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# Embodying the Regime of Automobility: a Phenomenology of the Driving Subject and the Affects of Governable Space

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EMBODYING THE REGIME OF AUTOMOBILITY: A PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE  
DRIVING SUBJECT AND THE AFFECTS OF GOVERNABLE SPACE

by

George Ananchev

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## ABSTRACT

### EMBODYING THE REGIME OF AUTOMOBILITY: A PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE DRIVING SUBJECT AND THE AFFECTS OF GOVERNABLE SPACE

by

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The University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2016  
Under the Supervision of Professor Kristin Sziarto, PhD

Automobility describes the car as a particularly universalized form of mobility, a dominant ‘regime’ that locks social life into ‘coercive flexibility’. Despite its liberatory promise and its capacity to emancipate people from the restrictions of physical distance, the car is perhaps the most regulated and controlled commodity that Americans live with today, implicating them in the production of driving subjectivities. This research uses ride-along interviews to inquire into the ways that people’s emotional, bodily, and affective relationships to the practice of driving contribute to the reproduction of the regime of automobility. When we ask questions regarding how power is embodied in an automobilized society and how the disciplinary nature of modern societies organizes the human experience of driving, we must also consider the political aims of our questions. Future investigations need to consider the ways that the openness of social action becomes entangled in systems of power. An ongoing examination of a politics of affect can point us towards understanding how particular relations of power enable particular virtualities in the regime of automobility to actualize.

To my mother and grandmother.

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## Introduction

“Just as our choice under capitalism is *to whom* we will each sell our labor, not *whether* we will sell it, the choices most of us make under automobility is *where and how we will drive*, not whether we will navigate in the surround of cars, drivers, highways, streets, shopping center, and parking lots.” (Seiler 2010: 394)

While this passage might seem like a bit of a generalization at first, it is worth pointing our attention to the data behind the words. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that in 2013, for instance, just over 75% of workers commuted to work alone by car (that number goes up to about 86% when factoring in carpooling). Of course, there is geographic variation to the prevalence of car use between and within different metro areas, but that does not diminish a concern for the entrenchment of the car in society. The hegemony of the car has been monumental in shaping the ways that people understand and structure their lives. In the United States in particular, it is systematically involved with the function of the state and prioritized over all other forms of transportation, facilitating the ongoing expansion of auto-space. The highways and the urban forms that they have enabled, like the various forms making up urban sprawl, have significantly altered the way that people think about work, family, community, consumption, leisure, safety, and obviously movement. This has come at the cost of serious environmental implications like particle pollution from exhaust, loss of habitat from car dependent development and construction, and ecological damage from oil extraction and refining – just to name a few. And, despite its liberatory promise and its capacity to emancipate people from the restrictions of physical distance, the car is perhaps the most regulated and controlled commodity that Americans live with today. From car registration and driver licensing to limited-access highways and the policing of road space, the car-user becomes

entangled in the regulation and management of movement, space, and subjectivity (Böhm, Jones, Land & Paterson 2006). Jörg Beckmann calls this the ‘Janus face’ of automobility, which suggests the contradictory notion of an autonomous mobility within a system that “continually forces people and goods to maintain their movement” (2001:598).

Most social scientists and scholars in the field have agreed to call this phenomenon ‘automobility’, a term that has come to describe the car as a particularly universalized form of mobility, a dominant ‘system’ or ‘regime’ that locks social life into “a peculiar combination of flexibility and coercion” (2004: 23) as the late John Urry puts it. While there are automobilities that do not depend on the car, the universalization of the car reflects the hegemonic nature of car-based automobility and expresses the political nature of ‘autonomy’ and subjectivity (Paterson 2007; Seiler 2008). Automobility has been explained as being so dominant and successful because of “its ability to reproduce capitalist society...and its ability to mobilize people as specific sorts of subject” (Paterson 2007: 30). This means that automobility, in order to reproduce itself, needs specific ways of being, seeing, thinking, and doing. “Systems persist and are transformed only through the flow of practices – of action and doing – which comprise them,” as Watson (2012: 492) writes. In this light, we see that automobility is dependent on the practice of driving to maintain its dominance. This practice persists through the ways that the car is normalized and becomes a taken for granted, natural thing.

If we want to shift the politics of transportation in the U.S., we need to understand why people like driving, why and how people are invested in driving – along with paying attention to policy. I use the notion of the production of a particular type of subject as a point of departure to understand how people’s experience of and relationship to

driving might contribute to the reproduction of automobility. The fact that driving is important and meaningful to many people is largely why the car remains so dominant. So, it is important to explore how people come to see the car as important and meaningful. It is not just the lack of transit that leads most people to choose to drive. The car is prioritized and made to seem necessary through its naturalization. Miller expounds on the naturalization of automobility in his exploration of the 'humanity' of car cultures and the many ways through which,

so many of us are socialized to take them for granted, so that we think our world through a sense of the self in which driving, roads, and traffic are simply integral to who we are and what we presume to do each day (2001:3).

By simply performing the day to day practice of driving, the driver, whether she or he is consciously aware of it or not, encounters objects and landscapes imbued with meanings that serve to legitimize automobility. But the necessity of automobility is socially constructed. In this regard, any analysis of the practice of driving should be compelled to examine the ways that all of the routinized meanings, sensibilities, competences, and material configurations produced through driving naturalize the necessity of automobility.

This research inquires into how people's experiences of driving can reveal much about their involvement in the ongoing reproduction of automobility. The primary concern is the ways that people's various emotional, corporeal, cognitive, and affective connections to the practice of driving contribute to the acceptance of and compliance with the U.S. regime of automobility. From here, I also ask questions regarding people's negotiation of their relationships to the state through the practice of driving and how the police (and other drivers) inform these experiences. I also ask whether there are per-

formances of self while driving that might go beyond or are not supported by the regime of automobility. Recognizing experience as its central focus, this research utilizes the ride-along interview as a method of exploring driving subjectivities in practice.

The first chapter situates this research amidst a broader theoretical background informed by poststructuralism, cultural studies, and theories of practice. It begins by addressing the contemporary interdisciplinary critical perspectives of the ‘new mobilities paradigm’ that emphasize the centrality of the various mobilities of people, objects, images, and information to the ‘social’ (Urry 2000; 2007). The significance of this perspective to articulations of human experience is its abandonment of the notion of the rational, ahistorical, and autonomous individual. The choices that (im)mobile humans make are seen as a result of the relations of power that they find themselves in. This points us to the notion of a politics of subjectivity. Using a Foucauldian perspective on the production of subjects, scholars identify how automobility and its subjects are reproduced through discourses and practices. From here, I shift the focus to practice theory and how scholars in this field have provided a path towards understanding the dialectical connections between structure and agency in the system of automobility. Through a focus on theories of practice, we are able to understand how through routinization and bodily engagements with practices humans come to embody structures and reproduce them. The embodiment of automobility through driving becomes the crucial locus of practical reproduction of the system. The chapter closes with a concern for how the potentialities of affective relationships to driving provide a way towards understanding how systems of practice like automobility are more uncertain and open-ended than they are frequently made to seem.

The second chapter expounds on the methodological and epistemological concerns in this research. After an overview of fieldwork and the interview process, I proceed with an examination of feminist geography's contribution towards this research. I use feminist geography in order to consider a few things: how power shapes the research process; how the subjects and subjectivities of research are socially constructed; and how to overcome the theoretical incompatibility between phenomenology, which explores human experience, and poststructuralism, which questions the validity of knowledge about one's subjectivity. I introduce the epistemological position behind the ride-along interview and consider how the notion of affective-discursive practice can be useful in mobile research.

The third chapter devotes its attention to the analysis of the interviews. I spend most of the time demonstrating how the practice of driving is a particularly effective venue for understanding how governmentality shapes and reproduces everyday life. The interviews bring to light the extent to which drivers are able to articulate their emotional and corporeal implication in the governmentality of automobility. I demonstrate how drivers express themselves as particular types of subjects – subjects of self-government that are compelled to act 'freely' on the road. However, the interviews also reveal how drivers are not the perfectly disciplined subjects that governmentality would have them to be. Through various involuntary emotional and affective responses, driving subjects are liable to breach the 'sociotechnological' codes of conduct that are demanded of them.

I will conclude by reflecting on the significance of considering practice in investigations of the embodiment of automobility. Any transition to less problematic modes of transportation will need to consider the significance of the emotional, corporeal, and affective relationships that people have to driving.

## **Chapter One: Theorizing automobility, auto-space, and auto-subjectivities**

### ***Mobility, power, and the subject***

Today, critical perspectives on the significance of cars in society, and in the everyday lives of the people using them, are situated in a broader, interdisciplinary field of the social sciences which has emphasized the centrality of the various mobilities of people, objects, images, and information to the 'social' (Urry 2000; 2007). This 'new mobilities paradigm' (Sheller & Urry 2006) repudiates more static approaches in social science, which designate movement and mobility as having neutral, stable, and functionalist significance in social life. A deeper understanding of the social significance of movement and mobilities particularly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires abandoning such immobile ways of seeing (Cresswell 2010; Sheller & Urry 2006; Urry 2000; 2007). Making sense of mobilities, as Doughty & Murray (2014) note, requires an understanding of the space-time contingent situatedness of mobile objects, subjects, and experiences. Seeing that the mobilities have been a concern for transport geographers since at least the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Cresswell & Merriman (2011) indicate that, today, geographers can be seen as 'revisiting an old friend' without welcoming the notion of the 'rational-mobile-person' as a point of departure. No longer is the subject of mobilities, the (non-)moving human, assumed to be an ahistorical and unaffected individual making rational and sensible choices (Cresswell 2010). A much more complex, nuanced picture of the human is conceptualized through this new paradigm, giving much renewed attention to the bodily scale. Cresswell (2010) argues that it is at the scale of the body that mobilities are produced, reproduced, and transformed: "Human mobility is practiced mobility that is

enacted and experienced through the body” (Cresswell 2010:20). Focusing attention on the body, however, must be accompanied with understandings of how humans and their activities are implicated in relations of power.

Contemporary scholars of mobilities are mainly concerned with how people’s mobility practices are embedded in their spatial, cultural, political, economical, social, and personal contexts (Manderscheid 2014). Such evaluations of relationality identify how power operates through discourses and practices of mobility and, in turn, generates both movement and stasis<sup>1</sup> (Sheller & Urry 2006). Once we acknowledge the role of power in mobility practices, we can work with the notion of a politics of mobility. While the notion of ‘politics’ should be seen as polysemic, studies of the politics of mobility have mainly drawn attention to relations of power. The politics of mobility describe “the ways in which mobilities are both productive of such social relations and produced by them” (2010:21). Mobility is constitutive of not only social relations but also of modern systems of power. A consideration of the implication of mobilities in relations of power opens up more inquiries regarding things like motive force, velocity, friction, rhythm, route, and experience (Cresswell 2010).

Pertinent to a corporeal focus on experience is the examination of the discursive operation of power. Discourses can be broadly conceptualized, in the Foucauldian sense, as “particular collections of knowledge and practices that shape society” (Doughty & Murray 2014:2). By constituting mobility as an object of knowledge, discourses define the meanings and values attributed to both movement and stasis (Manderscheid 2014). The experiences and embodiments of mobile practices are contingent on discursive rep-

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<sup>1</sup> Cresswell argues that studies of mobility should not exclude “notions of fixity, stasis, and immobility” (2010:29).

representations (and, in turn, shared meanings) of mobilities (Cresswell 2010). The degree to which embodied mobile practices conform or conflict with their representations is important to consider when examining mobility and power. Driving a car, for example, can show us how a mobile practice is implicated in discursively produced “narratives of mobility-as-liberty and mobility-as-progress” which accompany notions of circulatory movement as “healthy and moral” (Cresswell 2010:27).

Being mindful of the politics of mobility in this regard can reveal much about how humans are implicated in systems of power. Mobilities consist of an entanglement of interrelated objects, activities, and ideas that are “implicated in the production and reproduction of power relations... (Cresswell 2010:26). Following Urry (2000; 2007), Doughty & Murray (2014) emphasize the importance of looking into the ways that societies are governed *through* mobilities, rather than only looking at the governing *of* mobilities. To aid in this study, scholars engaging with post-structural perspectives have applied a Foucauldian view on power and its various operations (Böhm *et al.* 2006; Doughty & Murray 2014; Manderscheid 2014; Packer 2008; Paterson 2007; Seiler 2008). Foucault’s concept of the *dispositif*, or the apparatus as it is often translated, broadly describes a network of power, a system of relations that “incorporates both discourses and practices, as well as their crystallized effects” (Seiler 2008:6). It emphasizes the complex arrangement of not only policies and attitudes, but “a ‘multilinear ensemble’ of commodities, bodies of knowledge, laws, techniques, institutions, environments, nodes of capital, sensibilities, and modes of perception” (Seiler 2008:6). This means that a *dispositif* is a particular, heterogeneous assemblage of both linguistic and non-linguistic elements that have the “capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings” (Agamben

2009:14). Furthermore, the effective operation of the *dispositif* necessitates processes of subjectification, or the production of its own subjects and subjectivities. Agamben calls a subject “that which results from the relation and...the relentless fight between living beings and apparatuses” (2009:14). An understanding of the production of subjects and subjectivities allows us to acknowledge the ways that humans are involved in the (re)production of relations of power. This is helpful, as Manderscheid writes, in understanding “mobility as a productive *dispositif* of modernity,” which entails focusing on “the constitution, ordering and governing of mobile bodies and their corresponding spatialities” (2014:607). Manderscheid writes further, drawing from Foucault:

the *dispositif* dimension of subjectification focuses on the formation and control of mobile individuals and collectives through the exercise of power by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, directed at the human body, the conduct of life, the ways of thinking and behaving and ways of socialising and formation of the social (2014:609).

Foucault’s notion of subject formation, or subjectification, describes a form of power that “applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him” (Foucault 1982:781). In this sense, as Foucault puts it, the word ‘subject’ has two meanings: “subject to someone else by control and dependence; and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge” (1982:781). This understanding suggests that the individual is made to understand him or herself as a subject and object of knowledge produced by modern systems of power. Subjectification is essential to the *dispositif*. It cannot properly function without processes of subject formation. This is what differentiates the

functioning of a dispositif from “a mere exercise in violence” as Agamben puts it (2009:19). The process is subtle and implicit rather than violent and conspicuously oppressive. Foucault argued that, in a disciplinary society, a dispositif aims to produce “through a series of practices, discourses, and bodies of knowledge” docile bodies that assume “their identity and freedom as subjects” (Agamben 2009:19). It is this docility then that allows for the subtlety of governing power to shape subjectivity and, in turn, produce subjects that embody government.

Throughout the last two centuries, modern systems of power have played a key role in the production of subjects and subjectivities. Foucault indicated that subjectification is also a necessary component of what he and others have called governmentality. Simply put, the notion of governmentality describes some of the goals and techniques of modern systems of power and how they manage and produce responsible, healthy, safe, and productive individuals (subjects) and populations (Packer 2008; Rose 1999; Seiler 2008). This frame of analysis helps to understand government as all of the endeavors that seek “to shape, guide, and direct the conduct of others” (Rose 1999: 3). This is not to say that there is someone or something conducting the behavior or actions of people, but rather that people are “urged and educated to bridle one’s own passions, to control one’s own instincts, to govern oneself” (Rose 1999: 3).

Governmentality can be seen as both a process employed by the dispositif and also something that uses various dispositifs to govern. The crucial parallel is the notion of problematization. Foucault indicates that particular problematizations are essential to the character of the dispositif, which functions in any given historical moment by responding to an ‘urgent need’ (Manderscheid 2014; Seiler 2008). In order for something to become a subject of governmentality, “it must be figured as a problem, both in terms

of its being a hazard and obstacle to the goals above and opportunity for the extension of control” (Seiler 2008: 61). The ‘problem of movement,’ as Foucault deemed it, emerged in the late eighteenth century as people in various positions of power identified the ever-increasing mobility of people as an impediment to effective economic and political control. Rather than stopping or slowing movement, the goal was to create a new kind of movement, one that was both regularized and promoted in order to make people more productive, less chaotic. The shaping and regularizing of movement, rather than restricting and controlling it, was crucial to this new ‘disciplinary’ form of power (Paterson 2007).

The twentieth century renewed movement as a problem with the emergence of the car as the dominant mode of mobility. In order to combat the ‘problems’ of automobility, such as the ever-increasing number of fatalities associated with car use in the early twentieth century along with congestion issues, road construction was not only encouraged but federally financed and organized. Seiler points to the many road networks that were put in place throughout the twentieth century as a glimpse of “the liberal state’s growing sense of automobility as a means to governing populations” (2008:65). Later, the spatial imperatives of highway construction and the emergence of highway patrol provided an extension of state power and an opportunity for governmentality to more effectively operate a (Merriman 2007). In conjunction with what Seiler deemed ‘the automobilization of the American landscape’, drivers were required to obtain state-instituted vehicle registration and to undergo evaluation and licensing, which became the “basic means of authorizing and verifying not merely driving ability, but individual identity and...national belonging” (2008:65). Alongside the evaluation and licensing of the auto-subject came the extension of state power through the police. Reeves & Packer

write that, “the automobile radically reconfigured the nature of police work and soon became its primary security concern” (2013:372) due to the ways that speed, territory, and communication were affected by widespread automobility. The highway patrol, or other forms of police, became one of the main ways drivers were assembled and governed.

The main concern in approaching a politics of the subjectivities of driving, or auto-subjectivities, is the exploration of the ways in which driving and the accompanied discourses of the (auto)mobility dispositif can inform, organize, and reinforce particular subjectivities, identities, and experiences (Agamben 2009; Seiler 2008). As some scholars have noted, Foucault’s antihumanist approach did not leave much room for more deeply theorizing the nature of subjectivity and other facets such as the implication of affective forces. With the goal of explaining how it is that discursive practices produce material bodies, scholars have responded to this gap by contributing more thought to the notion of a materialist discourse, one which acknowledges the human body as a juncture of the physical, symbolic, and social (Doughty & Murray 2014). In this sense, locating subjectivity in the body is an understanding of subjectivity as “arising from lived and complex experience within multiple discourses and physical positions” (Doughty & Murray 2014: 4). Discursive knowledge production is anchored in materiality, in the *doing* of material life. This positions the body and its beings and doings within assemblages of words and things. The material configuration of automobility, for example, is “thought to be actively implicated in the production of a range of mobile practices emerging around it...” (Doughty & Murray 2014: 4). With this notion we begin to consider how particular practices, like driving, persist through their material configurations. We can turn to the work of social practice theorists who focus on the body, things,

practical knowledge, and routines as the main channel through which are able to bring attention to the connections between actions, institutions, and structures (Reckwitz 2002).

### ***Structure, agency, and theories of practice***

While the formulations made by practice theorists have not always been in conversation with the post-structuralism adopted by followers of Foucault, their writings nonetheless provide important paths towards understanding how it is that societies and systems within them are reproduced. While the roots of social theories of practice go as far back as Wittgenstein and Heidegger (Reckwitz 2002), the writings of Bourdieu (1977) and Giddens (1984) have had long-lasting influence on the conversations that scholars have had since. Much of Bourdieu's analysis of practice proceeds from his conceptualization of habitus. While others before him like Mauss (1973) provided similar paths for understanding the relationship between the body and human action or practice, Bourdieu's habitus remains a highly influential framework for understanding the embodiment of structure.

Broadly speaking, the notion of the habitus is designed to achieve a conception of practice that accounts for its generative capacities. Bourdieu himself defined the habitus as "systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations..." (1977:72, emphasis in original). It posits a situated agency, a grammar or framework for action and expression based on one's class, education, upbringing, and previous choices. The conditions for its own reproduction are built

into the habitus. The manner through which individuals choose to use their body and mind and the ways that they categorize their behavior and the behavior of others reproduces the very structures that gave shape to their behavior.

And because one is born into a particular social world, or into particular “material conditions” (1977:72), the dispositions that arise through the habitus are perceived as innate and unaffected by structure, producing a realm of possibilities in which one can improvise and strategize without the ability to transcend its limits. It is with this notion of doxa, “that which is taken for granted...as self-evident” (1977:166), that Bourdieu considers the role of power in structuring social action. He writes that, “every established order tends to produce...the naturalization of its own arbitrariness” (1977:164). In this view, by not having any “conscious mastery” of the habitus, the agent’s actions contain an “‘objective intention’...which always outruns...conscious intentions” (1977:79).

Whether individuals are aware of it or not, they (re)produce objective meaning through doxic actions shaped by the habitus. Such ideas have the danger of slipping into the objectivism that Bourdieu claimed to reject, leaving little room for change or modification. Some critics argue that a true abandonment of the dualism of structure-agency should acknowledge that, “individuals have intimate knowledge of their culture” (King 2000:428). Nonetheless, Bourdieu’s concepts can certainly provide a starting point for inquiries regarding the reproduction of complex ‘sociotechnological’ structures, like that of automobility (Freund & Martin 2009).

While it is not vastly different from Bourdieu’s understanding of the interplay between structure and agency, Giddens’s (1984) conceptualization sees agents as more reflexive, aware, and endowed with causal powers. His most significant contribution to theories of practice is structuration theory. It is a processual conceptualization of the re-

relationship between powerful social structures and individual agency with an emphasis on the ordering of social practices across space and time, owing much of its debt to the conceptual framework put forward by Hägerstrand's (1970) time geography. Giddens's explicit consideration of time and space gives more credit to the flow of (potentially) intentional actions with (potentially) unintended consequences. The dualism of objectivism and subjectivism, prevalent in the social sciences at the time, is reconceptualized as the *duality* of structure, which sees the structural properties of social systems as "both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize" (1984:25). Similar to Bourdieu, Giddens sees structure as both constraining and enabling. He sees structure most simply as the rules and resources "recursively involved in institutions" (1984:24). But he prefers to see structure as 'structural properties': "the properties which make it possible for discernibly similar social practices to exist across varying spans of time and space and which lend them 'systemic' form" (1984:17). The most enduring features of social life, the practices that have "the greatest time-space extension" (1984:17) are what Giddens refers to as institutions. This conception of institutions allows for a parallel to be drawn with the system of automobility within which the practice of driving is implicated. But it is important to consider the practical means through which such institutions can be embedded in social life. Giddens's emphasis on knowledgeability and practice can reveal some of this.

The notion of the duality of structure locates structure not 'out there', not external to agents, but rather, within the recursive knowledgeability of agents. Structure in this view is internal, instantiated through practices and as memory traces. While discursive consciousness is certainly important to Giddens's model of human agency, he argues that the knowledgeability of agents is "expressed first and foremost in practical

consciousness” which “provides for the generalized capacity to respond to and influence an indeterminate range of social circumstances” (1984:21-22). This tacit knowledge of action is comparable to Bourdieu’s notion of habitus, in which the unsaid is not necessarily the unknown. Individuals are equipped with both verbalized knowledge and corporeal knowledge, ready to ‘go on’ in a myriad of situations. Practical consciousness is a vital theme in Giddens’s structuration theory, placing structure in the routine nature of action (Reckwitz 2002). Routinization is carried through the practical consciousness which is “integral both to the continuity of the personality of the agent...and to the institutions of society” (1984:60). This concept also makes clearer the connections between practice and what Giddens calls ‘ontological security’, the ways that an individual retains mental stability and personhood through routinized knowledgeability of action amidst the uncertainty of reality. These ideas have proved to be very influential to contemporary conceptions of practice and the role that it plays in reproducing social structures.

A crucial point in understanding social life from the perspective of theorists of practice is that the social does not exist in the mental, nor in the discursive, nor in the intersubjective, but rather in practices (Reckwitz 2002). Reckwitz provides a comprehensive definition of practice as a routinized type of behavior which consists of several interdependent elements: “forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge” (2002:249). He sees practice as representing a pattern that can be ‘filled out’ by the recursive actions of agents. Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012) indicate that a recognizable conjunction of the interdependent elements of a practice make it out to be an entity, one that can only exist through its performances. In this light, individuals, as bodily and mental agents, are to be understood as ‘carri-

ers' of a multitude of practices, many of which need not be related to one another (Reckwitz 2002). Reckwitz argues that understanding, knowing-how, and desiring are necessary constitutive qualities of any given practice, rather than the qualities of an individual. Following Giddens, a recognition of the role of time and space yields the notion of practice as a type of behaving and understanding that is contingent on place, time, and individuals (or body-minds).

One of the most significant features in the theories of practice posited by Reckwitz (2002) and Shove *et al.* (2012) is the consideration of the constitutive role of things and materials in everyday life. They add an explicit material dimension to the otherwise conventionally social theories of Bourdieu and Giddens which Shove *et al.* argue lack in concern for things. Shove *et al.* contribute to what they claim is a broadly agreed upon position that things be treated as elements of practice. Proceeding from this, they posit a simplified scheme of three elements of practice: materials, competence, and meanings. 'Materials' include objects, infrastructures, tools, hardware and the body itself (2012:23). 'Competence' is derived from the Giddensian notion of practical consciousness, which includes know-how, background knowledge, and multiple forms of understanding and deliberately cultivated skill. The element of 'meanings', comprised of emotions, motivational knowledge, and other mental activities, is used to "represent the social and symbolic significance of participation at any one moment" (Shove *et al.* 2012:23).

It is the active integration of the interdependent materials, competences, and meanings that define practices. With this formulation, they suppose that elements are "somehow 'out there' in the world, waiting to be linked together" (2012:24), which seems to conflict with the notion that structure is internal, as put forward by Giddens.

The notion that structure has no existence outside of practical instantiations stops short of accepting concepts of externalities. Excluding the elements of practice from such a repudiation seems inconsistent at least with the authors' avowal to side with Giddens in his thinking. One should be suspicious of the notion of 'waiting to be linked' that the elements are purported to be doing. However, with this caveat in mind, Shove *et al.*'s formulation offers a pertinent look at how practices emerge, persist, transform, and potentially disappear. As a performance of the system of automobility, the practice of driving is a prime example of the significance of the interconnected elements of materials, competences, and meanings. I will return to this notion after giving a context to this discussion of practice by elaborating on the concept of automobility and situating subjectivity and theories of practice within key scholarship in the field.

### ***The systemic regime of automobility***

In the broadest sense, the term 'automobility' conflates mobility with notions of an individual's autonomy. Featherstone writes that, "we can think of many automobilities – modes of autonomous, self-directed movement" (2004: 1). Böhm *et al.* suggest modes of 'autonomous, self-directed movement', like walking or cycling, and also consider modes of automobility that do not involve bodily travel, but still "create forms of travel that express and embody notions of autonomy," (2006: 6) like the use of the telephone or the internet<sup>2</sup>. However, what is key in understanding how the term is predom-

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<sup>2</sup> Here, it is important to take into consideration that even these expressions of 'autonomy' should be scrutinized for the significance that they assign to individuals and their agency. Following Mauss (1973), we can consider walking and other forms of bodily (and mental) movement as always participating in 'physio-

inantly used in this literature is the “specific character of domination” of the car and the notion of a “self-organizing, autopoietic, non-linear system that spreads worldwide and includes cars, car-drivers, roads, petroleum supplies and many novel objects, technologies and signs” (Urry 2004:27). Urry asserts that the system of automobility generates the conditions for its own reproduction through the combination of its cultural, subjective, bodily, consumptive, economic, and environmental interconnections. Paterson indicates that, “the whole ideological apparatus of automobility serves to emphasize that...this is a mobility which serves, produces and makes possible human autonomy” (2007:139).

Following contemporary poststructuralist scholars of mobility, social scientists like Böhm *et al.* and Paterson see automobility as inherently political. This perspective recognizes the array of different power relations that contributed to the rise of the automobile, including discourses, practices, and their material realities (Seiler 2008). It seeks to fill a gap left by some automobility scholars who, while expounding the notion of the non-linear, self-organizing, and self-reproducing ‘system’ of automobility (Sheller & Urry 2000; Urry 2004), have avoided exploring the political dimensions of such a phenomenon (Böhm *et al.* 2006). In response to the notion of a ‘system’ of automobility, Böhm *et al.* propose using the term ‘regime’ instead, which is able to both emphasize its systemic nature and also shed light on the relations of power that both produce and are reproduced by this system. This politicization of the term makes sure to approach automobility as something that is not natural or inevitable, but rather something that enables and is enabled by particular arrangements of power.

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psycho-sociological assemblages’, which are attributable to education and the “circumstances of life in common, of contact” (1973:84).

Marletto (2011) further elaborates on the concept of 'regime' by including a consideration of structure and agency. He indicates that regimes are "systems that have a pervasive (or dominant) effect on reality" by satisfying a "societal demand", like that of sustenance, housing, or mobility, in this case (2011:72-73). Any given regime is reproduced and transformed through the ways in which the actions and learning of individuals and collectivities affect its structural components, the "rules, artifacts, services, preferences, interests, etc." (2011:72). He argues that regimes operate through structured agency. The structure of the regime is replicated by individual and collective action, which also generates "the variation of structural variables" (2011:74), allowing for change to potentially take shape. But in his discussion of agency, Marletto relegates individual drivers to the role of consumers with a 'locked-in' preference and instead devotes his attention to the 'core actors' largely responsible for the diffusion of the car, like corporations and organizations represented by federal agencies, auto manufacturers, road-builders, and the oil, cement, and rubber industries. Given that today, for example, the built environment is tailored to fit the needs of the car, a view of mobility behavior as a 'locked-in' consumer preference would do better seeing it as a concession or a yielding to the structural conditions. After all, as Watson writes, "systems can only emerge, persist, and gain dominance by colonizing what people do" (2012:492), and this is especially so when considering the notion of the regime. Herein lies the crucial issue for a practice theoretical approach: "systems persist and are transformed only through the flow of practices – of action and doing – which comprise them" (Watson 2012:492).

In this regard, Watson indicates that sociotechnical systems, like that of automobility, can be conceptualized as 'systems of practice' (2012:493). Watson's conceptualization certainly owes some of its debt to Giddens, who identified systems as the "repro-

duced relations between actors or collectivities organized as regular social practices” (1984:25). The depth of the embeddedness of a practice like driving is shaped by its relations with other practices and by the systemic elements (materials, competences, meanings), which are constituted and sustained by the practice. The whole system of automobility is contingent on the practice of driving. It is through the successive performances of driving that the (system of) practice is embedded, reproduced, and repeatedly reshaped. But attention to embeddedness and situatedness needs to consider that practices happen in space. Practice and space are interdependent. Today’s spaces of automobility were certainly not always reserved for the car.

### ***The rise of the car and the production of auto-space***

The emergent success of the car in the first quarter of the twentieth century depended on a new kind of city, or at least a new conception of the spaces of the city. Transformation of the city and the spaces of the street necessitated a ‘social reconstruction’ of the street as a space “where motorists unquestionably belonged” (Norton 2007:1). The heterogeneous uses of street space were seen as an obstacle to the proliferation of the car that a coalition of auto-lobbying interests desired. Up until the 1920s, cars were shunned on the streets. By 1930, the street as a space for the car prevailed as the standard. Jain (2004) traces the origins of an automobility habitus not just as an embodied mode of transport, but as a set of legal dispositions on the part of policymakers and regulators. She indicates that the beginning of the twentieth century brought with it a new ‘common sense’ regarding the appropriate uses of certain spaces and the technology and design of the automobile. She calls this the material and semiotic ‘en-

coding' of the automobility habitus through the legal codification of the attitudes and practices of driving. Planning codes, land use, standardized guardrail design, and asphalt specifications all coincided "with the kind of political space that the road would become; the vehicle choices that people could make; and the measurement of risk, inflected in terms of gender, class, race, and age, of a lived American geography" (2004:64).

Jackson attests to automobility's capacity to organize space in his book *Crabgrass Frontier* (1985), explaining the political forces that enabled the production of auto-space in conjunction with suburbanization and highway construction. He explains that, during the first several decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, rapidly growing auto ownership had begun to congest dilapidated city streets that had not seen the care of public spending. Prior to 1920, there were almost no paved surfaces between cities, and no highway numbering system to facilitate travel. In the cities, streets were packed with trolleys, horse-drawn carriages, and pedestrians. Auto travel in the cities became increasingly difficult, inconvenient, and unsafe. The city and its residents, who were increasingly more black than white, became problematized. Increasing auto ownership and the racially exclusive, state-sponsored housing boom of the mid-20th century set the stage for the construction of the white suburbs and the highways that would prioritize the extension of white movement over the preservation of black space. Practically every major American metro area saw the removal of thousands of minority households to make way for the highway systems that would serve the needs of the newly burgeoning white middle class that fled the heterogeneous space of the cities. In some ways, Jackson's explanation can be seen as an expression of the operation of governmentality. Through discourses of problematization, safety, efficiency, and productivity, the state facilitated the

creation of the (white) suburbs and provided impetus for the construction of the federal highway system. The infrastructural entrenchment of the car in American society facilitated the governing of (auto)mobility.

Drivers and their subjectivities and practices are implicated in the production of governable spaces. Merriman writes that, “while official regulations, codes and policing would form important elements of a regime of good governance... habituated, everyday techniques and practices of self-governance and self-discipline by vehicle drivers would underlay the production of safe, efficient and social driving environment” (2007:153). Freund & Martin (1993) and Merriman (2007) indicate that the space of the modern highway alters the very nature of being in the world, generating new ways of navigating through and understanding space. People are required to adapt, to self-govern themselves on the highway (as well as other types of roads), managing speed, alertness, patience (Freund & Martin 1993). This “instrumental, diligent, wide awake state of being becomes the rule” as more and more space becomes automobilized (Freund & Martin 1993). Furthermore, the policing and surveillance of highway space facilitates the production of a compliant, self-governing driving subject, exemplifying the disciplinary nature of governable space and the critical role that space contributes to the production of subjects. Consider the city and the amount of urban space devoted to the car. While it can be argued that cities also contain high concentrations of alternative mobilities (to varying degrees), the hegemony of the car certainly manifests very visibly in the fabric of the urban environment. Freund & Martin write that, modern urban landscapes are “built to facilitate automobility and to discourage other forms of human movement” (Freund & Martin 1993:119). This type of generalization would need to differentiate between different types of ‘urban’ space in order to maintain credibility, but cities like Los

Angeles are clear examples of the extent to which the urban landscape can necessitate the use of the car (Beckmann 2001; Seiler 2008). In such automobilized spaces, as Beckmann argues, the introduction and entrenching of new, 'compressed' spatiotemporalities, or ways for people to overcome distance and "reduce the friction between two places," (2001:597) has accelerated the expansion of suburban spaces and contributed to the fragmentation of space.

But this shouldn't suggest a static space. The very notion that space-time can be 'compressed' by the introduction of various mobilities presumes the interdependent social, material, and practical production of spatiality. While the circumstances of car use can surely vary from one place to another, the pervasiveness of the car in (American) urban landscapes significantly influences the organization of space and the networks through which (American) humans have navigated social, economic, and subjective realities (Freund & Martin 1993; Seiler 2008). Space and "the subjectivities through which individuals inhabit spaces" are formed and reformed by the array of different movements and circulations of not only people and their ideas, but also capital and materials (Sheller & Urry 2006:216). Especially when considering movement and mobility, "...it is perhaps more useful to think about the ongoing processes of 'spacing', 'placing' and 'landscaping' through which the world is shaped and formed" (Cresswell & Merriman 2011). It is the active (re)production of space that allows us to think about auto-space as not only the space of streets, freeways, parking lots, and drive-ways, but more importantly, as a space of doing, in this case, driving and all the subjective, social, and political aspects it entails.

### *The emergence of the practice of driving*

An important component of recent work on the geographies of mobilities has given much attention to practice and performance of mobilities, largely influenced by a post-structuralist sensitivity to movement and practice (Cresswell & Merriman 2011). As a response to the previous avoidance of any substantial consideration of the embodiments and feelings associated with the mobilities, this approach devotes much of its focus to the “corporeal body as an affective vehicle through which we sense place and movement, and construct emotional geographies” (Sheller & Urry 2006:216).

As Shove *et al.* show, the practice of driving exists as “a recognizable conjunction of elements, consequently figuring as an entity” (2012:7). Without prioritizing structure or agency, they argue that a focus on driving as a practice exposes the ‘trajectories’ of practices-as-entities, in which the connections between the elements are made, broken, and remade throughout the passing of time. In this light, materiality, meaning, and competence mutually shape one another. A historical account of how the practice of driving came to be so pervasive in social life provides a way to understand how stability and routinization are “not end points of a linear process of normalization,” but are rather “ongoing accomplishments in which similar elements are repeatedly linked together in similar ways” (Shove *et al.* 2012:24), a conception that stays true to the Giddensian commitment to the *durée* of social life.

By tracing back the lineage of the practice of driving and its elemental linkages, Shove *et al.* elucidate its continuities with the practices of horse riding, cycling, machine operation, and sea-faring. The conventional use of the right side of the road, for exam-

ple, can be traced back to practical configurations of horse-based travel on roads. In the early 1900s, the emergence of the gasoline engine generated the need for the knowledge to maintain its cumbersome early mechanical designs. The scarcity of this new competence structured both the character of driving and the manner in which it took hold. In order to drive the car, one had to know how to repair it. This limited driving and car-use to those individuals with the particular mechanical knowledge or with the means to secure a chauffeur with such competence. This close relationship between materiality and competence also shaped the way that meanings about driving were informed. Simply having access to a car signified affluence. Because car driving provided a means to leave the unsanitary conditions of cities at the time, links to health and adventurousness were also made through this configuration of elements. The links between the elements of a nascent practice of driving were in flux more than they were stable. As competence and materiality co-evolved, so did the meanings that were ascribed to the conditions. Shove *et al.* write that, “the material relations were reconfigured such that driving required less demanding skills” (2012:30). More access to the car inevitably changed the status of driving to a more populist practice.

The proliferation of hegemonic car-based mobility stems from changes in the required competences, which included not only changes in the car and its mechanical capabilities, but also in spatial and infrastructural changes. For example, the arrival of the freeway system brought with it not only broader spatial access but also another emergent competence of navigation and operation. The practice of driving now entailed not only the operation of a vehicle, but also knowing where to go, ‘getting around’ and travelling. Meaning and competence became entangled when licensing and legitimation were introduced. Certain meanings, like adventurousness, were able to stick around, if

perhaps less significantly, while others, like links to affluence and health, disappeared altogether. The increasing embeddedness of driving both stimulated and was stimulated by newcomers to the scene of meanings: independence, freedom, and citizenship.

### ***Embodying and enacting the meanings of automobility***

Considering the role of shared meanings in discursive production of subjectivity, Seiler suggests that the ideological conflict between capitalism and socialism during the Cold War was a means for the state to produce the ‘authentically autonomous’ individual. The apparent vitality and prosperity of the country was at stake, the ‘urgent need’ being an individual that upholds and defends the ideology of the nation-state (2008:69-71). Particularly in the United States, liberal individualism has been instrumental in the justification and naturalization of the “prevailing arrangement of social, economic, and political power by making that arrangement appear to be the aggregate of innumerable acts of choice and consent on the part of free individuals” (Seiler 2008:4). In a similar vein, Henderson (2006) refers to the ‘inevitability hypothesis,’ which suggests that the proliferation of automobility is unavoidable and natural due to people’s free choices, a view adopted by the majority of the policy makers in the discourses surrounding automobility.

Much of what Seiler (2008) and others (Edensor 2004; Keohane *et al.* 2002; Rajan 2006; Packer 2008) examine proceeds from acknowledging the acquisition of discursively produced meanings. Seiler argues that the performances of driving, at least in the United States, are conflated with the liberal tenets of citizenship and nationality. To be ‘American,’ Seiler argues, is “to claim automobility as one’s habitat and habitus”

(Seiler 2008:9). Rajan (2006) implicitly draws from theories of practice in his remarks on the 'banal rehearsals' of automobility. Driving, negotiating the road with other drivers, reading signs and maps, parking, and getting licensed are all doxic aspects of the practice of driving. They are self-evident through their banality. Referencing Bourdieu, he considers these aspects for their effect on "a habitus that is 'collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor'" (2006:122). A consideration of 'collective orchestration' is not entirely about nonreflexive automatons, he argues. Rather, it is the habitual reflexivity of the habitus produced by the practice of driving that allows for change, improvisation, and even what would seem like a transcendence of the objective order to the agent. Rajan asserts that the 'liberalism theology' that is generated by the practices of automobility is exactly what allows one to feel like they can escape the habitus: "...the freedom to break loose can always be realized simply by getting into one's car and driving off in any direction one chooses" (2006:123). The very act that allows one to feel like they are escaping is, in turn, reproducing and maintaining automobility and the practice of driving. Ultimately, as Beckmann (2001) points out, nonreflexivity rests on "the social construction of automobility as a necessity" (605).

### *The car-driver hybrid*

Mindful of the constitutive role of materials (and other elements) in everyday life, Dant expounds on the concept of the 'driver-car' assemblage, or the car-driver hybrid, neither a thing nor a person, but rather a "social being that produces a range of social actions that are associated with the car" (2004:51) and with late modernity, more broadly. Urry suggests that this 'quasi-object' produces "new subjectivities organized around

the extraordinarily disciplined ‘driving body’” (2006: 24). It is not only an extension of the human body, but also an extension of society into the human. The tacit knowledge of the doxa and the reflexivity of practical consciousness could both have a place in this formulation, but Dant draws instead from Merleau-Ponty’s understanding of the embodied experience of the material and social world through bodily memory. Following Merleau-Ponty, Dant indicates that human beings carry into each moment an embodied orientation to the world based on a history of sensuous experience. It is with this bodily orientation toward the world that the practice of driving can be seen as “an embodied skill that becomes a taken-for-granted way of moving through space” (2004:73). Understandings of the appropriate speed and the appropriate style of maneuvering are acquired corporeally through the vehicle, its dials and controls, and the accompanying sounds and vibrations. The car-driver hybrid is ultimately a performance of the system of automobility. Every time someone drives, they draw from a habitus to not only make decisions and choices regarding their driving, but to also perceive and to make appropriate bodily movements within the car. Through the habitual performance of the assemblage, the body remembers and informs the driver-car. Freund & Martin (2009) argue that such a ‘technological habitus’ demands a sober “sociotechnological frame of mind” in order to “manage highly complex and potentially dangerous relationships with material culture” (480). This habitus suppresses those uses of the body and mind that do not pertain to driving or navigating auto-centric spaces. But such habitus are not undifferentiated. The competition or clash of multiple contrasting habitus is surely an event that can engender practical changes.

Geographer Edensor (2004) and sociologists Keohane, Kuhling, and Horgan (2002) explore how particular mundane practices (styles and conventions of driving)

sustain both conscious and unreflexive impressions of national and regional belonging. Edensor uses the notion of the habitus to account for the ways that both the reflexive and unreflexive embodied competencies and conventions of driving are constituted nationally. The extent to which these driving habits are grounded nationally is very evident in the experience of someone driving in the unfamiliar autoscapes of foreign countries. The incompatibility of the two national habitus is expressed through the lack of the range of everyday competencies that the foreigner does not possess. But Edensor also indicates that, “habits can operate in an improvisatory fashion within a known motorscape” (2004:112). The habitual structures of automobility within a given regional or national context allow for flexibility and adaptability.

In one of the most cogent depictions of situational adjustments in the practice of driving, Keohane *et al.* (2002) use traffic accidents in an unevenly modernizing Ireland to explore how particular habitus informs the adaptive development of new practices and helps to shape a reconstituted social order. It is an imperative of many Irish drivers to develop new codes of driving practice in order to survive amidst a changing moral and cultural landscape. They argue that the clash between “incompatible paces of life” (2002:54) that occupy spaces designed to hold only one is the cause of road traffic accidents on the motorways of Ireland. The commonsense misunderstanding about the causes of accidents in Ireland arises out of statistics that blame ‘driver error’ for most car accidents. They insist that the conception of the driver from this point of view fails to consider the existence of multiple habitus that inform individual and collective driving. Besides exaggerating the notion of the morally responsible and rational individual, the focus on driver error misses the point and “obscures the extent to which driving, for the most part, is an artful accomplishment in which drivers exemplify great skill and re-

sourcefulness” (2002:59). The ‘collision culture’ of Ireland, as they deem it, arises out of liminal and anomic conditions. Because there is a lack of cohesive moral authority, people cannot look towards the larger societal context for guidance regarding their driving behavior. So, they must adapt in order to be safer. Experienced drivers draw from previous experience, from an already established habitus, to create new codes of practice. This suggests that in some cases drivers are not the disciplined subjects that systems of power aim to produce, but creative subjects that draw on experience of various habituses beyond state governmentality.

Keohane *et al.* draw from their ethnographic work and indicate that one of the ways through which this improvisation happens is through the habitual and ‘fluent’ communication that drivers of small towns perform on the newer roads that cut through their communities. This includes salutes, gestures, and facial expressions that can comment on dangerous situations or others’ driving. These are “sedimented, automatic, unreflexive, and vestigial” actions that are derived from a habitus that is “anchored in traditional forms life” (2002:61). In the instance that an incompatible habitus arrives or passes through, the locals can also use these techniques to maintain the boundaries of their own habitus and protect themselves by distinguishing local from non-local. This disposition has a ‘disciplinary gaze’ built into it that determines who is deemed competent or worthy of participation in local automobility. The police, in fact, look towards these codes of practice as the appropriate ways of using the road under anomic conditions, despite their illegality. With their discretionary power “they interpret, improvise, and adapt bureaucratic legal rationality to suit the anomic context of the wider society” (2002:63). The police are involved in regulating which habitus is more valuable. Because the rationality of traffic law doesn’t match the conditions on the road, the police

look to these adaptive codes of practice as models of appropriate behavior. They draw from their own bureaucratic habitus and ‘improvise’ in order to adapt to and cope with change. In this ethnographic work, Keohane *et al.* (2002) draw from several theorists of practice, including Bourdieu and Giddens, to emphasize the knowledgeableability of particular practices.

While several scholars have in fact used the habitus explicitly within their writing, its use in automobility scholarship has been disjointed at best. In several instances, the habitus is implicitly used or suggested without direct citation of Bourdieu. In the foundational sociological work on automobility (Sheller & Urry; Urry 2004), the habitus is never mentioned, perhaps only hinted at. Sheller & Urry (2000) indicate that automobility “organizes how both car-users *and* non-car-users organize their lives through time-space” (745, emphasis in original). While car-use can “rudely interrupt the taskscapes” of non-car-users, this interruptive practice is prioritized over the daily routines of “slower-moving pathways and dwellings” (Sheller & Urry 2000:745). It is then naturalized into doxic conceptions of the use of urban space and, in turn, generative of the systemic regime of automobility. They argue that the ‘contemporary traveller’ has come to internalize the expected “seamlessness of the car journey” (2000:745). Other modes of travel become inflexible and fragmented. Driving produces this habitual internalization of time perception. The practice of driving, they argue, also requires a public, mutual trust between all car-users in which they are able to follow shared rules, communicate, and interact on the space of the road. This suggests that driving takes place “in the midst of the routines and habits of other road users, all of whom have ‘careers’ of different durations” (Shove *et al.* 2012:39). Elias (quoted in Shove *et al.* 2012:40) indicates that the patterns of self-regulation that drivers exhibit are largely determined by a

society's standards for the general self-regulation of individuals. This collectively guides drivers' behaviors and decisions without requiring face-to-face interaction. Others (Dant 2004; Freund & Martin 1993; Rajan 2006; Urry 2006) have also suggested this notion of a trained, alert, and dependable body that is both trustworthy and trustful of the fact that thousands of others "must share these characteristics on the road" (Rajan 2006:122). Sheller (2004), who also doesn't directly use habitus (but mentions Bourdieu, nonetheless), writes of the ways that car-use is generative of culturally sedimented emotional and affective dispositions. The emotions or feelings that might be associated with the socially situated practice of driving, or being driven, are not just felt or expressed, she argues, but rather "elicited, invoked, regulated and managed through a variety of expectations, patterns and anticipations" (2004:226). She asks, "what role might driving or riding in cars play in the naturalization of certain kinds of feeling?" (2004:226). Similarly, we can ask: how might the emotional and affective internalization of car-use facilitate the reproduction of automobility?

### *Bodies, affect, and practice*

The answer to this question largely depends on one's conceptualization of affect in the first place. From nonrepresentational theories of practice to emotional and affectual geography, this is an on-going question that proves difficult to comprehensively answer (Pile 2010; Thrift 2004; Wetherell 2012). As Thrift (2004) indicates, the various ways that scholars have approached the realm of affect each have their benefits and drawbacks, but all of these approaches suggest that affect is a form of indirect and non-pensive thinking, a "pre-subjective force" (Thrift 2004:58). It can be broadly understood

as arising out of a heterogeneous assemblage of emotions and feelings, instinctive motivating forces, objects, activities, and environments among other things (Thrift 2004). The individual has little control over the intensities and qualities of feelings aroused by affect. Shouse writes that affect is “a non-conscious experience of intensity...a moment of unformed and unstructured potential” (2005: no page).

Drawing from Deleuze and Massumi, Bissell (2014) writes of the ways that considerations of time figure into understandings of affective perception. The past, as Deleuze suggests, “has not ceased to be” (1988: 55). The past remains in the present as a virtuality. The capacity of affect to shape action arises from its temporality, from “the continued virtual presence of the past as a realm of potential in the present” (Bissell 2014: 1950). From here, we can look towards an affective practice, a view that emphasizes the openness of practice, rather than its rigidity – the copresence of the virtual with everyday life. In this light, habitual action is seen as “a way that the past survives in and through the present, actualizing its virtual forces through the development of a future-orientated preparedness for action” (Bissell 2014: 1954). Bissell argues that Bourdieu had little to say about “the temporality of habitus” focusing instead on “its inertia rather than its dynamism,” not leaving much room for explorations of transformation once people have reached “a threshold of practical proficiency” (2014: 1952). Seeing habit as ‘locked in’ does not provide a path for exploring change, however big or small. Bissell also talks about the ways that practices and milieus enable the past to exist in the present through memory. Both the mind and the body remember and are affected by the spaces they inhabit. Structure in this view is internal, instantiated through practices and as memory traces. As it concerns the car-driver hybrid, we can consider the corporeal memory that is needed to maintain this crucial materiality of automobility. But a view of

the virtualities of practice, or the potential of multiple outcomes, can point us to the ways that the car-driver is not 'locked in' to its relational hybridity.

Considering the notion of affect in this light provides a way towards understanding how systems of practice like automobility are more uncertain and open-ended than they are frequently made to seem. But nonetheless we still find that automobility has a certain grasp on human action. Investigations of the embodied and experiential aspects of driving also need to consider that “practices that work on the psychological such as affective practices are also a form of discipline and control” (Wetherell 2012: 23). Such investigations can look towards a politics of affect to explore the relations of power that enable particular virtualities to actualize.

### ***Research Questions***

With all of this mind, I will turn our attention to my research questions:

- How do people’s various affective, emotional, cognitive, and corporeal connections to the practice of driving contribute to the acceptance of and compliance with the U.S. regime of automobility?
  - In what ways is the (driving) self-performed/constructed through the practice of driving?
    - What discourses/logics/ideas emerge when people talk about their driving while driving?
    - What is the relation of the (driving) self to auto-space?
- How do the assemblages of automobility enable particular subjectivities that are generative of the goals of governmentality?

- How are the car and the road made governable through the practice of driving?
- How do drivers negotiate their relationship to the state through the practice of driving?
  - What role do the police play in driver's subjectivities?
  - What besides the police ensures 'proper (driving) conduct' ?
- How should we study driving and automobility?
  - What relationship of theory and method is appropriate to understanding driving as an embodied practice?
  - What method(s) does this suggest? What can we learn from such methods?  
What are the challenges of such methods?

## **Chapter Two: How do we study (and represent) feelings, emotions, and affect in car use?**

### *Introduction*

This research uses the intersection between kinesthetic consistency and emotional variation as a point of departure for an exploration of the embodied mobile practice of driving. The subjective experience of driving is the focus of my attention. While the previous chapter suggested the social construction of subjectivity, it is worth emphasizing that this does not close off the possibility that people have unique experiences. Certainly, the potential for variation exists in the particular dispositions and experiences that drivers carry with them into the practice. There is also the potential to vary based on type of vehicle driven (compact, minivan, SUV, truck, motorcycle, etc.) or type of auto-space navigated (highway, street, alley, parking lot). Emotional and sensory variations are bound to occur. Certainly, competence and subjective experience are related and dependent on one another. So, we might assume that even emotional and sensory experiences will have a degree of consistency between different drivers.

The everydayness of this habitual routine practice leads some to argue that there is much about the experience that we are not able to know about or comment on. Bourdieu was especially skeptical of the capabilities of the interview. However, Hitchings argues that talking to people about these things “is not logically inconsistent with the arguments made by proponents of social practice theory” (2012:65). While there are critics that say that the embodied practices of driving elude representation, that they are fleeting and non-representational, others give more credit to the discursive capabilities of drivers. Merriman writes that, “driving is characterized by highly distinctive, kinaes-

thetic, proprioceptive, haptic, spatial and visual sensibilities that are difficult to describe and are rarely reflected upon, but this does not mean that motorists are unable to present or describe their embodied experiences...” (Merriman 2014:180). With the use of ride-along interviews, I investigate the ways that people understand their own experience of driving. I take seriously the notion that people have knowledge of their own experiences, despite some limitations regarding an awareness of why they do certain things or feel certain ways. Rather than focusing on *why* people experience practices in certain ways, I pay attention to *how* people talk about their experiences, how this is liable to shape their understanding of the world, and how this might provide a way to understand the ways certain practices persist.

In this chapter, I begin with an account of my fieldwork. Then, I introduce the epistemological concerns in this research and put forth a rationale for my research method: the ride-along interview and the autoethnography. Investigating the experiences of driving subjects requires an acknowledgement of a theoretical problem, namely the epistemological incompatibility between post-structuralism and the humanist tradition. Taking off from here, I discuss how a critical (post)phenomenology is helpful in exploring the role of affect in practice, given a more enthusiastic embrace of discourse. Then, I will consider the ways that this research combines contemporary mobile methods and conventional qualitative methods. I will conclude with a discussion of my analysis methods and the ways that studies of affect can help to understand the production of the driving subject.

## ***Overview of fieldwork***

The data for this research was collected through a series of six semi-structured, ride-along interviews, completed between the spring and winter of 2015. It was initially planned that the participants were to be recruited through a recruitment flyer posted in various locations on the UW-Milwaukee campus, the public library, and various cafés/coffee shops. Recruitment proved to be difficult and inconsistent. There were several instances of people contacting me through texts or phone calls. One person called and wanted to know more about the project. What seemed like genuine interest in the phone conversation never proceeded to a scheduled interview. One person left a voice mail indicating their interest in the ‘driving job’. I called back and informed them through voice mail of the terms of the research project, never to hear from them again. This was the case in most of the contacts made through the recruitment flyer. I would receive a text indicating that a person was interested and wanted to know more. I would respond in what I hoped was received as a casual congeniality and asked for their email address in order to proceed with informing them of the project. After receiving their email address, I would send a standardized informative email with a verbal consent letter attached. This was usually the last point of contact I would have with interested persons. There was one instance of a scheduled interview with a person that failed to arrive at the meeting place. I called to ask if they wanted to reschedule to no avail. This series of failed potentialities certainly lowered my morale, but despite the setbacks I was fortunately able to acquire several interview participants through the flyers and through network connections.

For this reason, most participants were either familiar to me or introduced to me by colleagues or acquaintances. Only one participant was successfully recruited from the public by flyer. We had not met in person prior to the interview. One participant was referred to me by an acquaintance. Prior to the scheduled interview, we were introduced once in person by this person. Two of the participants were coworkers from a previous job that had seen the flyer and expressed interest in the project. We had known each other through shared employment and had an informally amicable association. The remaining two participants were acquaintances with whom I would say, relative to the rest of the interviewees, I had the closest relationship prior to the interview. The ages of the interviewees ranged from 22 to 28 years old – basically, peers by age proximity (I was 25 years old at the time of the interviews). This mixture of participant familiarity is important to acknowledge in consideration of the roles of rapport and positionality in the interview process.

Each one-on-one interview took place in the participants' respective cars with them at the wheel and me in the passenger seat. The interviews ranged in length from 35 minutes to 50 minutes. An audio recording was made of each interview, which I later used to make full transcriptions, which were supplemented by notes taken during the interviews and during transcription. Before the interview, the drivers were told to choose a route of their preference with the condition that they use the highway at some point on the route.

The semi-structured interview was based on a set of predetermined questions that were used as a rough guide to the trajectory of the interview. I began formulating the interview prompts (see Appendix) after immersing myself in some of the literature regarding subject formation and the embodiment of automobility. Many of the ques-

tions were written shortly prior to the first interview. I tried to consider the best ways to ask questions that might not have easily accessible (if at all) answers. I certainly could not ask: *hey, how does subject formation feel for you?* But I knew that I wanted to devise a way of developing a conversation that would at least point towards the acquisition of practical knowledge, corporeal awareness, and emotional relationality. I wanted to address the car-driver hybrid and inquire into people's relationship to sensation in and through the car. With the hope of revealing affective operations, my goal was to open up comfortable spaces for interviewees to express things that they did not know exactly how to talk about. I tried to imagine how I might want to be asked the questions I was writing, not sure of how I would answer them myself. The first interview allowed me to consider what my list of questions was missing. Later, my advisor and I modified the list of questions to better reflect things that we had talked about in our conversations about the research. It is worth mentioning that I inherited a car from my family after the first interview. While I had previous practical driving knowledge to draw from, my new ownership of this car in the context of this research proved to be a serendipitous occasion. Ideas about the project emerged as I began this new corporeal and emotional relationship with my new car. I could not help but to think about this research and the questions that I would ask my interviewees.

Every interview began with the same question: *how do you feel in this moment? What types of sensations or thoughts are emerging as you hold the steering wheel, use the pedals with your feet, look out the window...?* From here, I conducted the interview in a manner that adjusted to the interviewee's statements. Many questions were answered in a way that opened the way for related questions to be asked. Sometimes unplanned questions were added in the midst of the interview, adjusting to the particular

flow. Some questions would get shorter answers, not leaving much room for a smooth transition into the next question. An awkward silence ensued at times, while I considered the next question. Despite the awkwardness, the ride-along interview allowed for each person's attention to be kept in some way other than through the interview. The interviewee, for example, was in the middle of controlling a machine and navigating through traffic. At certain points, the interview carried on more like a conversation where we would exchange thoughts. In these moments, I expressed my own thoughts about driving and passengering in order to encourage a more open dialogue. When appropriate, I would point something out on the road (other drivers, the road, surroundings) and we would enter it into the conversation. At other times, as we will see in the next chapter, the interviewees brought my attention to things on the road that affected their driving or annoyed them. Talking about mundane activities and feelings proved to be slightly awkward for the participants.

Additionally, I noticed something about my own behavior during the interviews: I rarely took my eyes off of the road or the surroundings (with the obvious exception of referring to my interview prompts). It is difficult to say exactly why I was compelled to act this way (and not in a way that dedicated more attention to the participant). Was this a result of something that I had unconsciously internalized from previous passengering? Or can it be attributed to the subtle feelings of uncertainty generated by being driven by not-so familiar people? Was I compelled by fear? Or was I compelled by some persistent curiosity, an on-going subconscious fascination with the moving landscape? Perhaps, it was a combination of these things along with the anxieties of research. Whatever the reason for this unintentional behavior, I realized that it prevented me from paying close attention to the participants and their bodily movements and facial expressions. At sev-

eral occasions I caught myself, corrected my behavior, and diverted attention to the drivers and their posture, movements, and subtle gesticulations. However, without having established direct observation as a part of the research to the participants, I worried that it would be liable to generate discomfort or unease.

Overall, I had two goals during the interview process: to allow the interviewees command over their explanations to reveal *how* subjective experiences of driving are talked about, while also paying attention to opportune moments in the interview to more closely examine taken-for-granted feelings or emotions by encouraging a deeper consideration on the part of the interviewee. Perhaps, I thought, this could begin to reveal the connection between the micro-level of experience to the macro-level of structure.

### ***Epistemological concerns***

Exploring subjective experiences requires positioning the epistemological concerns of the research and the ontological status of the subjects of research. A serious consideration of epistemological concerns is highly meaningful to the ways that methods are chosen and the ways that data is gathered and analyzed. The meanings produced during and after the interview process emerge from a particular ontological understanding of the subject and researcher. What is the nature of reality? What is representable about reality? How do subjects exist in the world? What kind of subjects does one's research engage with? What can research say? In order to maintain investigative rigor, it is imperative that researchers ask these questions of themselves. This implies a reexam-

ination of the connections between theory, method, and practice in research methodologies.

The epistemological position in this research follows from the antipositivist assertions made by theorists of feminist geography who have emphasized the centrality of power in shaping our understandings and experiences of the world (Staeheli & Lawson 1995; Rose 1997), a view that shares much in common with post-structuralism's concern for the power-laden production of knowledge. This implies that the subjects of research need to be examined with a similar regard for power and social construction. Staeheli & Lawson write that analyses drawing from feminist geography "entail an ontological position that views the subjects of research as situated in complex webs of power relations that construct and shape those very subjects" (Staeheli & Lawson 1995:322). The task then, as some feminist geographers argue, is to connect what is understood as "the microlevel of everyday experience to the macrolevel of power relations" (Rose 1997:310), providing a path towards an analysis that attempts to access larger power relations through the local. While it shares with humanism a concern with subjectivity, individual experience, and everyday life, feminist geography compensates for a major shortcoming in humanist research that "neglects the social construction of individual experiences through power relations that can be both known and changed" (Staeheli & Lawson 1995). This notion acknowledges that while understandings and experiences of the world are shaped by a variety of circumstances that pervade the mind-body in varying degrees of consciousness, these ways of knowing are not completely under the surface of representation.

Feminist geographers' epistemological critique of the research process has encouraged the reevaluation of the relationship between the researcher and the re-

searched. The feminist view of the inextricable entanglement of power and knowledge is applied to not only the knowledge of the subjects of research, but also the knowledge of the researcher. The intersection of power with academic knowledge places the researcher in a privileged position. Quoted in Rose (1999:307), McLafferty writes of the ways that the interview is implicated in relations of power: “except in rare cases, the researcher holds a “privileged” position – by deciding what questions to ask, directing the flow of discourse, interpreting interview and observational material, and deciding where and in what form it should be presented”. The act of interpretation is a key site of academic power. Including the interpretation in the lens of analysis, we can see that the researcher becomes an object of analysis as well. Reflexivity in the research process is crucial for a critical geography that calls for situated knowledges. This is not an easy task. Researchers are faced with the myriad “anxieties and ambivalences” (Rose 1997:306) that surround reflexivity, positionality, situated knowledges, and their potential virtues and limits. Rose (1997) argues that in order to sustain reflexivity within research, it is important to make appropriate assumptions about agency and power. We cannot assume that both are knowable. Rose indicates that reflexivity requires an understanding that neither the interviewer nor the interviewee are centered, certain, entirely present, or fully representable. But this isn’t a defeatist claim. It is an epistemological and ontological stance. The researcher and the research participant bring different but overlapping knowledges to the research process both of which are important and productive. So, it is crucial to recognize the limits of what can be said by both parties. Rose writes that,

“We cannot know everything, nor can we survey power as if we can fully understand, control or redistribute it. What we may be able to do is something rather more modest but, perhaps, rather more radical: to inscribe into our research

practices some absences and fallibilities while recognizing that the significance of this does not rest entirely in our own hands” (1997:319).

In this light, considerations of rigor and professionalism within social research can, and should, include room for error. Treating the interview as if it is removed from the potentialities of human communication risks putting research on a pedestal and reproducing the very relations of power that one seeks to repudiate.

### ***Power and the interview***

The interview is one of the most widely used methods in qualitative human geography. In this research, I approach the interview as a particular way of investigating and knowing, rather than as the most accurate or the most effective at eliciting subjective knowledge. Talking methods, in general, give us “access to the ways in which people represent themselves and the world in the context of a (very particular kind of) conversation” (Secor 2010:195). Rather than making broad generalizations, the interview is more appropriate for answering questions regarding the ways in which particular practices and knowledges are constructed and enacted within particular contexts (Secor 2010). Depending on the theoretical approach and research questions, the interview can reveal “a diversity of meaning, opinion, and experiences” (Dunn 2010:102) and provide some access to the complexity and potential contradictions that arise in the interrogations of practices. Duncan & Duncan (2001:399) indicate that the interview is one of the main methods that can uncover “the conflicts, interconnections, anxieties, and specificities (historical or emerging) that roil beneath the calm surface of...situated meaning systems” (2001:401). Considering this, the interview must assume at least some degree of

knowledgeability on the part of the participants. While I do want to recognize the interviewees' agency in knowing and describing their experiences, it is important to be cautious of reducing the subsequent interpretation to strong relativism. I want to maintain the multiplicity of these experiences while looking for connections, overlaps, and similarities.

My concern is the negotiation of the many different ways that order or meaning can be understood, a compromise between the multiple 'truths' that might be exposed through my research. The 'data' gathered from the interviews represents a glimpse of someone's understanding of their own life world. I must consider temporal and spatial contexts regarding these inevitably shifting understandings. What people tell me in our conversations is a reflection of not only the context of our conversation (in which there is inevitably a power dynamic between the researcher and participant), but also of the particular personal circumstances that the interviewees came with (which is hardly knowable to me). The ensuing interpretation of the interviews will be a negotiation, a compromise between two understandings.

### ***The ride-along interview as method***

The main method I employ is the ride-along interview, or the 'passenger seat ethnography' as Dawson (2015) calls it. Any concern for the body and the way that feelings and emotions are (dis)engaged needs to consider the context in which these things are being investigated. Elwood & Martin (2000) point to the significance of the interview site in producing 'micro-geographies' of spatial relations and meaning. The role of the body must be recognized in "all social relationships and relationships with the mate-

rial world” (Dawson 2015:5). In this case, when contemplating an ontology of the driving subject (and the researcher-subject), the entanglement between person and object, between driver and car, is of the utmost importance. This merger between driver and car creates a distinct ontological shift. The car-driver hybrid, as described in the previous chapter, is the interview participant, and the car-passenger the researcher. The ride-along interview is a mobile method in the sense that both participants are moving, but we are not both driving the car. I am ‘passengering’. This is why it is important to make the distinction between language-use here. The ride-along is not the drive-along. While we are both being carried, in a sense, only one person, the driver, is in charge of how this carrying takes place. Establishing positionality and situating knowledge in this sense is crucial. The ways that the practice is known and felt develops differently through these relationships. It is useful to consider Ingold’s conceptualization of the human being, and thereby of perception, as “a singular locus of creative growth within a continually unfolding field of relationships” (2000:4-5). This makes sure to emphasize the processual nature of the experience of participation in the assemblages of automobility.

The ride-along with its combination of ethnographic observation and interviewing, should be seen as a particularly well-suited tool for exploration of everyday lived experience. Kusenbach calls the ride-along method “a more modest, but also a more systematic and outcome-oriented version” of the highly recommended ethnographic practice of ‘hanging out’ with key informants (2003:463). While it is limited in its representational capacities, it is quite focused in its investigation of experience. Not only does the ride-along facilitate discussions with research participants and form the basis for the interview context (Merriman 2014), but it is also a crucial way to intimately explore the assemblages that the practice of driving is implicated in. By centering the practice of

driving, the ride-along assists “recollection by connecting participants and researchers with the materialities of doing” (Spinney 2015:236). Talking, while crucial to the process, is not the only focus of attention. The immediacy of the ride-along immerses the car-driver in the assemblage and allows the interview closer inspection of the “taken for granted boundaries between driver, car, and the wider dimensions of the automobility system, such as roads and traffic apparatuses” (Dawson 2015:4). While the interview will inevitably interrupt or discourage the ‘natural’ occurrences and tendencies whilst driving, this interruption should be looked towards as a way of breaking through the hold of the unreflexive aspects of daily practices, as a ‘critical situation’ in the Giddensian sense. The interview itself is what brings otherwise routine actions abruptly into consciousness (Hitchings 2012) by guiding people to reflect more deeply on the taken for granted, and this is especially so in the context of driving. The ride-along setting overcomes some of the static circumstances of traditional sit-down interviews by catching the participant in the midst of a performance of the practice. It is different from more typical settings for interviews (desk, table, phone, email). In the ride-along, the interviewee and researcher are sharing something together. The car is not being driven together, but it is the experiences and the spaces of the road and the car that are shared.

This sharing of setting helps to establish rapport. As a passenger, I have a different embodied experience of the drive and of the car-driver hybrid (car-passenger, in this case) than that of my driving interviewee, but nonetheless, there are many important experiential overlaps that can contribute to a more productive rapport. Spinney makes the point that that ‘movement with’ becomes a way of ‘attuning’ the researcher to the mobile practice in question, “and in so doing facilitates cultural and social empathy” (Spinney 2015:37). Acknowledging the complexity of embodiment and the contingencies

of rapport also leads to an awareness of the role of the setting for the interview. Doing the ride-along in the interviewee's personal car is crucial to inquiries regarding embodiment. This means recognizing the significance of comfort, kinesthetic familiarity, and the array of the sensuous aspects of the personal car's interior.

Despite its benefits in helping the research get closer to understandings of the subjectivities of driving, the ride-along interview certainly has its setbacks. Firstly, there is the ethical concern. Driving is inherently dangerous. Adding distraction to the practice increases the risk of injury for both people involved. For the researcher, getting inside a car with a stranger is potentially a risky endeavor. For the researched, letting a stranger into the car is a risky endeavor as well. Secondly, there is inevitable drawback of contrivance. Ride-alongs, just as regular interviews and even participant observation, are always "contrived social situations that disturb the unfolding of ordinary events" (Kusenbach 2003:464). The mere presence and curiosity of the researcher (and the audio recorder) alters this "delicate, private dimension of lived experience" (Kusenbach 2003:464). Another problem is the inevitability of distortion. Certainly, recollections behind the wheel could be liable for forgetting, distortion, or misrepresentation. At worst, in order to avoid embarrassment, interviewees could fabricate answers and give a false account. These issues are, of course, unavoidable and undetectable in the format employed by this research. While the audio recordings provide an advantageous position from which to reevaluate the interview after the fact, because this project does not entail the interviewee returning to listen to the audio recording with me, the interpretation is certainly limited in its open-endedness. The recording is a snapshot of expressions of experience. The interviewee does not have the opportunity to reconsider ques-

tions or evaluate their answers. Nonetheless, analysis and interpretation proceeds with these things in mind.

### ***Phenomenology and the poststructuralist critique***

In this research, the interview will serve as a means to access a critical phenomenology of the performative and embodied experiences of car-use. Phenomenological method, putting it simply, “seeks to focus attention on the relationship between subject and object and to describe the experience from the first person point of view” (Spinney 2015:233). Seamon & Gill (2016) write that, phenomenology aims to “identify and understand broader, underlying patterns...that give order and coherence to the richness and ‘chaos’ of human experience as it is lived in everyday life” (p.122). Movement is particularly important to phenomenology for its fundamental role in bringing humans into relational contact with the world, allowing for sense and meaning to be made. So, phenomenological perspectives on mobile practices like driving are a useful way to explore the ways that this particular type of movement influences broader understandings of the world. Drawing from Husserl, Spinney writes that, “phenomenology requires an immersion and an empathy that is much more readily available through participation” (2015:237). The ride-along method is particularly well suited for this approach given its participatory nature.

Through the elicitation of descriptions of experiences and situations, the ride-along interviews are seen as a third-person phenomenological research method. In addition to the research material gathered from the interviews, I employ a first-person phenomenological (autophenomenological or autoethnographical) approach, using my own

experience of driving as “a basis for examining its specific characteristics and qualities” (Seamon & Gill 2016). The inclusion of the autophenomenological account, particularly in the case of driving, is inevitable in many ways. I recognize its presence in the research in an effort to both heed the feminist call for situating knowledge and incorporate the consideration that certain cultural geographers have made regarding the role of intensities and affective forces in shaping experience of practice, landscape, and self (Bissell 2014; Spinney 2015; Wylie 2005). The situating of knowledge is crucial to consider in research that interrupts the very routines that it studies. The researcher’s own knowledge regarding the practice of driving is valuable in creating a basis for examination. It can be seen as a self-interview. After all, the interview is interested in ‘getting in the shoes’ of the participant. Of course, valuing the autoethnographic account does not mean to privilege the experience of the researcher over that of the participants. It can be said that it is known differently, however, especially in the context of this research project. Ultimately, Letherby writes,

“...research is always auto/biographical in that when reflecting on and writing our own autobiographies we reflect on our relationship with the biographies of others and when writing the biographies of others we inevitably refer to and reflect on our own autobiographies” (2010:156).

This acknowledgement is part of what makes social scientific work rigorous.

Traditional (Husserlian) phenomenology tends to be subjectivist in its attempt to ‘identify and understand broader, underlying patterns’ of the nature of consciousness and of being-in-the-world. Critiques of phenomenology have pointed to its espousal of epistemological foundationalism, which is understood as, “a recourse to experience as the source of foundation of knowledge” (Stoller 2009:708). Poststructuralist critiques

have drawn attention to phenomenology's view of the pre-discursive nature of experience. Even Bourdieu has critiqued phenomenology for its lack of a concern for the social and political. However, Stoller indicates that, in their own way, poststructuralism and phenomenology share a common interest in a critical concept of experience. She draws from poststructuralist scholar Joan Scott in addressing the needed historicization of experience. She writes that, "it is not that, as a result of critically re-examining the concept of experience, we must therefore get rid of it; we must, instead, transform the concept" (2009:729). Feminist academic work has proceeded in including both poststructuralist and phenomenological perspectives in investigations of experience. Stoller argues that feminist phenomenology can be seen as a philosophy of experience that is capable of accounting for the poststructuralist critique. This project draws both from Stoller's account of the underevaluated compatibility between poststructuralism and phenomenology and from what has been called post-phenomenology, a perspective that tries to compensate for some of the shortcomings of a strictly humanist phenomenology. Spinney writes that,

"the core aspects that denote the 'post' are first that, through more rigorous analysis of embodied perception, post-phenomenology attempts to move beyond its labeling as anti-science and solipsistic. Second, it seeks to probe the role of technologies/non-humans in assembling the social and cultural" (2015:234).

Drawing upon non-representational theory, Spinney also adds a third aspect to the 'post': "the study of those aspects of lived experience such as affect that may escape conscious thought and language and thus can be described in some ways as being 'beyond' experience" (2015:234). I draw from Spinney's definition of the study of affect as some-

thing that is “concerned with how emotions, sensations, atmospheres, and feelings arise out of relational encounters between objects, spaces and people” (2015:235).

### ***Towards an affective-discursive practice***

Both the autoethnographic account and the ride-along interview rely on a particular assumption regarding the relation between discourse and affect, namely a regard for the potential of affect to surface to discursive levels, a view that goes against non-representationalist perspectives. Pile (2010) critiques the non-representational theorizations of affectual geography, pointing to its ‘hypocritical’ claims and shaky foundations regarding the workings of affect. He argues that affectual geographers have not established an actual theory of affect and its circulation, transmission, or contagion, and, because of this, are able to only deal with its surface expressions, despite their claims of non-representation. Affectual geography does not provide a path towards understanding how it is that the unconscious and non-representable (affect) makes itself known to the conscious and representable (thought, expressions, statements). Similarly, emotional geography’s epistemological stance leads to its failure to connect thought to affect, leaving no distinction between the two. The rejection by non-representationalists of discourse and their problematizing of representation greatly hinders empirical research on affect.

In order to facilitate a move from the theoretical to the empirical, Wetherell calls for a rethinking of discourse as practice “and as a core part of affective assemblages” (2012:76). Affect is then seen as a practical, relational, and most importantly discursive thing. In her view, affect is “pre-eminently a relational and social event, and the ‘dialog-

ic' activities involved need to be at the forefront of attempts to understand affective meaning-making" (2012:74). She looks towards practice as a more effective position from which to understand affect as a performative component. Feelings, emotions, and affective states are seen as constitutive of practices. In the same line of thought, Spinney writes that,

"research into affect is concerned much less with what practices signify and much more with content because affects in particular are forms of absence in that they present only through performance; through the interaction of bodies, spaces, representations and objects" (Spinney 2015:235).

Wetherell is less interested in "adjudicating in abstract the exact location between bodies and discourse, feelings and words" (2012:53) and more in favor of shifting attention to "how affect is accomplished and ordered" through a perspective on affective practices. Agreeing with Pile, Wetherell writes "field work reaches an impasse when it formulates its object as unspeakable" (2012:67). It is useful to think of discourse, in the context of this project, as Wetherell does: "By discourse...I mean the practical (formal and informal) realm of language in action...patterned within the everyday activities of social life" (2012:52), which includes various forms of text and talk, words, utterances, conversations, stories, and speeches. Bridging the gap between discourse and affect, Wetherell writes,

"From an affective practices standpoint, specifying the exact relationship between affect and discourse is less interesting than investigating the range and entire patterning of affective assemblages operating in important scenes in everyday life along with their social consequences and entailments. Affect and discourse intertwine in these patterns to varying extents and in varying ways. The discursive el-

ements may move in and out of prominence as the flow of practice plays out.

Sometimes they are very dominant and sometimes more peripheral” (2012:52).

In this light, we can consider the capacity of the ride-along interview to immerse research in the ebb and flow of affect and discourse.

### ***Mobile methods and the status of the interview***

This research uses these considerations as a point of departure for confidently approaching the interview and its capabilities for revealing the complexity of the subjective experience. It has been suggested that the interview is outdated or ineffective at uncovering the experiences of modern mobilities. A reconsideration of qualitative methods has appeared amongst recent research on the mobilities with a particular emphasis on methods that allow researchers to ‘be’ or ‘see’ *with* mobile research participants (Fincham, McGuinness, and Murray 2010). The new mobilities paradigm and its accompanying epistemological shifts have turned more interest towards experimental and non-conventional research methods – video, photo, and mobile methods like the ‘go-along’ or the ride-along. However, Merriman (2014) cautions against a wholesale abandonment of ‘conventional’ methods – interviews, questionnaires, discourse analysis or archival research – due to their perceived ineffectiveness, simplicity, or obsolescence. He suggests that the power of mobile methods is sometimes exaggerated, “particularly when it is claimed that they provide a more accurate or close knowledge of particular practices” (2014:169). He critiques the notion of a requirement of these new techniques, pointing to an epistemological confusion:

“the problematic belief that experimental and improvisational ‘mobile methods’ provide the means to enable the research to get ‘close-to’, ‘grasp’ or witness the here-ness, now-ness and live-ness of particular practices and events – providing some ‘God-like’ position from which the researcher can gain a more accurate or authentic knowledge of a situation” (Merriman 2014:182-183).

If we lack the vocabulary or skills to represent such things as experiences of mobile practices, how can we say at the same time that an analysis of a video or photo will represent something more accurately? Merriman argues that the interview should be given more credit than it has been by non-representationalists.

With this consideration, I see the ride-along interview as a blend between contemporary mobile methods, with their emphasis on seeing and being *with*, and more conventional qualitative methods that embrace the effectiveness of interviews and observation. Methodological innovation comes with the development of new theoretical perspectives. The range of theoretical and epistemological concerns in this research benefits from a diversification and pluralization of methods and methodologies.

### ***Looking for affect, analyzing subjectivity***

While there were some emerging analytical perspectives during the interviews, much of the initial analysis began during the transcriptions of the audio recordings. With observational memos and notes handy, I proceeded adding analytic memos during the transcription process in order to leave myself some clues about where an analysis might go further upon my return to code the interview. In some cases, I began transcribing shortly after finishing the interview, intending for the freshest memory to aid in the

process. Others were transcribed weeks after the fact, potentially hindering the capacity of memory to supplement the process. Additionally, during a few drives I recorded myself describing my experience of driving and later transcribed these recordings. While these brief descriptions did not cover the breadth of topics included in the interviews, they were helpful in creating a basis for thinking about the discursive availability of the corporeal or emotional aspects of driving. No one had asked me before. So, an exercise in eliciting this from myself seemed useful at least for situating my own privileged knowledge in the research.

The lengthy start-stop listening sessions provided a space for paying closer attention to moments of affective intensity or potentially emergent patterns in the driving subjectivities. I was able to focus on certain indicators like tone of voice, pace of speech, volume, emphasis, pauses, ‘ums’, laughter, eloquence, and vocabulary or word choice. These indicators helped me to consider the degrees in which participants sounded self-assured or uncertain in their statements. Sometimes, they seemed to be good indicators of affective intensity, other times less so. For some participants, volume and emphasis expressed moments of intensity more clearly than other things. For others, eloquence, word choice, and pace of speech were better indicators of intensity. This aural barometer of expression also pointed to particular relational moments during the interviews. Sometimes, this meant that the participants’ affect was expressed in relation to memories, drawing from the past to express the present. Sometimes, the relational encounter was with something in the present on the road. In these instances, I had to refer to my memories of the interview. The audio certainly helped in remembering. The sounds of the surroundings, the sounds of the car, the radio, the motor, and the road all triggered contextual memories, albeit not perfectly.

Within the text of the transcription, I used memo-writing and bolding or italicizing particular passages of interest, so that the transcriptions would be ‘prepared’ for more effective coding. Then, I printed the transcriptions so as to have more flexibility with the drawing and diagramming that took place alongside the coding. The coding process began with descriptive coding and *in vivo* coding of statements or vocabulary from the interviews. Using these initial codes, I looked for broad themes with the hopes of finding similarity between the interviews. While there were many similarities and overlaps, it was difficult to understand how to include the irregularities within the analysis. Ultimately, I did not rely heavily on a structured coding process. Instead, the coding process provided a path towards a thematic framework. From here, it was a matter of filling in the categories with participants’ passages and writing it into a narrative. Writing became another part of the analysis. Revisions of the first attempts at writing out an analytical narrative required rereading the transcriptions, relistening to the audio in some cases, and revisiting some of my own memories and assumptions in order to consider how thematically driven connections between discourse and affect could tell a story.

Ultimately, paying attention to the ways that driving subjectivities are affectively expressed means having to pay attention to meaning-making and its discursively expressed articulations through the body. The meanings that drivers produce, maintain, and draw from arise out of and reinforce particular corporeal relations to the practice of driving and the assemblages of automobility. Recognizing this corporeal implication within the assemblages of automobility allows us to further understand the (re)production of power through experience. Subjectivity is embedded in the ongoing formation of social institutions, rationalities, and forms of knowledge. Knowing, think-

ing, and feeling are implicated in relations of power that are barely visible to subjects. However, this does not mean that we should abandon studies of the operation of power and its traces within the mind-bodies of subjects. Focusing on affect and discourse within “emergent patterns of situated activity” (Wetherell 2013: 364) provides a way towards understanding the significance of affective production of subjects. Situating affect and discourse within mobile practices like driving provides a path towards understanding the mobile subject and its implication in the (re)production of automobility.

## **Chapter Three: The driving subject and the affects of governable space**

### ***Introduction***

As an assemblage of practices, commodities, bodies of knowledge, laws, sensibilities, and modes of perception, the dispositif of automobility relies on the formation of a particular subject: the driving subject. It is through processes of subjectification that drivers are made into governable subjects – subjects that act ‘freely’ in the name of safety, health, orderliness, and responsibility. The practice of driving shapes the subjectivities that enable people to be incorporated as objects of governmentality. Governmentality should be seen, as Huxley writes, as a framework “that allows certain kinds of questions to be asked about how particular aspects of taken-for-granted social relations came to be as they are” (2008:1636). I will use this notion as a point of departure to address my research questions in this chapter:

- How do the assemblages of automobility enable particular subjectivities that are generative of the goals of governmentality?
- How are the car and the road made governable through the practice of driving?
- How do drivers negotiate their relationship to the state through the practice of driving? And what role do the police play in driver’s subjectivities? What else plays a role in ensuring ‘proper conduct’ on the road?

In what follows, I will use the research material obtained from my ride-along interviews to answer these questions and reveal how the practice of driving is a fitting lens for understanding how governmentality functions in everyday life. The interviews bring to light the extent to which drivers are able to articulate their implication in the govern-

mentality of automobility. I will first explore how the framing of safety and risk demonstrates the ways that drivers see self-regulation and discipline as necessary components of the practice of driving. Much of the taken-for-grantedness of drivers' corporeal and emotional relationships to driving can be attributed to the perception of safety and risk. Second, I will continue to examine self-regulation by considering the subjectivities generated through drivers' encounters and negotiations with the state. The police, as arbiters of the law, are crucial to the construction of disciplined subjectivities. While there are spatial contingencies to the degree to which the police's gaze will shape behavior, the panopticism experienced on the road is a powerful affective factor in guiding self-governance, whether or not it is consciously available. The third section will demonstrate that surveillance and panopticism is not dependent on police and their presence. Other drivers and non-drivers, like passengers, pedestrians, or cyclists, are implicated in the construction of subjectivities and behavior on the road. Visibility, discipline, and trust shape the ways that people articulate their styles of driving. Additionally, I will show how the 'asymmetric awareness' that enables bursts of righteous emotion is generated by the affective energies of car-driver hybridity. Ultimately, we see how all of these things facilitate, albeit inconsistently and irregularly, the maintenance of drivers' status as subjects of automobility.

### ***Safety and subjectivity***

For Kevin<sup>3</sup>, 'driving is a means to an end,' a belief that the destination is more important than the journey. He says,

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<sup>3</sup> All names used are pseudonyms.

“There’s no lollygagging. It’s a serious matter to drive a vehicle. You gotta be on top of it. You are in control of a two-ton steel frame and you are utterly responsible for your actions and the actions of the vehicle.”

Others also shared this understanding of the car as something heavy, metal, and fast and that these facts contribute to the risks involved. Nathan said,

“I’ve always been cautious and aware that driving is really dangerous and that there’s a lot of other people on the road driving one or two-ton vehicles going 70 miles per hour and I can’t count on them to be safe.”

The origins of this knowledge could certainly vary driver by driver, as could the actual weight of the car in use, but the use of numbers or statistical language to give grounds for one’s thinking was common among participants. The ‘likelihood’ or ‘probability’, as Katie put it, of unsafe situations (or of getting caught being ‘unsafe’) was calculated during reflections on safety. Kevin remembered, “some sort of statistic somewhere that said that highway driving is actually safer than city driving but...I treat it just as dangerously because there are higher speeds involved.” This turn to statistically based knowledge points to the ways that practices and their subjectivities might be shaped through ‘truthful’ claims. The statistic, in this case, is not enough to deter Kevin from his own perceived basis for action and feeling. It is rather a negotiation between feeling and ‘truth’.

Throughout our conversation, Kevin expressed a sense of responsibility and obligation that seemed inextricable from his conception of appropriate driving behavior. In his descriptions of his driving experiences, he consistently evoked the language of duty, function, and reliability. The function of driving lessons and licensing is to produce “a set of skills” that needs to be learned “in order to make the road a safe place for commerce and travel.” For him, the road has a clear purpose and his role as a driver is then

to participate in this, to make it safe for all types of traffic, whether commercial or not (arguably, most traffic can be deemed commercial, especially if we consider the commute or the errand run as participating in commercial life). He went on: "...I feel like it's my job, when I get into a vehicle, to both make myself, my passengers, and the other drivers on the road to feel like we're all understanding each other, that we're doing what is expected of us." The internalization of the disciplinary demands of automobility is set as the norm. A set of expectations come with driving, and JK claimed to hold others to same standards as he does himself.

For some, the obligations of safety on the road reached into the realm of the emotional and corporeal. Nathan indicated that, "sometimes I'm just happy to see other people driving well and being safe and that makes me happy." Seeing safe driving behavior and driving amidst other safe drivers induces a pleasant mood, an emotional state in which the source of happiness can fade below the level of consciousness, allowing one to 'zone out'. The body is also an important locus for negotiating safety, as Nathan indicated: "I've found that I've dialed in the most comfortable position. That's important, so that, instead of focusing on being uncomfortable I can focus on being safe..." When the expectations of safety are met, the driver is allowed more room to "not really think about it that much". A sense of relief comes with being able to relax and not be vigilant of others' behaviors. This had the tendency to be evoked particularly in reference to long distance drives on the highway. Katie mentioned this as "a nicer kind of driving because I didn't have to do as much maneuvering or worry about traffic so much." Bodily disengagement and the cognitive leeway that it allows take drivers further away from a routinization of automobility in the first place. The less one has to think about driving, the more one is able to think about (and do) other things.

But the highway is also a stressor, particularly within cities amidst fast moving traffic. An accomplished sense of relief comes with the return to the slower, safer (perceived) auto-space of city streets. Using the off-ramp on the highway, for example, reminded Kevin of “the stickers that I used to get on...homework from elementary school that says ‘you did it!’ like ‘yes! Good job’.” While it probably stems from Kevin’s utilitarian view of driving as a means to an end (the end being a reward in this case), this analogy surely demonstrates that his world of everyday driving has beyond a simply instrumental value. Perceptions of safety shape the metaphors and memories that pervade Kevin’s driving performances.

Other participants echoed an understanding of the gravity of the risks involved, calling it ‘really dangerous’ and potentially fatal. Fear of hurting oneself and others or even of losing one’s life especially populated the subjectivities of those who had been in car accidents, like Paul: “I like my life, I don’t want to die just because of my driving skills, or somebody else’s lack of driving skills...” Nathan also expressed how the thought of accidents shapes his view of driving: “it seems like almost everyone has been in an accident at one time or another, so I just keep that in mind.”

Others were less explicit about perceived risk. It came up as the “unpredictable factors”, in Katie’s words, or just other related stressors of driving. In these cases, rather than using the language of risk or danger, participants described the things in the driving environment that are stressful and inducing of grumpiness such as semi-trucks, Hummers, erratic driving, or construction. Katie indicated a bias “against...big SUVs or...like a Hummer” and that she “would probably get kind of angry and I might trust them less to be safe drivers too.” Andrea explained that perceived risk affects how stress emerges in particular spaces: “...if it’s a long drive and I’ve been on the highway for a

while, going on 94, there are parts where there are lots of semi-trucks and that part's a little stressful." Inclement weather also served as an indicator of perceived risk: "...if it's really bad rain, or like, icy...then I usually have the music all the way down and I hold my breath, which is not a good option at all but that's what I do apparently." In retrospect, Andrea is able to notice something that might not be available for reflection in the moment that it occurs. She noticed that, 'apparently' she holds her breath in these instances. This could mean several things: that she only realizes that this happens upon reflection; that it is involuntary.

We begin to see how different spaces and different contexts figure into drivers' conceptions of safety and risk and how this shapes their driving subjectivities. Likening it to reward-based learning, for Kevin, the off-ramp is "a great place to be because it means you're almost there, you're almost home, like there's only x amount more to go. You've made it this far, you can do the rest." Returning to safer environments induces a sense of relief, allowing one to take delight in driving:

"I think with the responsibility comes fun. When you successfully complete a driving endeavor I think that's where the relief, that's where the enjoyment comes from. It's very much from the danger of driving and making it through safely and correctly executing maneuvers and all that...that's where the relief comes from, that's what makes it fun. Making it. Making safety a game."

This notion of 'making safety a game' alludes to various coping strategies that drivers might employ in order to deal with the emotional and cognitive demands of driving safely. Sometimes, this means that drivers have to creatively adapt to different situations in order to stay safe. Corey's brake issues in his car lead him to develop coping strategies in situations that would call for a fully functioning brake system: "...if I am not braking fast

enough because my brakes suck a little bit, I'll even throw my car into Neutral to take away the little push of being in Drive so I can stop easier." But uncertainty remains even in situations where coping strategies have to be employed:

"If you're going downhill and you're trying to stop at the end of the hill at a stop sign and you can tell your car is just not quite braking as fast as you want it to and you get super tense and you kind of [laughs] you will your car to stop, you're like 'No! I'm tense so it's going to stop faster!'"

Corey realizes that tensing up his body and 'willing' the car to stop is an ineffective way to deal with risky situations. Much like Andrea's mention of holding her breath, this involuntary corporeal response can be seen as an embodied, unconsciously activated coping strategy. Perceptions of risk – which are shaped by particular drivers, particular cars, particular spaces, and particular situations – entail affective energies that provoke bodily engagements with the given circumstances.

It is clear that, for all of the participants, notions of safety and risk contribute to the ways that driving subjectivities require discipline and self-governance. Disciplinarity and self-governance emerge as consciously available ways of thinking about one's driving experience. These drivers know that they are called upon and required to be disciplined subjects. Indeed, it is in their best interest in most cases to be disciplined. There are ways in which self-discipline is embodied that makes it difficult or even impossible to manifest as discursive expressions. However, as it regards safety, much of this is not unknown or unconscious to drivers. The risks are known. Much is at stake, but they carry on, sometimes developing various coping strategies. Risk assessment does not seem to be enough to deter these people from choosing to drive in the first place. They problematize themselves, the car, and the myriad things populating auto-space. But, ulti-

mately, by individualizing risk and embodying responsibility, they are able to deal with, to govern the risks involved – and maintain their status as subjects of automobility.

### ***Self-regulation and encounters with the state***

As subjects of automobility, drivers must practice various self-regulatory measures in order to self-govern. Self-regulation emerges from an awareness of visibility. Driving, as Seiler notes, entails being made visible, being made available for monitoring, recognition, and apprehension by “expanding regimes of surveillance and legibility” (2008:139). The classic model of disciplinarity works on the principle that conduct, of driving in this case, will be altered with or without the presence of the police. This is the panoptic view of the disciplinary gaze. Safe and orderly driver subjects are the ideal results of policeable space. I say *policeable* rather than *policed* to emphasize the potential for, rather than active, policing. Policeable space is the space of panopticism. Nikolas Rose writes that, the police operate “not so much through terror and the certainty of apprehension, but by placing a grid of norms of conduct over urban space and regulating behavior according to the division of the normal and the pathological” (1999:73). This grid of norms is the policeable space. Drivers know what is expected of them and what standard they are held to. They know what kind of driving is normal and what kind of driving is improper. They also know the potential consequences of transgression: getting caught or getting hurt. The intersection of these two notions points to the paternalistic relationship between drivers and the law – and the police as arbiters of the law. Getting caught is vindicated by not getting hurt. ‘You’re lucky you didn’t get hurt,’ the officer could say. The law is seen as protection.

The fear of getting caught does not arise solely out of practical experiences with driving and the police. The notion that one might ‘get caught’ presupposes that a driver has some kind of relationship with the state, meaning that they have some kind of knowledge of the relations of power that exist between them and the law. A relationship with the state begins to emerge long before one becomes a frequent driver. Through various encounters, drivers are ‘prepped’ into knowing the conditions of this relationship, beginning most significantly with driver’s education programs and then continuing with driver’s competence tests, licensing, and vehicle registration. Even prior to formal driving education, one might witness a parent or guardian getting pulled over for a traffic violation. These experiences are then carried forward into one’s own conception of this relationship.

In the interviews, I focused on the police and the various regulations of driving and the road, such as speed limits and traffic lights, as manifestations of the state in the experiences of everyday automobility. I asked how drivers responded when police vehicles were (not) nearby and whether or not they thought about the police frequently. For the most part, participants indicated some kind of change in behavior or feeling when the police were around. Speeding seems to be the predominant element evoked during reflections on fears of getting caught. For these participants, no other aspect of driving seems to be as indicative of transgression as speeding. Speed limits, as Paul suggested, are there,

“obviously to protect other people, to make driving a safer experience for everybody. If there weren’t speed limits, everybody would be going as fast as they could and I think there would be a lot more accidents if there weren’t speed limits.”

The notion of protection evokes the idea that the state, through imposing and enforcing speed limits, is keeping drivers from harming themselves and each other. Such a conviction in the pastoral relations of power expressed here is certainly liable to produce a fear of getting hurt when reflecting on regulation of speed. Ultimately, both fear of getting caught and fear of getting hurt seemed to be generative of bad feelings and discomfort coupled with a regulatory response. Altered behavior or unconscious regulation is a result of the negotiation between the two.

### *Panopticism and self-regulation*

Kevin began by indicating that,

“The first thing I do when I see a police officer is I look at the speed limit or I look at my speed and I’ll typically slow down *involuntarily* anyway just to make sure that I’m not going over the speed limit...”

Important to note here is the emphasis on impulse or involuntary response to police presence: slowing down, just in case. Through a routinization of this occasion, the body responds, with the eyes and with the foot, seemingly automatically. This reaction could entail a quick combination of bodily responses: simply shifting one’s gaze from the road briefly to the speedometer and simultaneously either easing off of the accelerator pedal or tapping the brake pedal, only to witness the speedometer needle fall back, regardless of whether one’s speed exceeded the limit or not. This reaction presumes that one is likely to be doing something wrong as soon as attention from the rules has been diverted. Behavior is adjusted ‘just in case’. It is interesting that Kevin called this response in-

voluntary. This points to the notion that there is room for reflexivity even during or after seemingly automatic bodily responses to disciplinarity.

In this case, it seems that Kevin might find this involuntary response helpful in dealing with the driver-police relationship. He indicated that he feels “safe when the police are on the highway,” because in these cases he expects everyone else on the highway to respond by being safe drivers as well. When the police are driving directly behind him,

“they’re holding you accountable, because if you mess up they’re gonna get you right then and there...and being comfortable with being a defensive driver, being comfortable with driving safely really makes you more aware of it when there is a police presence there...”

The police, in this case, serve as are a reminder for Kevin to feel good about being safe and orderly, reassurance in his attentive driving style.

Similarly, Nathan expressed the feeling of comfort in legality. But comfort with police presence is conditional on legality. Nathan said, “ I don’t like getting surprised by them. I’m comfortable having them around, you know, if I’m not driving fast. Sometimes I’ll go over the speed limit and...if they’re around I’ll drive more conservatively...so if I know there’s a police car behind me I won’t drive fast and I’ll be comfortable because I know I’m not doing anything illegal.” I would add to Nathan’s notion of comfort the notion sufficiency. What he expressed seems to convey that he is comfortable *enough* – sufficiently comfortable, given the circumstances. This notion of comfort in ‘knowing that one is not doing anything illegal’ entails a conditional reflexivity, the condition being the presence of the police. It entails asking a question of oneself: Am I doing anything illegal? This involves judging one’s actions based on the norms and expectations

that are legally inscribed in the space. The feeling of comfort follows from either maintaining or adjusting behavior. In this particular case, Nathan was talking about the highway, a space that does not demand much of the driver other than maintaining speed and position in the lane.

Nathan also expressed vigilance stemming from his expectations of how the police might be acting:

“It’s important to just be aware of where they might be hiding out. I like to look up like way in the distance to see if there’s a good spot where a police car might be hiding out...I try to look as far as I can...so I keep that in mind and that’s kind of a limiting factor on how I drive, I’m not doing anything crazy or driving fast because I know I could get arrested for driving too fast. So, if there’s no one else on the road, I wouldn’t go a 100 mph because there might be a police officer somewhere”

Nathan’s field of vision on the highway seems to be populated by potential spaces where the police might be ‘hiding’. The expectations of policeable space generate this vigilance and the resultant self-regulation. The notion that behavior is shaped by the fact that there ‘might be a police officer somewhere’ is the typical example of panopticism at work.

Katie expressed this contingent behavior as well:

“if I notice that I’m going really fast, and even if there aren’t police there, I might feel anxious and usually slow down or kind of look around me [laughs] and make sure, notice how fast other people are going in comparison to me...”

This statement suggests that there are lapses in self-regulation. Sometimes she forgets that she might need to pay attention to the speed limit. The simple realization that she is

exceeding the speed limit is enough to make her 'look around and make sure' she is not being watched. The notion of conditional reflexivity comes up again: "...that's generally when I think about the police...when I'm breaking the law..." Policeable space generates the fear of getting caught, so the police do not have to be present for Katie to worry about exceeding the speed limit.

It seems that, at least for Katie and Nathan, a perceived panopticism shapes driving behavior. That is not to say that those who are not (discursively) aware of a disciplinary gaze are not affected by it. The focus is rather on the moments when these realizations come to consciousness. Sometimes, this is not the case. Interestingly, Kevin claimed that he rarely thinks about the police when they are not present: "I have little reason to fear the police when I'm driving. I definitely try not to do anything that would make me a target." What is evident in Kevin's statements is a lack of connection between the police and his efforts to make himself "as innocuous as possible." Trying not to be a target could be a product of *having* reason to fear the police, like the fear of punishment for doing something wrong. There is also inconsistency between the notion of having "little reason to fear the police" and his statement regarding the 'involuntary' responses to police presence.

### *The police and the spatial contingency of the gaze*

Corey, on the other hand, expressed explicit feelings of discomfort in police presence. "Oh, terrible!..." he began his answer to my question regarding his feelings towards police presence on the road. Revealing a more nuanced conception, he went on:

“...if they’re behind me, especially directly behind me, I feel like I have to go the exact speed limit or like a little bit above just to make it seem like I’m not trying to like brownnose...I check my rear-view mirror probably like ten times more if I’m being tailed by a cop. Even if it happens to be like, that’s just the route they’re taking and they’re right behind me for now.”

For Corey, it is the potential for action on the part of the police that generates feelings of nervousness. The notion of ‘not wanting to seem like he is brownnosing’ in this case suggests that he tries to make himself seem like he is acting as if he is not aware that he is being watched, as if this is how he acts normally: naively disciplined and orderly. This implies that Corey’s conception of what the police consider to be ‘normal’ has some leeway. In the eyes of Corey’s hypothetical police officers, slightly exceeding the speed limit is considered normal. “If they’re in front of me, then whatever...” he said, but if he falls within the gaze, the costs of making a mistake or transgression are different. With this notion, Corey presumes that police officers are always policing only whatever is in front of them. This also entails Corey putting himself in the position of the police officer. Inside the police car, the gaze is directed forward. So, in this case, while Corey might remain in the *policeable* space behind the cop, what matters is the actively *policed* space in front of the cop. That is where one has to be “on guard” as Katie indicated. Similarly, as Kevin said, this is a space where “there is a pressure on you to almost perform for them...like perform safe driving,” as if other contexts do not entail the same performances.

Corey continued about the police:

“So, they make me feel nervous, because if you fuck up and no one’s around like ‘oops, they fucked up but like everything’s fine!’ But if you fuck up and there’s someone there patrolling you, then they’ll be like ‘ha-ha red flag, got you sucker.’”

Panopticism is not something Corey claims to be affected by, at least not in the way that Katie and Nathan expressed. For him, it is contextual. There is spatiality to the gaze. Some places are more disciplinary than others. He used his past experiences of learning how to drive in the town of Manitowoc, Wisconsin to explain this notion of the spatially contingent gaze:

“...in smaller cities you don’t have as much to worry about as in large cities, as far as a police officer goes, so you’re probably not going to pull someone over for going a little over the speed limit [in Milwaukee]...but in Manitowoc, you don’t have a lot to do, so you get to sit and wait to pull people over.”

Andrea echoed this in her conception of the police gaze. She claimed to not be affected by their presence in the city:

“I don’t think I’m nervous that I’ll ever really be pulled over unless a cop is following me for no reason, which has happened before, but other than that, I don’t typically get followed by cops, so it’s not something that is on my mind often. I usually see a cop and have no reaction to my driving...they’re just another car on the road. I think they might have bigger problems than people going ten miles over.”

Both Andrea and Corey put themselves in the position of the police and consider what is and what isn’t policeable given different urban contexts. Self-regulation follows from this. There is an assumption that the city is a place where traffic is less policed because there are ‘bigger problems’ that need attention.

For Corey, this seems to suggest the notion of a spatially contingent driving habitus. This is clearly evident in his statement regarding the sensation of correct driving speed in Milwaukee as compared with Manitowoc:

“...it’s really frustrating when I go back to Manitowoc because I’m so used to driving in Milwaukee and just *feeling* like you’re going the right speed without really looking, like this whole time I haven’t looked at my speedometer at all. It just *feels* like we’re going the right speed.”

This is a product of having internalized lax speed enforcement in Milwaukee. The Milwaukee habitus is one where Corey’s bodily responses are able to assist in navigating the expectations of the particular space. More punitive police practices regarding speed limit enforcement in Manitowoc lead to Corey to take note of the incompatibility of the two habitus.

But spatial contingency of the habitus is not just about different urban environments. Differences within the landscapes of automobility produce different expectations, regardless of signage. He explained that, “I’ve noticed it depends on how wide the road is. If it’s a wide road, it feels like you’re allowed to go faster, even if the speed limit doesn’t say you can.” Road design seems to shape the habitus. To Corey, the expanse of a roadway is a better indicator of the appropriate speed than actual signage. Here, we see that the regulation of the road is negotiated with the ‘feeling’ of road rules. Ultimately, for Corey, this requires an awareness of the quality of law enforcement in any given context.

Similarly, Andrea expressed her opinion regarding regulation of speed in particular contexts:

“I feel like they’re sort of made, knowing that the rule is going to be broken, so if the speed limit is 30, you can go like 50, like let’s say the speed limit is 30 on a curve, like...you can go about 50 without actually like dying...because they know people are stupid and don’t pay attention to rules and they’ll break them a little bit, just by human nature. So I’d say every speed limit is a little lower than what should actually be necessary to keep people safe...”

Andrea’s view is different from that of Corey in the way that she places herself in the position of the state in order to think about the rationale for the rules. Her self-regulation of speed seems to be derived from this consideration of the rules as being made to be broken, or at least with the expectation that they will be broken. This could also serve as a justification for potential transgressions.

#### *The police as affective-emotional force*

Of all the participants, Paul stood out as the most emotionally affected by the police. However, he did not indicate how his driving behavior might change in response to the affective intensity produced by the police. He focused instead on discomfort and unease. For Paul, even “just the thought of running into a police officer” generates discomfort. Paul said,

“...it’s pretty crazy how I feel, even if I don’t see a police car, and if I’m thinking about it...even when I know I haven’t done anything wrong...if I do see a police officer... checking speed with a radar gun or they’re behind you, I get extremely uncomfortable and nervous, even if I have nothing to be nervous about. Their presence is really, really strong and overwhelming. I’ve always felt that way.”

He indicated that this came from a lack of trust in the police stemming from past experiences in which police officers were “extremely rude and...not really cooperative...just kind of holding themselves higher, you know, kind of above you.” So, the notion that he has ‘always felt this way’ actually seems to have clear origins. Unpleasant experiences with the police have led to unpleasant feelings regarding policeable space. His attentiveness to vocabulary, the somber tone of his voice, and the careful pace in which he expressed these feelings was an indication of the powerful affective burden generated by discursive expression regarding the police. Phrases like ‘pretty crazy’, ‘extremely uncomfortable and nervous’ and ‘really strong and overwhelming presence’ accounted for the strongest descriptive language he used in the entire interview. Whether this increased his heart rate or made frightening memories appear, it was clear that he had intense feelings regarding the matter.

### ***Visibility, discipline, and trust***

#### *Other drivers and the gaze*

Surveillance, in this case, should not be solely equated with police presence or traffic cameras. The practice of driving includes within it the panoptic eye of discipline-inducing scrutiny and supervision of others. Drivers are legible to one another. They see and judge behavior. Surveillance becomes an involuntary reaction to the presence of others. So, self-discipline is maintained both from within, as a safety measure, and from the outside, from the knowledge that thousands of drivers’ eyes pass by daily. But the disciplinary gaze is not uniform. Each driver carries with them their own particular disciplinary gaze informed by their own preconceptions.

While participants are wary about other drivers, the tacit trust involved in participating in automobility is hardly put into question. Some participants express a general mistrust of other drivers, as if they know they are mistaken for their confidence. Katie laughed and said that she trusts other drivers “probably more than I should.” The notion of trusting ‘more than one should’ suggests that trust becomes mostly nonreflexive. We get into the car and drive off not asking whether or not we should trust drivers today.

Similarly, Paul indicated that, while he likes the feeling of control produced by driving,

“it could also be like a false sense of control, like you feel like you’re in control, but in reality you never know what might happen, like there’s so many different things going on around you...there’s everybody else around you and you can’t really control how they’re driving.”

Suspicion regarding others' driving contributes to Paul's claim of ‘false sense of control’.

A lack of confidence in others erases the possibility of a ‘true’ sense of control.

Others are more assured about their expectations, knowing that judgment and trust go both ways. Feelings of responsibility and obligation produce an expectation of judgment and a desire for accountability. We see this with Kevin's understanding of the role he has as a driver. If other drivers are around, one is obligated to behave safely and in turn keep others safe. An awareness of others' disciplinary gaze surely shapes disciplined action. And, as Kevin said, what other drivers judge is liable to be judged by the police as well: “if you’re making another driver angry, you might irk the police officer.”

An awareness of the lack of the gaze allows for ‘less disciplined’ action. This seems Katie claims that she is more likely to perform “a maneuver that might not be legal” when there are “...generally...fewer people in total present.” She goes on:

“if there’s another car on the street where I’m about to do an illegal U-turn, I’d be less likely to do it, just because...maybe they might see me breaking a rule and also because it could be dangerous, maybe there’s a reason I shouldn’t be doing a U-turn there and they might not expect it.”

Considering the seriousness of the risks, she resigns to the fact that sometimes signs and regulations are desirably disciplinary, pointing to the pastoral power inherent in the relationship between driver and state.

While initially ambiguous about her relationship to other drivers, Katie is quick to go to visual cues to inform her degrees of trust. When asked whether she trusts other drivers: “I don’t know if I do or not. Maybe it depends on my mood or just like the way that I see that they’re driving.” Katie expressed that the affective power of certain moods is likely to contribute to the extent that trust becomes available for reflexivity. Witnessing behavior that puts trust into question also suggests that trust only becomes reflexive when it is in question. ‘Should I trust this driver?’ is likely more common than ‘I know that I trust this driver.’ Katie continued with her explanation:

“I’d be much more likely to trust a bus driver to be a good driver and to be like looking out around them because they kind of always do that...I think I have a bias against, and only to an extent, against like big SUVs or if I saw like a Hummer I would probably just get kind of angry...and I might just trust them less to be safe drivers too...so, I think if I see a car that’s more like mine, like a more modest car that’s not meant to be flashy or use up a lot of gas, I might trust them more, or if there was a car that was falling apart or had obviously been in a crash I might question if that was a good driver or if that was going to fall apart...”

Here, we see how her gaze is informed by perceptions of particular vehicles, which to her also carry with them specific ideological meanings. She feels capable of making “assumptions about how that person is politically aligned” based on their choice to drive a Hummer, for example, and also how that person might behave on the road. “I feel like it’s a kind of aggressive vehicle to drive,” she indicated, “and often I think bigger vehicles are driven more aggressively or seem more aggressive at least, and that makes me feel uncomfortable...” Additionally, police vehicles fall in her distrustful gaze: “...police often just break traffic laws to go get somebody or just weave through traffic and that I guess is unpredictable...” They are distrusted precisely because of their immunity from the disciplinary gazes of other drivers on the road.

For Paul, his relationship to other drivers is implicated in his ‘offensive’ driving style, which comes out of a self-established necessity:

“I feel like I have to be...to avoid getting in an accident. Most drivers, other drivers make me feel...unsafe. I don’t trust most drivers. It just seems very, um, it seems like they’re very unaware of their surroundings most of the time and kind of take things for granted when they’re driving...umm, as far as their surroundings and whatnot.”

Paul’s previous experiences with car accidents shape both his lack of confidence in other drivers and his assurance in his own driving skills. I asked him what makes him claim to be “more of an offensive driver than a defensive driver,” to which he answered, “I guess I’m just pretty confident in my driving skills. And umm...[laughs] I’ve gotten into a handful of accidents when I was growing up and did a lot of stupid things as far as my driving goes...” I interrupted and asked, “Sober?” He continued, “yeah, absolutely, you’d think not. All my tickets that I’ve gotten were from like speeding and driving recklessly.”

His current experience is surely shaped by what he might consider to be reckless mistakes. His self-conscious laugh points to embarrassment or shame regarding past behavior. So, as his past experiences inform his mistrust of other drivers, it also shapes the way that he might discipline his own driving today.

Nathan shares this concern for accidents despite not ever having been in one. For him, it is the simple fact that accidents occur that leads him to be cautious. His cautiousness and awareness of the dangers of “a lot of other people on the road driving one or two ton vehicles going 70 miles an hour.” He says, “I can’t count on them to be safe. And it seems like almost everyone has been in an accident at one time or another, so I just keep that in mind.”

For Corey, different spaces produce different degrees of trust:

“I trust other drivers to stay in their lane, but I don’t necessarily trust them to not be assholes. I don’t know, like on Lake Drive here, it think it’s pretty much fine, but when you get into the heart of the city, it gets a lot different, especially downtown.”

This spatiality of trust shows that the scrutiny employed by drivers is unequally distributed throughout auto-space. Preconceived notions about and expectations of particular streets or neighborhoods can surely shape the extent to which people’s disciplinary tendencies will be put to use, both on themselves and others.

### *Visibility, discipline, and non-drivers*

Driving behavior is formed not just through other drivers’ gazes, but through the gazes of non-drivers as well, particularly passengers. While they can be somewhat dis-

tracting for Katie, passengers discipline alertness, particularly on longer drives: “I would feel safer with someone in the car with me to make sure I didn’t fall asleep or something.” Boredom and fatigue induced by long drives proves to be a factor in safety, and the passenger is trusted with regulating the driver’s behavior in this case. For Kevin, the trust involved in driving with a passenger is both disciplinary and empowering. He said,

“I feel that driving another person is pleasurable, to an extent. But there is also...the responsibility...you’re held a little more accountable for it too, because there’s someone in your immediate vicinity that can judge you on your behavior...there’s definitely a sense of empowerment in having a passenger in the car and making them feel safe and being responsible driver.”

Here, his own good feelings are based on the potential for judgments from the others in the car. To feel trustworthy, which is a standard he seems to hold himself to, he needs to make passengers feel safe. Safety and trustworthiness go hand in hand. What is not revealed, however, is how he knows that the other person feels safe. Does the passenger comment on his attentive driving? Is he reading facial cues or body language from his passenger? Or is the presence of the passenger enough to induce what he called earlier a ‘performance of safe driving’, and, in turn, reassures Kevin of his own efforts to be a ‘good’ driver?

For Nathan, his own internalization of social rules regarding what can and cannot be said in the car shapes the power that he gives to the passenger’s gaze. This, in turn, influences how he conceives of his own driving style. While passengers could be judgmental, they are expected to save their comments about driving. One is not supposed to comment on others’ driving, even if it is ‘really bad’, lest one be rude. “It’s a personal thing,” he says, “everyone thinks they’re a good driver, so, if someone’s driving badly

and you tell them that, maybe they could work on a few things, they'd probably get offended...I think I'm an ok driver, and no one's really commented." It is hard to tell how seriously Nathan takes this maxim and whether or not the passenger's presence, despite their silence, affects his driving. But he seems to not notice the irony of claiming that one is an acceptable driver by others' standards while relegating their input to rudeness.

The gaze of the pedestrian or cyclist is also generative of self-regulation and the feelings that follow instances of transgression. Katie indicated that her inclination is to, "let people go before me. I don't always do that and sometimes there will be someone in the crosswalk that I didn't notice and that will make me feel bad. Because I'm usually a biker and I'm a pretty aggressive biker so I expect cars to give me berth and let me go. And so, in the car, I try to be a conscientious driver and give people who aren't in cars space."

Here, we see that the subjectivities produced through alternative mobilities, biking in this case, are applied to driving subjectivities. For Katie, a set of expectations comes with biking in auto-space. As a biker, she feels a need to be 'aggressive' in order to be given space by drivers, most likely because more passive biking, in her experience, was not met with respectful driving. So, when she does not meet those expectations as a driver, she starts to 'feel bad' because in those instances she transgresses her own moral order of driving. Paul expressed similar empathetic feelings:

"I feel kind of bad for a lot of cyclists...a lot of drivers are really inconsiderate and rude when it comes to respecting the cyclist and letting the road be a shared space...from my experience of riding my own bike..."

The bodily relationships to traffic and auto-space involved in driving and cycling are vastly different from one another. This empathy results from a familiarity with the feel-

ings involved in cycling through the city amidst (disrespectful) car traffic – feelings of fear, extra care, or disempowerment. Knowing what auto-space feels like as a biker puts into perspective what it feels like as a driver and produces a self-regulatory driving subjectivity. Having occupied the cyclist subjectivity – one that is uncertain of the amount of trust to give to traffic – Paul conveyed a desire to produce a sense of trust from non-drivers.

### *Ambiguity and styles of driving*

As we saw above, trust shapes the way that performances of driving are regulated and the way that techniques or styles of driving are considered. Types of driving were described as either ‘defensive’ or ‘offensive’ with varying degrees of knowledgeability of one’s particular style. This go-to vocabulary indicates the availability of a common knowledge that can be drawn from in order to articulate or describe something. But this available knowledge does not always match perfectly with reflections on the practice. Ambiguity was common. When asked to describe his driving style, Nathan laughed and gave a vague answer:

“defensive and aggressive, if that makes any sense...I like driving fast, but I want to do it the safest way possible, which means, I never pass people on the right, or hang out in their blind spot. I stay pretty aware of other drivers on the road.”

How can one be both defensive and aggressive? It certainly might be because contexts change and enable certain types of performances and discourage others. Nathan explained that his aggressiveness (‘driving fast’) is compensated by self-regulation, allowing for the perceived existence of both styles.

Reflecting his care for caution, Kevin indicated that,

“I would like to call myself a defensive driver...I’m not entirely sure if I am or not, but I do like to respect the fact that the car could be a dangerous place and I want to make it as safe as possible for myself and for other people on the road.”

His uncertainty about whether or not his style reflects his beliefs could be a sign of the naturalization of his routine. These participants are ambiguously knowledgeable about their styles of driving, perhaps, because, while a pattern or style might exist for any individual driver, it ultimately becomes so routinized that it is hardly acknowledged or available for reflection. Participants then turn to ‘common knowledge’ evaluations of driving styles in order to try to make sense of their practice.

Consider this excerpt from the interview with Andrea: “I’m a pretty cautious driver...I would say a defensive driver, for the most part, which, I don’t remember if you’re supposed to be that or an offensive driver, I don’t remember what the good kind of driver is.” Andrea is uncertain of the values assigned to driving styles. In this instance, she does not turn to her own conceptions. Perhaps, the dichotomous notion of a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ driver is too simplistic, too binary to assign to one’s own on-going practice. Nonetheless, Andrea seems to resign to the perceived ‘truth’ that there is a good and bad type of driving. Would she even want to admit that she is a bad driver? The interview continued:

“Where did you hear those terms, like defensive, good kind, bad kind?”

“Um...people at work, because I’m always on the verge of being late, so...[laughing] one guy called me an aggressive driver because I thought he was a parent. I was like ‘you need to move’ because I was on his tail, but usually I don’t

tail people too badly. My dad said I was defensive driver but I couldn't tell if it was a compliment or like a 'get your shit together, K' sort of thing. So, yeah it's interesting, I don't really know..."

In her anecdote, she seems to experience a lapse in her self-proclaimed cautiousness or defensiveness, describing something more akin to road rage. Perhaps, because she does not see herself as an aggressive driver, or at least because her aggressiveness is not always available for self-reflection, it is difficult for Andrea to agree with the label. She then references her father's judgment as something that shapes her conception of driving. Did her father comment on her driving after experiencing her more aggressive side? To what extent might her father's comment stay with her in her daily driving? Surely, her uncertainty regarding his comment could be attributed to other personal things in her life that were not disclosed in the interview. But her father's comment seems significant enough to confound her to this day. It is clear that it has as much, if not more, gravity than the comment of the person who was on the receiving end of an instance of her aggressiveness. Overall, she does not seem sure of whether she is a defensive or offensive driver, a good or bad driver. She holds herself to defensiveness and cautiousness, but her actual driving behavior does not always match with these standards. Indeed, this clash between practice and classification was very apparent in her quasi-confrontational behavior during the interview. It certainly showed the extent to which even discursive aspects of the practice of driving become subsumed into nonreflexivity. How would she classify this behavior?

## *Talking to traffic*

No other participant was as communicative to the world outside the car as Andrea. This ranged from benevolent efforts at communication to irritated interjections and judgmental assertions. The first instance occurred just as we began the interview: “Go babies!” she said as she motioned to a group of young people trying to cross the street. They stood still, not knowing whether or not to cross the street. An awkward moment ensued. She impatiently remarked, “...or don’t go,” before driving off. The windows were up and the volume of her voice was not audible to anyone outside the car. The patient street crossers had to rely on lip-reading and recognizing Andrea’s gestures in order to proceed. Ultimately, the awkwardness got the best of Andrea and she made the first move. Despite her cranky tone, I classified this as a benevolent effort at communication because it began as genuine politeness.

In another instance, a car cut across the street while Andrea was answering one of my interview questions, explaining something. Mid-sentence, interrupting her explanation, she muttered, “dumb-dumb,” at the car, and immediately returned to her explanation without any further acknowledgement of the occurrence. The crossing car was not within earshot, but, in this case, Andrea’s intention was not to solicit a response from the other driver. Katz explains that, “people shout in closed cars because the practice represents the animating problem, which is the challenge of being effectively appreciated by other drivers about whom one has become all too aware” (1999:26). He argues it is precisely the “perception of asymmetrical awareness” (1999:29) that is a condition for becoming angry or frustrated while driving. Her quick interjections could be seen as a way to resolve the emotional tension created by the perception of this asymmetry. Ad-

ditionally, Katz indicates that the emotional tension created by the act of being cut off can be attributed to the car-driver hybrid. The driver's experience of being cut off is ontologically different than that of a passenger. The passenger does not have the same kinesthetic relationship with the car, its movements, its trajectory, and its surroundings as does the driver. Was her intention also to be heard by me? It is not clear whether or not Andrea would have uttered this without my presence, but my being there seemed to be helpful. By taking the initiative to say something about what just happened she might have been seeking justification for her own frustration. Laurier indicates that statements like these perhaps call upon,

“one as a passenger to find in the scene ahead what the driver has formulated...and offers one, as passenger, a space for response as to whether they are willing to join the other, as driver, in their analysis and moral assessment of the traffic object that has elicited their remarks” (2004:268).

The presence of a passenger might be useful in removing doubts about the driver's judgment of the situation. As a witness, as another set of eyes, the passenger is also a potential judge of the correctness of all behavior involved.

When asked about the ways that driving might be stressful to her, Andrea responded:

“just parking, that is literally my only stressor. I think maybe if I'm at an intersection and its unclear who goes first, like sometimes 4-way stops get kind of weird, I don't know what that might be—is your car on, what are you doing? Things like this make me grumpy, like put your hazards on, like something like that would make me be like ‘what are you doing?’ but other than that...”

It is quite telling, I think, that in the course of indicating that parking is ‘literally her only stressor’, she interrupts herself and expresses the frustration that other drivers elicit. It is indicative of the naturalization of her quasi-road rage, of its subsumption into non-reflexivity. So, because of this nonreflexivity, stressors come from others. Her own behavior seems to be rarely in question. The rules that she follows become the norm, leaving others’ behavior in her gaze.

In another example, she referred to a truck that she had passed:

“I go probably the same speed on the roads in the snow, on the highway I might go a little bit slower, than I would typically go. See, like that dodo back there, what is he doing, why is he going 10 miles an hour? he’s in a truck, I don’t know what he’s doing...so, all sorts of silliness I guess...”

Throughout the drive, she was able to show me multiple instances of how others were doing something wrong. If only they drove in the way that she drove, then, it seems, her only stressor would truly be parking.

Finally, in another portion of our interview, she admitted to conducting herself in an aggressive manner:

“I’ve gone through stages, and I think it’s just when I’m really tired from work [says something inaudible briefly interrupting her speech, addressing something on the road], really tired from work, where I have like road rage, not towards other drivers, like I would never flip someone off or like do anything dangerous in any way, but I just like curse them out in my car very vehemently or call them a dodo-head if I’m feeling a little less stressed from school...so, it’s the weekend, you won’t hear too many curse words about drivers...”

“So *dodo-head* is a little more endearing than cursing? Out loud you’ll do that?”

“Yes, I’ll say to no one in particular, just me getting out my frustration when people are driving like dodos”

“Do you think the interior of the car has an aspect of privacy through it that you don’t get in other places?”

“well, if I called someone a dodo on the subway they would hear me, so yeah...”

The notion of the closed privacy of the car is also important here. The interior of the car, as both Andrea and Katie indicated, elicits feelings of ownership and privacy:

Andrea: “my car is my car, whatever is in it is mine...my car’s like, mine, my stuff, it’s just mine, it’s private...I guess there’s a sense of ownership to it”

Katie: “I think it often feels like I’m in a room, like a building almost, and even though I don’t clean my car and I don’t decorate very much, I do feel like it is my space, like it is a private space of mine”

Not only does the interior of car provide a soundproof space in which a driver can ‘curse out’ other drivers, but it also enables feelings of ownership and privacy which contribute to closer, more intimate relationships to the space occupied in the cabin of the car. If the car, as a machine, is an extension of the body, then the cabin can be seen as an extension of the mind or one’s ‘headspace’. And this corporeal and psychological closeness to the interior of the car is precisely what leads to the conditions in which drivers are induced to verbally react to traffic. It is not just the driver that has been cut off or dismayed, but the body and mind in the temporal flow of the drive. Of course, as Andrea pointed out,

this also seems to be conditional on mood and other affective states, like the presence of a passenger, that either enable or constrain impulses to speak out against the perceived asymmetry. The presence of a passenger is not necessary, but it probably helps, as Laurier indicates.

While no one was comparatively communicative in this regard, other participants expressed a desire to convey information to other drivers. Kevin's pragmatism pervaded his views on communication with other drivers. Acknowledging the fact that other drivers cannot hear him in the car, he suggested a hypothetical way to monitor others' driving behavior:

“if you see another personal vehicle driving unsafely...you don't have an outlet to tell somebody else how upset you feel about it...It might be neat to put a 'how's my driving?' sticker on every car with your personal phone number on it.”

This proposition certainly exudes a sort of concession to the disciplinary demands of automobility, but it can also be seen as an expression of Kevin's frustration with being an attentive driver. Katz writes that, “the better you are as a driver, in the sense of being dutifully attentive to the movements of other cars, the more you are aware of how circumscribed are the attentions of others” (Katz 1999:28) and this is precisely what can lead to emotional responses to others' driving behaviors. It is a frustration with the realization that, regardless of how good one's awareness of others, one can never expect it to be consistently reciprocated. Kevin goes on with his pragmatic outlook:

“I think of all the other cars on the road...as other people getting to a destination. Often, they're going the same way as you, but through the actions of your driving and how you drive, it can affect their trip. And I think it's kind of funny to see another driver get angry at somebody who cuts them off or someone not driving so

safely or smartly and then you know they go into a fit of road rage or something...”

Here, Kevin seems to advocate for what Katz refers to as ‘Zen driving’. He writes that Zen-inspired perspectives on driving avoid “the rise of anger, or any emotion other than the metaphysical pleasure of remaining in the flow of responsive driving itself, by avoiding the possibility of being cut off from concerns that transcend driving” (1999:81). In this sense, being cut off or witnessing ‘bad’ driving behavior becomes just another part of the milieu of automobility. It is to be expected. A perspective on the governmentality of automobility suggests that this resignation to the ‘flow of responsive driving’ is part of the self-government of individuals to maintain their safety, contentment, and discipline while driving.

### ***Discussion-conclusion: governmentality and automobility***

Before proceeding with the discussion, let me return to the questions at hand:

- How do the assemblages of automobility enable particular subjectivities that are generative of the goals of governmentality?
- How are the driver, the car, and the road made governable through the practice of driving?
- How do drivers negotiate their relationship to the state through the practice of driving? And what role do the police play in driver’s subjectivities?

What we have seen above is that the practice of driving is a particularly effective venue for understanding how governmentality functions in everyday mobility. The interviews bring to light the extent to which drivers are able to articulate their emotional and cor-

poreal implication in the governmentality of automobility. I have shown how drivers are formed into particular types of subjects – subjects of self-government that are compelled to act ‘freely’.

Drawing from Rose, I suggest that automobility is not a wholly disciplined mobility, but rather a mobility in which the strategies and tactics of discipline are always active. Rose writes that discipline is “not a means of producing terrorized slaves without privacy, but self-managing citizens capable of conducting themselves in freedom, shaping their newly acquired ‘private lives’ according to norms of civility, and judging their conduct accordingly” (1999:242). Understandings of safety and considerations of disciplinary visibility evidently impact the way that drivers consider their subjectivities. Safety is the ‘truth’ or rationality by which drivers govern themselves. They are aware of the potentially fatal risks of driving, but are able to continue into action without moral complications. “The risks of driving are denied,” as Beckmann writes, “and the illusion of safety is reconstructed” (2004:93) through the discursive anomalization of accidents. When risks and accidents are problematized, they become a target of governmentality. The goal is then to rationalize risk, to create the idea that safe, self-regulated driving is normal, conventional, and the standard to which drivers are held. Accidents and dangerous driving become anomalies. They are seen as problems in need of fixing, rather something that can be expected on the road. The solution is the creation of the governable driving subject – the individual that is able to consider the risks by individualizing them, to hold one and others to particular safety standards, and to embody rationalization to the degree that it becomes unquestionable ‘truth’.

Drivers are constantly imagining what others might be perceiving or thinking of their driving. Part of self-regulatory judgment is putting oneself in others’ positions in

order to consider the gaze. How should I be driving right now? Should I be doing this? Is it legal? And, of course, these questions are predicated on another important question: Does anyone else see me? The police, other drivers, and non-drivers, like pedestrians, cyclists, or even passengers are all implicated in the landscape of visibility. And because the police are arbiters of the law, we can, more abstractly, consider how our driving looks in the eyes of the law – certainly, we can assume that the driving instructor or driving evaluator are included in this as well. The corporeal, emotional, and affective capacities of driving subjectivities all become legally and morally evaluated.

As Rose indicates, “governable spaces are not fabricated counter to experience” (Rose 1999:32). Drivers make auto-space governable by perceiving, thinking, and doing in particular ways. Safe and orderly driver subjects are the ideal results of policeable space. Auto-space is made governable not just through policing, but more importantly through the thinking and the performing of subjects. The interviews make evident that some drivers, through thinking and performing, make certain spaces more governable than others. There is an uneven geography of governmentality. So, policeable space, like governable space, is policeable only to the extent that the mind and body of the driver is attuned to this policing or governing.

Police-induced discipline points to the irregularity and inconsistency of self-regulation and rule following. Some drivers seem more affected by an awareness of the potential for police presence or getting caught, others have contingent conceptions of their relationship to the state. Like Corey and Andrea, they put themselves in the position of the state, and through doing this, through imagining the rationality involved in governing or policing, they internalize the ‘mentality’ and try to act accordingly. Sometimes this means they don’t want to get caught transgressing this mentality. Other times

they articulate the necessity of regulation. As mentioned above, the two notions of getting caught or getting hurt provide a way to understand drivers' relationship to the state. This intersection of punitiveness and safety is precisely where one might begin to identify the notion of pastoral power, as Foucault (1982) puts it. Pastoral power, simply put, is the various ways that modern states are concerned with ensuring that people are kept safe, healthy, and protected from accidents. The law and its enforcement are seen as protection. Safety is the rationalization for policing. But it is not clear how consistently drivers are able to reflect on the way their bodies and feelings have been conditioned by pastoral subjectification.

The contingency of habitus shows us that the 'technological habitus' of driving that Freund & Martin (2009) have suggested is quite complicated and irregular. While this habitus might demand a sober "sociotechnological frame of mind" in order to "manage highly complex and potentially dangerous relationships with material culture" (2009:480), the reality is that this demand is not always met with 'proper conduct'. The body-mind's relationship to the car is not as mechanistic and sober as this notion would suggest. The righteous emotions and quasi-confrontational attitude generated by the affective energies of car-driver hybridity, as exemplified in Andrea's interview, are signs that the 'technological habitus' is prone to slippage. Similarly, we can look towards Paul's intense affective response towards the police as another sign that driving is not immune to affect and emotion. Driving subjects are liable to breach the 'sociotechnological' codes of conduct that are demanded of them. However, what is worth exploring are the ways that these breaches of conduct become subsumed into the routine of practice. If breaches of conduct are not seen as such by drivers, then what significance do they have as potential sites of resistance to governmentality?

Reflexivity is complicated. The things that drivers do and think are not always consciously available to them. Bodily responses like tensing up or relaxing are not all inaccessible to drivers. Drivers are sometimes even aware of involuntariness and are able to talk about it, but the fact that there is involuntariness is the point. Ultimately, the accumulation of performances of driving produce more nonreflexivity than we can probably imagine. Seiler writes that, it is drivers' desire for and competence at the practice of driving that "serves as an index of their internalization of hegemonic ways of being in the world, to such a degree that the threat of coercion recedes to the edge of perception" (2008:143). Safety becomes the rationalization for discipline, and the obligation to 'be free', to choose when, where, what, and how to drive keeps drivers close to subjectification.

## **Conclusion: who controls the past, controls the future**

In this research, I have paid close attention to the ways that the regime of auto-mobility both enables and demands consistency in drivers' actions and experiences. I began by addressing the contemporary critical perspectives of the 'new mobilities paradigm' which emphasizes the centrality of the various mobilities of people, objects, images, and information to the 'social' (Urry 2000; 2007). This interdisciplinary perspective is significant in its articulation of human experience as implicated in relations of power. This abandonment of the notion of the rational, ahistorical, and autonomous individual points to a notion of a politics of subjectivity. Using a Foucauldian perspective on the production of subjects, scholars have identified how automobility is reproduced through discourses and practices. While not always in conversation with poststructuralists, theorists of practice have provided a way towards understanding the dialectical connection between structure and agency. Through such a focus, we are able to understand how routinization and bodily engagements with practices reproduce the structures that humans find themselves in. The embodiment of automobility through the affective assemblages of driving becomes the crucial locus of a practical reproduction of the system.

I devoted much time to considering how the governing of automobility is enacted through thought and practice. The interviews brought to light the extent to which drivers were able to articulate their emotional and corporeal implication as subjects of automobility. We see that safety is expressed as the moral imperative for being a 'good' driving subject. Safety becomes the rationalization for discipline, and the obligation to 'be free', to choose when, where, what, and how to drive keeps drivers close to subjectification. While this creates the need for self-government and discipline on the road, it also

is becomes a site of potential 'breach of conduct'. Judging others as 'bad' driving subjects can incite emotional bursts of righteousness, indicating the precariousness of a governable subjectivity – 'good' driving subjects should be cool, calm, and collected in their performances of driving rather than emotionally volatile. We also see that our practical incorporation into the assemblages of automobility, and the subjectivities created through these relationships, are the things that make auto-space governable. Governable spaces are thought and performed into being. This means that certain spaces are more governable than others due to drivers' spatially contingent habituses. The notion of pastoral power shows us how the experiences produced through the practice of driving also shape our relationship to the state and sometimes provide ways for us to condone and desire the particular relations of power that, in this case, maintain the current politics of transportation.

When we ask questions regarding how power is embodied in an automobilized society and how the disciplinary nature of modern societies organizes the human experience of driving, we must also consider the political aims of our questions. While Sheller's (2004) aim is to help create a new 'ethics of automobility' or 'ethics of car consumption', others like Böhm *et al.* argue that, "reforming automobility is not enough" (2006:14). To them, the important part of any reformist politics and other efforts to ameliorate the environmental and sociocultural problems of automobility "is to connect them to a wider, more general, questioning of the impossibility of the regime of automobility itself" (Böhm *et al.* 2006: 15) by radically putting into question the hegemony of the car and potentially giving rise to new imaginings of mobility and social forms. Similarly, Soron suggests that a critique of automobility is "most promising when it moves beyond simply reorienting our personal relationship to a particular object, and

begins to sharpen our resistance to the broader socio-economic system that conditions and presupposes the car's use" (quoted in Manderscheid 2014: 620).

To assist in the identification of the sources and consequences of auto-hegemony, further research will need to more explicitly address the ways that governmentality and other forms of power impact on the subjectivities and affects of driving. This could mean continuing in the manner that I have carried out this research, using the audio-recorded ride-along interview or the 'passenger seat ethnography' that others have utilized before me (Dawson 2015; Katz 1999). This should entail considering the limitations of the ride-along interview in capturing some of the very things that it seeks to investigate, such as bodily movements, facial expressions, and interactions with traffic or the surroundings. Observational note-taking and listening back to audio recordings is limited in its capacity to capture these things. However, listening to the audio recordings does provide a way to revisit tone of voice, pace of speech, volume, and other discursive indicators of affect. The use of photo can help to supplement these observations, as Collin-Lange (2013) has done. Video recording is perhaps the best way to improve on the limitations of the audio-recorded ride-along interview, as Laurier (2004), Laurier *et al.* (2008), and Spinney (2015) have demonstrated with their research. Video recordings create an opportunity for revisiting the mobile practice in action, and also opens up the possibility of bringing the interview participant back to reflect on the recording of their performance – allowing for a more comprehensive inclusion of the researched in research. But there is even room for more traditional methods like the sit-down interview in exploring affect and emotion in mobile practice, which Bissell (2014) and Kent (2015) have both utilized in their explorations of embodied mobile practices.

In addition to considerations of methodology, future research on the embodiment of automobility should be theoretically equipped to deal with practice. My research contributes to the ongoing questioning of the hegemony of the car in society by emphasizing the body and the feelings, emotions, and affects generated through the practice of driving. In order to improve on the poststructural critique of subjectivity, we need to consider the ways that practices shape subjectivities – the ways that the body, things, practical knowledge, and routines provide a way towards understanding actions, institutions, and structures. Through such a focus, more analytical power is given to examinations of emergence, persistence, and change. Additionally, this research considers how the potentialities of affective relationships to driving provide a way towards understanding that systems of practice like automobility are more uncertain and open-ended than they are frequently made to seem. The past remains in the present as a virtuality, as Deleuze points out. The capacity of affect to shape action arises from its temporality, from “the continued virtual presence of the past as a realm of potential in the present” (Bissell 2014: 1950). From here, we can look towards an affective practice, a view that emphasizes the openness of practice, rather than its rigidity – the copresence of the virtual with everyday life.

If the affective relations of automobility are reproduced through practice, they can also be transformed through practice. This centers the body as the site of transformation. Future investigations need to consider the ways that the openness of social action becomes entangled in systems of power. An ongoing examination of a politics of affect can point us towards understanding how particular relations of power enable particular virtualities to actualize – who controls the past, controls the future.

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## APPENDIX

### *Interview Prompts*

How long have you been a driver?

- When do you drive? How often?
- Where do you usually drive?
- Who with?

How do you/what do you feel right now?

- Think about the sensations that you might take for granted that arise?
- What kinds of feelings or thoughts come to mind when you're holding the steering wheel? pressing the accelerator? Navigating traffic?
- Sensory (smells, sounds, sensations)
- Ask this many times throughout the interview

How aware do you think you are of your car's dimensions in relation to your surroundings?

- How might this affect your driving style?

How do other drivers make you feel?

- Non-drivers?
- The police?
  - How does police presence make you feel?
  - Do you ever think about the police if you don't see them?
  - What do you do when you see lights / hear sirens?
  - Why don't you speed? Why don't you run red lights?
- Urban design?
  - City streets vs. highways?
  - Speed limits? Stop lights? One-way streets?

Do you enjoy driving?

Is there a type of road you prefer to drive on? A preferable type of car?

Can you describe your driving style? What kind of driver are you?

- How do you think you developed this?
- Where/when/how did you learn to drive? Before driver's ed?

How do you think your life would be different without a car?

- How important is it to you? Why?
- How do you travel when not by car? Why?