



Cosmobilities Newsletter

Editorial

Dear Cosmobilities,

Almost four years after the first issue of the Cosmobilities Newsletter came out this will be the last newsletter in its current shape. This doesn't mean the function of the newsletter will disappear: in the coming months, we want to try out new ways of sharing and spreading news about mobilities research projects and groups, publications, workshops, and conferences.

My work as an editor of the newsletter began after I attended the Cosmobilities Conference in Berlin in 2005, when I was still a master student in sociology. Starting as a side job, over time my editorial work got more and more connected to my own work. Now, four years later, I am doing my PhD on mobility regimes at airports and this summer I edited the newsletter from Jakarta where I did part of my fieldwork.

Editing this newsletter was a great way for me to get to know many people who are connected to the Cosmobilities Network and to be on top of new developments in mobilities research. My favorite item always was the portrait on the last page in which we introduce one of the network's research groups. The portraits give our international network a face and also show how diverse the network is. I think it is very important to continue with these portraits in a new way.

For now, I would like to thank everyone who over the past four years contributed to the newsletters and I hope to meet you again via a new platform in the near future.

Best regards,

Sanneke Kloppenburg

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- Noel Salazar and Pál Nyíri organise a session on **Imaginaries and regimes of mobility across the globe** at the EASA Conference, 24-27 August 2010 Maynooth. Deadline for papers 1 March 2010.
- Javier Caletrio and Katharina Manderscheid organise a cosmobilities session on **Sustainable Futures and Spatial Mobility Regimes** at the ISA World Congress of Sociology, 11-17 July 2010 in Gothenburg.

See the cosmobilities website for details.

New: Call for papers 'The Cultures of Mobilities'

6th Cosmobilities Conference

The Cultures of Mobilities: Everyday life, Communication, and Politics

Aalborg, Denmark
October 27-29, 2010

Abstract submissions are invited for the 6th Cosmobilities Conference 'The Cultures of Mobilities: Everyday life, Communication, and Politics', to be held in Aalborg, Denmark, on October 27-29 2010.

The conference is open to students, scholars, and professionals from various fields interested in the theoretical or applied study of mobilities.

The conference is jointly organised by the **Cosmobilities Network** and the **Centre for Mobility and Urban Studies (C-MUS)** at Aalborg University, Denmark

For more information about the conference see page 2 of this newsletter.

About this newsletter

This newsletter is produced by the Cosmobilities Network. The Cosmobilities Network connects European scientists working in the field of mobility research.

As an interdisciplinary network it represents state of the art research on different as-

pects of social, physical, cultural and virtual mobility.

The website www.cosmobilities.net serves as an information platform. It supports scientific exchange and meeting each other in virtual or real space.

Call for papers: 6th Cosmobilities Conference 'The Cultures of Mobilities'

The Cultures of Mobilities: Everyday life, Communication, and Politics

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Different forms of mobilities have increased dramatically in recent decades and are today essential for many spheres of contemporary societies. In various research disciplines mobility is still often thought of as a matter of rational organization, an important competitive feature in a global world, or as a dominant factor involved in stratification. As such, mobility is immanently connected to material practices of movement and access - or their opposites. However, what is less discussed in the recent debates on mobility research is that mobilities are not just material, but also signifying practices. Mobilities have just as much to do with the production of meaning and culture. The 2010 'Cultures of Mobilities' conference therefore takes up the challenge to theorize and analyze mobilities from the vantage point of a cultural perspective. The conference will place a particular emphasis on how mobilities produce and re-produce norms, meanings and cultures.

The conference focus of 'Cultures of Mobilities' will encompass three different themes: Everyday life, Communication and Politics. The *Everyday life perspective*

considers how the organization of mobilities in everyday life produces (and re-produces) particular sets of values and norms relating to mobilities. It explores the ways in which everyday life mobilities are being organized, and asks whether everyday mobilities are generating new social communities and perspectives on social interaction, or are instead eroding social connectivity. The *Communication perspective* considers how new digital communication technologies influence mobility practices and how they may create affordances for particular ways of engaging with mobilities. Papers in this part may also involve intercultural/cross-cultural perspectives on mobility as well as the analysis of representations of mobilities in, for example, literature, media, documentary, cinema, computer games and fiction. Finally the *Politics perspective* addresses how the new mobilities are being perceived politically. Are various political perceptions encouraging or discouraging particular forms of mobility? Are there specific norms and cultures related to the ways in which states and governmental systems create policies for mobilities? Under this theme, we also encourage papers on critical perspectives, 'the environment', 'mobility as a right' and power/social stratification at scales from the neighborhood to global mega-regions.

We invite authors to send in abstracts of maximum 300 words within these themes; however contributions that move beyond these themes will also be considered. The registration process will open in February 2010. The conference registration fee is 165 EUR (for faculty and other professionals). Reduced rate for students: 80 EUR.

Conference: Cultures of Movement

Cultures of Movement: Mobile Subjects, Communities, and Technologies in the Americas.

Victoria, British Columbia, Canada,
April 8-10, 2010.

Open to students, scholars, and professionals, the conference is meant to build new ties amongst all those interested in the theoretical or applied study of mobilities. While the conference is open to all themes pertinent to the study of mobilities from a social and cultural perspective—irrespective of the geographical site of empirical or theoretical attention—the main focus of the conference will be on the experience, practice, social organization, and cultural significance of forms of mobility in North, Central, and South America.

Whereas in Europe the new mobilities paradigm has taken a strong hold in academic units, professional research networks, and recognized publication outlets, the study of

mobilities is still in its infancy in the Americas. In contrast, mobility is very much part of the core of the social imaginary, geo-politics, and cultural life of the Americas. Indeed, to be "on the move" is amongst the most quintessential characteristics of what it means to be a citizen of the Americas. Furthermore, the Americas are home to many, distinct mobile cultures and practices: from indigenous cultures rooted in traditional meanings of home to the historical institutionalization of colonial and postcolonial trade routes and forced relocations, from controversial experiments in free transnational trade, to the politics and experience of migration and Diaspora, from the widespread diffusion of portable communication technologies, to the mobilization of surveillance systems, and from the leisure mobilities of tourism, to the social and cultural significance of transportation and movement in daily life.

The 6th Cosmobilities Conference is jointly organised by the **Cosmobilities Network** and the **Centre for Mobility and Urban Studies (C-MUS)** at Aalborg University, Denmark

This conference is organised by Royal Roads University and the new Pan-American Mobilities Network

The **preliminary program** is now online at <http://tinyurl.com/l6k97s>

Or contact Philip Vannini at phillip.vannini@royalroads.ca

Research News: new project on Multilocal Families

Multilocal Families", a research project of the Schumpeter research group at the German Institute for Childhood, Youth and Family (DJI) in Munich

By Anna Proske

In January 2009, the Schumpeter research group, funded by "Volkswagen Stiftung" and situated at the DJI in Munich, has started its research "multilocal families – everyday accomplishment of family life in case of spatial distance". Under the direction of Dr. Michaela Schier the project will continue until the end of 2013.

The research group „multilocal families" explores the phenomenon of a rising multilocality of family life. Family life in modern societies is no longer limited to one single place and one single household. Increasing divorce rates as well as increasing expectations of job mobility lead to family lives that are lived in several places, to long periods of absence and detachment between parents and their minor children, and a new construction of spatial identity.

The main interest of this research project is to investigate the impact of spatial dimensions on family practices and the everyday accomplishment of family life. Based on the assumption that a conjoint spatial co-presence is a constitutive element of family life, our research group focuses on the following questions: How do the actors accomplish family life under the conditions of constantly changing presence and absence of certain family members? What kind of individual and daily practices are developed by the actors in order to maintain closeness in spite of spatial absence?

The accomplishment of family life under the conditions of multilocality will be investigated by using sociological and geographical concepts that understand daily life as being accomplished by actors in a daily process of adaptation and reconstruction of daily routines.

The Schumpeter research group investigates two different forms of multilocal families. Part A deals with multilocality that is caused by familial reasons. In this part we look at families after divorce or separation. In these families it is generally the children who commute between two households and have a different spatial sense of belonging. Part B examines multilocal arrangements that are caused by conditions of employment. We look at families where the parents face job-related mobility and live in at least two places.

The project has an explorative character: for the first time there will be a secondary analysis focusing on the question of the spread of the phenomenon of multilocal families in Germany. At the same time we accomplish two deepening qualitative analyses: on multilocality that is caused by divorce and multilocality that is caused by employment conditions. In order to investigate multilocal families we will use a mix of methods, integrating qualitative interviews, visual methods and participant observation. At the moment we are preparing the data collection, which we will start by the end of the year.

For more information please visit our homepage: www.dji.de/multilokale_familie, or contact our project director Dr. Michaela Schier at schier@dji.de or our project officer Anna Proske at proske@dji.de

Mobilities Research and Policy Center at Drexel University

The new Center for Mobilities Research and Policy (mCenter) at Drexel University combines interdisciplinary approaches to the study of travel, transport, migration, borders, and mobile communication into one over-arching framework.

The mCenter will promote new theoretical approaches, new methods, and the academic leadership to research, envision, and foster alternative mobility futures based on innovative collaborations between the arts and social sciences, engineering, business, law, media and design, as well as public health. This is an area of growing academic interest, policy debate, and research investment. The mCenter will be a nexus for generating innovative collaborations within Drexel, across the Greater Philadelphia region, and internationally.

The mCenter will engage in public outreach through conferences, symposia, workshops,

film screenings, and art exhibitions focusing on issues such as:

- contemporary urban environments and their complex infrastructures, architectures of mobility, and networked connections;
- questions of sustainable mobility and mobility justice;
- border control, population surveillance and political conflict over the rights to mobility and rights to enter, stay, and reside;
- movement of risks and diseases across the increasingly interdependent and vulnerable world;
- development of new mobile technologies including automated highways, cybercars, locative media and ecologically sustainable "smart" cities.
- bodily (im)mobilities within homes and buildings, including children's and elderly mobility

Mimi Sheller is Director of the new Mobilities Research and Policy Center at Drexel University

The launch of the mCenter is planned for Monday, April 19th, 2010.

Website
<http://mcenterdrexel.wordpress.com>

New publication: Subject-Oriented Approaches to Transport

Edited by **Christian Holz-Rau** and **Joachim Scheiner**

Rohn, 2009, 100 pages.,
ISBN 978-3-88211-172-9
€11.00 www.rohn-verlag.de

The history of transport planning is mainly a history of numbers and statistical parameters. The human being plays a prominent role in transport planning in terms of his or her role as a transport mode user, as a macro-economic aggregate of various benefit components in appraisal methods, or as a disturbance variable in traffic flows. In terms of being subjects with individual needs, wishes and daily requirements however, human beings appeared quite late in transport planning.

This book aims to make a case for the recently emerging 'subjective perspectives' in transport studies and transport planning. The seven contributions are based on concepts as different as lifestyle, milieu, emotion, and accessibility preferences. Methodologies adopted include agent-based micro-simulation, quantitative empirical analysis, and qualitative in-depth interviews.

The book may be useful for all those interested in recent developments in transport, as well as accessibility and mobility studies, including planners, geographers, sociologists, psychologists and economists.

Christian Holz-Rau and Joachim Scheiner work at the Department of Transport Planning at Dortmund University of Technology, Germany



New publication: Mobility

By **Peter Adey**

Routledge, *Key ideas in Geography series*, July 2009.
288 pages, Paperback ISBN
978-0-415-43400-3, £21.99,
€30.75

As everything from immigration, airport security and road tolling become headline news, the need to understand mobility has never been more pertinent. Yet 'mobility' remains remarkably elusive in summary and definition. This introductory text makes 'mobility' tangible by explaining the key theories and writings that surround it. This book traces out the concept of mobility as a key idea within the discipline of geography as well as subject areas from the wider arts and social sciences.

The text takes an interdisciplinary approach to draw upon key writers and thinkers that have contributed to the topic. In analyzing these, it develops an understanding of mobility as a relationship through which the world is

lived and understood. *Mobility* is organised around themed chapters discussing – Meanings, Politics, Practices and Mediations and the book identifies the evolution of mobility and its implications for theoretical debate. These include the way we think about travel and embodiment, to regarding issues such as power, feminism and post-colonialism. Important contemporary case-studies are showcased in boxes. Examples range from the mobility politics evident in the evacuation of the flooding of New Orleans, xenophobia in Southern Africa, motoring in India, to the new social relationships emerging from the mobile phone. The methodological quandaries mobility demands are addressed through highlighted boxes discussing both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Arguing for a more relational notion of the term, the book understands mobility as a keystone to the examination of issues from migration, war and transportation; from communications and politics

to disability rights and security. Key concept and case-study boxes, further readings, and central issue discussion allows students to grasp the central importance of 'mobility' to social, cultural, political, economic and everyday terrains. The text also assists scholars of Geography, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Planning, and Political Science to understand and engage with this evasive concept.

Peter Adey is Lecturer in Cultural Geography at Keele University, UK



Mobilities is a wonderful introduction to the growing literature within human geography, sociology, urban studies, and anthropology that takes seriously the fact that we live in a world that is a constant hum of motion. This is a book that provides a thorough overview of the recent 'mobility-turn' in the social sciences, a book that is both highly readable and intellectually challenging.

Dr Alan Latham, University College London, UK

New publication: Mobility styles using the example of Berlin

By **Jutta Deffner**

Zu Fuß und mit dem Rad in der Stadt *in German*. Institute of Spatial Planning TU Dortmund 2009, 274 pages, ISBN 978-3-88211-173-6, € 22.50

The urging debate on climate change adds more and more importance to bicycle and pedestrian traffic as zero emission alternatives for urban mobility. Pollution, noise and traffic congestions can be avoided by more walking or using the bicycle. Key factors to address in promoting these travel modes are personal motivation as well as more comprehensive consideration in urban planning. In her recently published book "Walking and cycling in the city – types of mobility using the example of Berlin" edited by the Technical University of Dortmund, Jutta Deffner therefore addresses individual and environmental aspects related to these travel modes.

The author analyses individual factors influencing the

decision for walking or cycling. Among these are attitudes towards mobility, such as demands for flexibility, independence or safety, and personal living conditions. These individual determinants interact with the social, but also with the built environment, for instance the surrounding's diversity. In her empirical work, Jutta Deffner identifies various patterns of attitude and behaviour to develop mobility styles. The typology for example distinguishes individuals, for whom mobility itself determines their lifestyle intensively, as it is the case for the type "urban enthusiasm". For the type "normality and convenience" mobility rather complies with the way of life. These findings allow for aligned planning of urban bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Jutta Deffner's typology furthermore allows for an enhanced understanding of target groups. It therefore permits addressing those specific groups more effectively via professional communication and to raise awareness of their various

different needs.

The book is published in German.

Jutta Deffner studied Spatial and Environmental Planning in Kaiserslautern and obtained her Dr at Technical University of Dortmund. She works as research assistant at the Institute for Socio-Ecological Research (ISOE) in Frankfurt on the Main in transdisciplinary projects on mobility and urbanity



New publication: Mobility as activity

Edited by **Michael Dick**

Mobility as Activity: Individual Expansion - Everyday Logistics - Cultural Capacity *in German*. Lengerich 2009. 324 pages ISBN 978-3-89967-533-7, €30.00

This book considers the experiential layer of mobility and its subjective representations. This ranges from the phenomenological analysis of driving experience via the reconstruction of mobility in everyday life and its meaning for the whole life course.

Starting with a psychological and interdisciplinary definition the book presents empirical work of psychological, sociological and planning

sciences. The vision is to encourage more interdisciplinary research on this core topic and to help acquiring deeper insights into the personal meaning of mobility.

Contents (among others): the hierarchical layers of human mobility (Hildebrandt & Dick); mobile couples organizing everyday life (Deubel); appropriation in the situation of driving (Dick & Zinn); body, horizon and expansion (Dick); mobility policies and socio-material networks (Kesselring); commitment to mobility and relocation (Otto); mobile working (Poppitz); motives for mobility in leisure time (Götz), the journey in planning sciences

(Schiefelbusch), the turn from mobility to accessibility in regional planning (Stein).

The book is published in German.





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Portrait: mobil.TUM

Talking about interdisciplinarity is one thing, actually practicing it is much more challenging and exciting. The project group 'mobil.TUM' at the Technische Universität München (TUM) was founded in 2006. From the beginning, it was an ambitious venture supported by the TUM and located at the Institute for Transportation which is part of the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geodesy. Over the past three years, the project group has established a lively culture of interdisciplinarity, networking, and international cooperation. Focusing on questions of sustainable mobility, mobil.TUM brings together approaches from mobilities research and transport studies. Scholars from different disciplines including sociology, economics, environmental studies, planning, and engineering work closely together, both in researching and teaching.

The group aims to contribute significantly to the debate on sustainable development and mobility. Sustainability is considered a culturally, socially and technologically driven phenomenon. Therefore, sustainable mobility introduces new lifestyles and new cultures of connectivity and technology use. In this context, the following questions arise: How can sustainable lifestyles be identified and propelled? How can the qualitative concept of sustainability be made manageable for concrete technologies and plans? Which measures are suitable for reaching this aim? How can the process for the implementation of these measures be initiated? And what policies of sustainability have to be developed?

In response to these questions, mobil.TUM experiments with new ways of cooperation by integrating engineering, natural sciences, social sciences and cultural studies. Currently, mobil.TUM members work on different projects situated on the interface of transport research and mobilities studies. These projects deal with corporate mobility politics and the impacts on work-life-balance, traffic behaviour and the distribution of transport-related environmental effects as well as the current state of ITS traffic technologies in Europe. The group also runs the international Master Programme 'Transportation Systems' which follows a transdisciplinary approach involving traffic engineering, planning, economics and social sciences.

Members of the group are active partners in international networks. Since 2005, the Cosmobilities Network office has been hosted at the TUM and many organizational tasks have been guaranteed in close collaboration between mobil.TUM and the department of sociology.

The NECTAR network (www.nectar-eu.org) plays an important role, and together with a new focus group at the TUM Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) mobil.TUM provides a framework for activities towards sustainable accessibility research.

Homepage:

www.mobil-tum.de



mobil.TUM



From left to right: Sven Kesselring, Waltraut Lotz (in front), Regine Gerike, Kristina Kebeck, Friederike Hülsmann