical issues in democratic theory, expressed in debates about global justice and cosmopolitanism (see Brock 2009). Pragmatist understandings of public formation inform the arguments of theorists of transnational democracy and justice such as James Bohman, Nancy Fraser, and John Dryzek. These thinkers all develop contestatory variations of deliberative democracy, departing from the strongly epistemic-consensual inflection Habermas continues to invest in communicative rationality, in favour of more pluralistic understandings of the modes and purposes of communicative transactions. These theorists of transnational democracy, as distinct from theorists of global or cosmopolitan democracy, also develop flexible views of the geographies of democratic politics. This reflects in part the pragmatist inflections of writers such as Bohman and Dryzek (Bohman 2004; Dryzek 2004), reflected in a concern with problematic situations which generate contentious issues (Cochran 2002; Bray 2009).

   What is most distinctive about the geographical imagination of this pragmatist strain of democratic theory is a sense that there is no *a priori* model of the spaces or scales at which democratic politics should be institutionalised. Rather, the geographies of democratic public action emerge from this strain of work as practical

accomplishments. The principle of all-affected interests is not a criterion of adjudication, but is better understood as providing a register of claims-making in worldly politics of social movement mobilisation and representation. Translated into a communicative principle in Habermasian discourse ethics, and inflected by the pragmatism of Mead, universalization is now understood as a process of situated perspective-taking (Bridge 2000), so that democratic legitimacy emerges as a norm according to which "what is in each case good for all parties [is] contingent on reciprocal perspective taking" (Habermas 2006, 35; see Benhabib 1992). Following Habermas's (2001) own account of "the post-national constellation", critical theorists of transnational democracy free-up the all-affected interests principle from its tight enclosure around territorial and scalar models of space and time. This conceptual move is most fully developed in Bohman's (2007) account of transnational democracy, with its sense of the untidy geographies of globalization, contrasting to the neatly hierarchical-scalar imaginations of undifferentiated and/or multi-levelled global space in accounts of global cosmopolitan democracy. Bohman's image of decentred, "multiple *dêmoi*" and "distributive publics" supports a view in which public communication enacts a democratic function primarily through seeking to influence authority rather than exercise authority (see Cohen and Fung 2004; Scheuermann 2006; Fung 2010).

There is a further pragmatist inflection required here, however, to fully cash-out the potential of pragmatist-informed accounts of transnational democracy. The communicative translation of the all-affected principle should not be interpreted as a straightforward warrant for a type of "methodological globalism" that presumes that the emplaced contexts of social integration – cities, nations, places - have lost their significance as containers of democratizing energies. There are grounds internal to

this strand of theorising for reconsidering the intrinsically democratic value of less-extensive, more localised spaces for enabling the sorts of expansive democratic imaginations that these theorists of transnational democracy promote. The communicative translation of all-affectedness in post-Habermasian theory is related to a downplaying of the epistemological inflection that is retained by Habermas, in favour of a more expansive sense of the communicative conditions of experience (Young 200; O'Neill 2002). It follows that any adequate critical theory of democracy must give due weight to the situated geographies through which imaginative capacities to care at a distance, learn to be affected, and engage with strangers are worked up and sustained (Entrikin 2002a). If one takes seriously the strongly pragmatist inflection of post-Habermasian theories of transnational democracy, then we must acknowledge the importance that theorists within this same broad tradition ascribe to national cultural and institutional formations (e.g. Benhabib 1992; Calhoun 1997) or urban environments (e.g. Bridge 2005; Fung 2004) as vital infrastructures in which expansive democratic political imaginations are learned.

   The communicative translation of the all-affected principle, in short, means taking seriously not only the de-territorializing effects of globalised chains of cause and consequence, but also the spaces in and through which capacities to acknowledge the claims of others are worked up and learned. This leads us back towards a consideration of the urban as a distinctive communicative field shaping the dimensions of public life (e.g. Ivesen 2007; Bridge 2009; Rodgers, Barnett and Cochrane 2009; McFarlane 2011). In developing this argument, we are assuming that asserting the relevance of contexts of learning such as national cultures or urban environments is not to be confused with a communitarian reassertion of the local or context as bounded or contained. Rather than presuming that expansive imaginaries

need to be squared with bounded imaginaries, we are assuming a line of thinking about places as scenes of openness rather than closure. On this understanding, the city in particular is understood as a figure for practices of learning to live together with difference through ordinary exposure to alterity (e.g. Watson 2006; Amin 2007). The methodological globalism characteristic of debates about cosmopolitan democracy presents globalisation as a process of spatial extension and assumes that the intensity of transactions is thinned as it is stretched. By contrast, we argue that the maintenance of transactional thickness over space is conditioned by relations embedded in places that have histories or ongoing momentum. To elaborate on this argument, we turn to one strand of pragmatist social thought that conceptualises the urban as a transactional space of democratic institutional experimentation.

There are long established lines of thought claiming a special relationship between democracy and the city, whether in terms of the city as a communicative utopia, as a model of non-sovereign politics, or a more accountable and inclusive scale of governance. We want to present here an alternative view, in which cities are understood as experimental spaces or laboratories of democratic innovation, a view that follows from pragmatist ideas of democracy as mode of agonistic, participatory problem-solving (Briggs 2008). This alternative, experimental view of urban democracy enables the relationship between urban processes and democratic politics to be specified without over-estimating the political efficacy of the urban as a scale of governance or effective citizenship rights (cf. Low 2004; Purcell 2006).

Learning from Chicago, again

To elaborate the pragmatist, experimental view of urban democracy, we focus here on the work of Archon Fung (2007, 2004), which centres on questions of democratic

participation and institutional innovation, and is part of a broader intellectual project concerned with re-animating practical democratic alternatives (e.g. Fung and Wright 2003; Wright 2010). Questions of participation and institutional innovation are at the heart of Fung's exploration of experiments in urban democracy as "empowered participation". His analysis is based on a case study of neighbourhoods in the African-American ghetto off the south side of Chicago, neighbourhoods that are testaments to systematic inequality and discrimination, and are amongst the least empowered of any urban districts in cities of the Global North.

Chicago is of course the city in which the first theoretical fusion of pragmatism and urban studies took place through the intellectual orientations of the Chicago School of urban ecology (Park 1926; 1936; Park, Burgess, and McKenzie 1925). Chicago was the scene for the overlapping intellectual and political initiatives that pioneered empirical enquiry into everyday urban practices (Wirth 1938), as well as participatory social welfare programmes associated with Jane Addams and the Hull House project (Addams 1968). Dewey himself was an active participant in these initiatives, as an influence on the Chicago School and a board member at Hull House (Martin 2002). As Gross (2009) argues Addams saw cooperative experimentation with the residents of certain Chicago neighbourhoods as a superior form of experimentation to that of the laboratory: a form of social experiment beyond the laboratory. The improvement of social conditions was obtained by combining of different skills and knowledge and was worked through everyday experience. This also involved rapid transpositions of spatial register: from bodies to institutional politics; and between public and private, for example in practices of civic housekeeping in which the dirty curtains of the lodgings of a factory worker's family became the basis of a campaign to limit pollutants from the factory itself (Addams1968; Jackson 2001).

For the Chicago School of urban ecology, then, the city oscillated between a field site of discovered authenticity and a laboratory of controlled conditions with wider generalisability (Gieryn 2006). Just as this tradition of research continued to develop against a background of machine-politics and political radicalism, then so Chicago continues to serve as a reference point for contemporary understandings of democratic participation in contemporary global city-regions (Simpson and Kelly 2008). This history of institutional and intellectual experimentation forms the background to Fung's use of contemporary Chicago as a case study of empowered participation.

Fung's analysis of urban democratic experiment returns to this scene of exemplary urban-democratic enquiry, to investigate the potentials of what he calls 'empowered participation' (2004). He explores two cases of grassroots mobilisation and participation in deprived neighbourhood in the South Side of Chicago: a case where local residents turned around a poorly performing local school, Africanising the curriculum and instilling a greater degree of pride and self-confidence in the students; and a case of resident participation in neighbourhood policing, where through neighbourhood liaison and representation on the local police board, hitherto hostile styles of policing were transformed into more co-operative and effective forms.

Fung's case studies point to two spatial dimensions of democratic experimentation: first, the relations between the site of the experiment itself and wider fields; and second, the processes of deliberative evaluation and application through which experimental forms are translated. These two spatial dimensions both combine aspects of democratic engagement and contestation with aspects of democratic institutionalization. These two dimensions indicate two distinct lessons that Fung draws from his case studies.

The first lesson is the importance of the relationship between local initiative and the wider polity. In both these cases, grassroots deliberation was from the start institutionally connected to the political centre in a form of what Fung calls "accountable autonomy". Fung contrasts accountable autonomy with neoliberal market-based and new managerialist forms of coordination. It represents, he argues, a form of civic engagement with pragmatism. The autonomy-side of accountable autonomy allowed for local initiative and experimentation, while the accountable side meant that lessons learned were communicated to the centre and then disseminated into other settings. Crucially, there was also political and financial support from central agencies that gave the initiatives more traction and brought them closer to source of power.

Fung's second lesson is that deliberation and participation should not just be about debating and making political decisions but should include the whole political process, including implementation of policy and its evaluation. This broader view of deliberation also relates to lessons learned and distributed via central mechanisms in connecting up initiatives. The particular content of what is being discussed will affect the institutional process, and there needs to be institutional sensitivity to the substantive content of initiatives. Furthermore institutional mechanisms may even be necessary to encourage participation in the first place. Fung presents these lessons as the basis for a distinctive normative procedure for assessing the democratic credentials of institutional arrangements, which he calls "pragmatic equilibrium". Pragmatic equilibrium is the pragmatist equivalent of Rawls's (1972) norm of reflective equilibrium, but rather than arriving at consistent moral beliefs by a process of reflective reconciliation between conflicting judgements, this consistency is arrived at practically through ongoing experimental action.

In Fung's analysis of urban democracy, the city emerges as a pluralized actor in processes of issue-formation, expressions of opinions, articulations of collective action, and institutional building. The city is not a scale but more like a site for various types of experimentation, that arise from diversely overlapping networks that provide feedback (Jackson 2001) both in terms of practice and institutional design. On this understanding, "the urban" emerges as a plural object or actor in political processes.

First, the urban represents a complex of issues, problems and objects which *generate* contention, gathering together myriad indirect consequences which are both locally generated and generated from afar.

Second, the urban is a field where the diversity and interconnectedness of effects operates as a seedbed for issue *recognition*. The recursiveness of urban life is also important in the formation of signs and symbols that can represent purposes and help anticipate consequences. These objects of recognition and intervention are also the medium out of which political subjectivities can be enhanced and people can learn to be affected.

Third, the urban remains the site of *institutional* architectures that might be useful in the development of further democratizing impulses, either through challenge and alternative institutions or further democratisation of institutions that already exist.

We have outlined a transactional understanding of the plural actions of the urban in generating, recognising and institutionalising public issues. This helps us see how the myriad connections and purposes that we think of as being "urban" help sustain transactional intensity out of which the objects of political concern, practices of learning to be affected, and the institutionalisation of will are all tested and refined. The urban stands as one example of situated transactional space that operates as a

focal point for recognising, accounting for and representing democratic political purposes. Other situated spaces of transactional intensity might be the school, the nation-state, or churches (Barnett 2008). As we indicated above, from the pragmatist perspective we have been outlining, if the city has a distinctive place in democratic politics, this follows less from its spatial form *per se*, and more from the diverse qualities of publicness that are gathered together in urban areas.

Conclusion

Our aim in this article has been to pluralize the reference points for thinking through the geographies of radical democracy, beyond a canon of poststructuralist ideas. We have done so by drawing into focus the influence of pragmatist philosophy and social theory in the refashioning of Critical Theory in terms of deliberative theories of democracy (Delanty 2009). We have emphasised the distinctive theoretical imagination that pragmatism brings to these debates, including specific understandings of communication, problem-solving, and rationalities of action. And we have suggested the pragmatist influence in democratic theory is most heavily felt in reconceptualizations of the normative principle of all-affected interest. It is here that the contribution of pragmatist philosophies to the development of a distinctive geographical approach to the analysis of democratic politics lies. Dewey's naturalistic understanding of action and his understanding of the formation of democratic publics informs a view of the spaces of democracy as transactionally contingent and enacted in relation to problematic situations. This conceptualisation of the relationship between spatiality and democratic politics is made evident in the working through of pragmatist themes in recent debates about transnational and urban democracy, where the 're-scaling' of democratic politics is understood primarily in terms of practices of

democratic experimentation and innovation, whether of transnational or urban varieties.

In closing, we want to reiterate the specific value that the pragmatist tradition brings to debates about the geographies of democracy. Electoral geography focuses attention on the mechanisms of institutionalised liberal democracy, accepting as given the norms of representation and fairness embedded in them, and examining their efficacy in different contexts. Alternatively, work on radical democracy in geography reserves the normative energies of democratic politics for disruptive practices of contestation. In their different varieties, the prevalent versions of radical democracy deployed in human geography share a deep wariness of drawing too close to issues of institutional design or programmatic reflection.

It is between the emphasis on institution and disruption that pragmatism interrupts current debates on democracy in geography. It is a tradition that brings an institutional imagination to debates about radical democracy, while also bringing an experimental sensibility to the analysis of established institutional formations of democratic politics. Whereas post-structuralist radical democratic theory dismisses Habermasian deliberative democracy as excessively consensual and rationalistic, we have argued that bringing into view the productive relationship between pragmatism and theories of communicative action enables us to see the emphasis on legitimate will-formation as one aspect of a commitment to experimenting with alternative mechanisms of institutional design. The commitment to thinking experimentally about democracy is related to the commitment to the inclusive norm of all-affected interests which deliberative and pragmatist approaches to democracy share with other traditions of radical democratic theory. Reconceptualising this principle in a non-causal way

challenges both territorial-scalar as well as relational conceptualisations of the spatiality of democracy.

The reconceptualization of the all-affected principle informs a programme of research which presumes that no singular model of spatial form should be privileged in advance as best suited to sustaining democratic energies. The idea of all-affectedness developed in this article is informed by a transactional understanding of the spatialities of public action. This combination underlines the claim that the spatial forms of democracy are contingent on the experimental practices of democratic politics as they are enacted in the world, where democratic politics is understood as a mode of collective action which emerges around situated problems generated by indirect consequences and indefinite effects.

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