

Cosmobilities Newsletter

Editorial

Dear Cosmobilities,

the second issue of the Cosmobilities Newsletter lies on the table. In summer 2009 the network is alive and kicking, with a lot of interaction between network members, interesting calls, and many ideas and plans for the future. However, the Cosmobilities Network faces a caesura: we see the end of funding by the German Research Association (Deutsch Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG) later this year.

During the Cosmobilities network's phase of support by the DFG, we have seen the release of various publications. A few more publications are currently in the pipeline, one in German might be suitable. You will be informed in the next newsletter.

With these new developments, one of the most important jobs of the task force that has been established last year in Roskilde is to think about the future of the Cosmobilities Network. We look and apply for new sources of funding for network activities like this newsletter, the maintenance of the homepage, grants for printing books, etc. We have been doing this during the last year and will keep doing so in the future. Our goal is to get into a funding scene of mobility research, which is often dominated by technical and/or economic approaches. The good message is: on the one hand transport research is more aware of the social dimensions of mobility, and on the other hand the social sciences

make progress in this field. The general conditions thus seem to be promising. But there is no guarantee. Interdisciplinary work is still in between – like the word says. Against this background we try to join the COST program as well as national funding programmes. And we are still optimistic.

Funding is important, but real networking needs more than money. The task force agrees that the motivating core of Cosmobilities is curiosity, a collective want for space for interdisciplinary research and a meeting space where people from different backgrounds can learn from each other.

Best wishes,

Weert Canzler

Weert Canzler wrote the first of a series of guest editorials. He works at the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (Social Science Research Center Berlin) in Germany where he leads the Mobility research group. Weert is a member of the Cosmobilities Network task force.

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 aspects of social, physical, cultural and virtual mobility. The website www.cosmobilities.net serves as an information platform. It sup-

ports scientific exchange and meeting each other in virtual or real space.

The newsletter is published 3 times a year and will be sent to all members and friends of the Cosmobilities Network. Please send your contributions for the next issue before October 1st to Sanneke.Kloppenborg@cosmobilities.net

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Mobility research at the University of Gothenburg

- From Canada, Phillip Vannini is developing a **Pan-American Mobilities Network**. For more information contact him at Philip.Vannini@royalroads.ca.
- On April 1st 2009, **Norbert Schneider** became the new director of the Federal Institute for Population Research in Wiesbaden, Germany. See <http://www.bib-demographie.de>
- Aalborg University will host a **PhD course on Critical Mobilities** from 22-24 September 2009. The course aims to generate a critical debate about the conceptual and practical challenges of researching mobilities. see <http://phd.plan.aau.dk/phd-courses/4129537>

Cosmobilities News: *Mobilities and Inequalities* out now!

Mobilities and Inequality

Edited by **Timo Ohnmacht**, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Switzerland, **Hanja Maksim**, Ecole Polytechnique Federale De Lausanne, Switzerland and **Manfred Max Bergman**, University of Basle, Switzerland

Ashgate, April 2009. 238 pages. Hardback 978-0-7546-7495-5, £55.00 / €±65.00

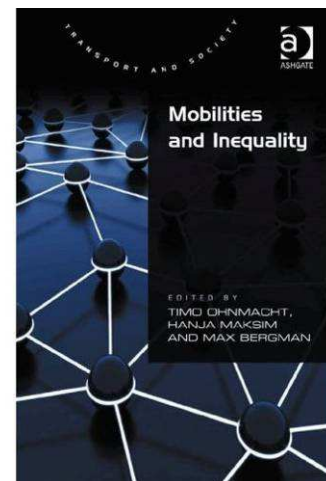
This book opens up the debate on the interrelations between space and mobilities with regard to different dimensions of social inequality. Based on the premise that the dynamics caused by modernization, globalization, migration and social change affect the structuring of the social fabric, the focus of the book is to illuminate these processes of social and spatial re-structurings. A leading team of contributors from the Cosmobilities network highlight different aspects of inequality in relation to mobilities, such as gender, supplying transport infrastructure, job-related relocations, multi-locality, social network geography, and socio-spatial development.

Contents: Foreword; Introduction: mobilities and inequality, *Timo Ohnmacht, Hanja Maksim and Manfred Max Bergman* ;

Part I Theory, Concepts, and Findings on Mobilities and Inequality: Mobilities and inequality – making connections, *Timo Ohnmacht, Hanja Maksim and Manfred Max Bergman* ; Unequal mobilities, *Katharina Manderscheid*; Life-course inequalities in the globalisation process, *Hans-Peter Blossfeld, Sandra Buchholz and Dirk Hofäcker*; Metap

hors of mobility – inequality on the move, *Jonas Larsen and Michael Hviid Jacobsen*.

Part II Empirical Applications: Mobilities and social network geography: size and spatial dispersion – the Zurich case study, *Andreas Frei, Kay W. Axhausen and Timo Ohnmacht* ; Social integration faced with commuting: more widespread and less dense support networks, *Gil Viry, Vincent Kaufmann and Eric D. Widmer*; Here, there, and in-between: on the interplay of multilocal living space and inequality, *Nicola Hilti*; Class divides within transnationalisation – the German population and its cross-border practices, *Steffen Mau and Jan Mewes*; Residential location, mobility and the city: mediating and reproducing social inequity, *Markus Hesse and Joachim Scheiner*; Mobility and the promotion of public transport in Johannesburg, *Ursula Scheidegger*.



The idea for this book originated during the 4th Cosmobilities Conference that took place in Basle, Switzerland, from 7-8 September 2007.

The conference with the title *Mobilities, Space, and Inequality* was held at the Department of Sociology at Basle University and coorganised by Institut für Soziologie, Universität Basel, Laboratoire de Sociologie Urbaine, EPFL Lausanne, Cosmobilities Network, München, Lehrstuhl für Soziologie, TU München, and Center for Mobilities Research Lancaster

Cosmobilities mailing list welcomes its 300th member

Lina Alm Mäntyniemi signed up as our 300th mailing list member! Lina is a PhD candidate at Swedish National Road and Traffic Research Institute/Linköpings University Department of Technology and Social Change.

Lina: 'My research is a part of the European ERA-NET project "Keep moving" called *Senior Life Transition Points and their Implications for Everyday Mobility: perspectives, patterns, scenarios and the issue of car use* with both junior and senior researchers from Sweden, Austria and The Netherlands.

My research interest embraces in the first place questions about older people and their everyday outdoor mobility. I work with qualitative interviews with a focus on the informants' own experiences and

knowledge about their everyday mobility. I am also interested in turning points or transitions points in the informants' lives and how (or if) a specific transition point has impacted their everyday mobility, and if so, how they have experienced that. Special focus will be on the transition to retirement.

At the moment I am working on an article based on a pilot study I conducted in autumn 2008 with older car drivers. A part of this study focuses on the older car drivers' own experiences of being an "old" car driver and on their thoughts of everyday mobility.

If you have any questions or comments on my work, feel free to contact me!

Lina Alm Mäntyniemi

lina.alm.mantyniemi(a)vti.se

New publication: Mobility in Daily Life

Malene Freudental-Pedersen

Ashgate, May 2009. 164 pages. Hardback 978-0-7546-7490-0, £55.00, €±65.00

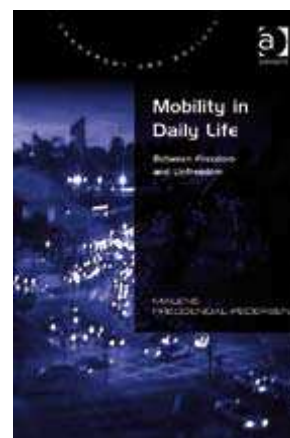
Why do we choose specific modes of transport and what are the perceived rationalities for our choice? How are different theoretical concepts within mobility research actually perceived and lived in everyday life? At this book's core is a conceptual and empirical contribution to critical mobility research. It focuses on the tension between freedom and unfreedom, articulated through the dichotomy between individuality and community, as well as critical perspectives on the multitude of unintended consequences of mobility. In a range of everyday

life narratives, this tension is analyzed through the concept of 'structural stories'. In teasing out the ambivalences of late modern everyday life, Malene Freudental-Pedersen exposes how mobility both generates and helps to overcome and live with these ambivalences.

'Through careful qualitative research into the everyday explanations people give for their transport choices, Freudental-Pedersen reveals how people produce car-dependent lifestyles despite ambivalent feelings about traffic, pollution, and security. This thoughtful and sensitive investigation of alternative 'structural stories' of mobility, freedom and community ultimately moves towards a hopeful vision of how to achieve more sustainable mobilities.'

– Mimi Sheller, Swarthmore College, USA

Malene Freudental-Pedersen is a researcher at Roskilde University, Denmark and Danish Architecture Centre, The Sustainable Cities Unit, Denmark



New publication: Public Transport and its Users

Edited by **Martin Schiefelbusch** and **Hans-Liudger Dienel**

Ashgate, *Transport and Society series*, April 2009. 330 pages, Hardback 978-0-7546-7447-4 £65.00, €±75.00

Public transport is essential to the quality of life of its passengers, both as a means to move around and also to achieve a sustainable environment. However, the passenger's position as a customer is weakened by the dominance of monopolies, regulation and political influence in our public transport systems.

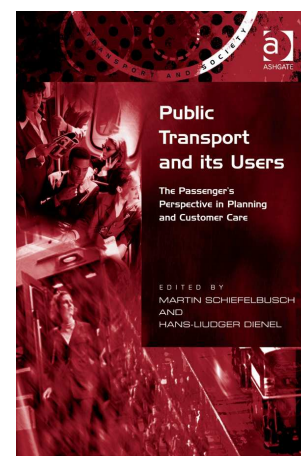
This book is one of the first to examine strategies for the representation of user interests in public transport from a variety of perspectives. The authors review approaches to integrating the passengers' views in the

planning process and to protecting their interests in operations and customer care across a range of European countries, including Austria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. The book presents the conclusions of this research and good practice, and will provide useful guidance for policy makers, stakeholder organizations and planners, and transport researchers.

'This book tackles the hugely important but often neglected concern over the rights of the passenger when using public transport. It proposes a substantial increase in their active participation in the design of the services being offered. As such, this book breaks new ground and should be read by all those who are really concerned about the traveller as well as travel.' – David Banister,

Transport Studies Unit, Oxford University Centre for the Environment, UK

Both authors work at the nexus Institute for Cooperation Management and Interdisciplinary Research, Germany





TUM - Cosmobilities Network
 Lothstrasse 17
 D-80335 Munich
 Germany

fon +49 89.289.28598
 fax +49 89.289.24302
 www.cosmobilities.net
 info@cosmobilities.net

Portrait: Mobility Research Group at the University of Gothenburg

The group unites human geographers interested in different forms of spatial mobility, be they physical, virtual, or media related. Our projects concern the changing use of various forms of spatial mobility, how such processes are interrelated and how they are embedded in and influence societal change. A particular focus is the dynamic relations between different mobility forms – in terms of complementarity, substitution, displacement and generation. Much work in the group is inspired by a time-geographical perspective and mobility trends are generally understood as being part of changing activity patterns. The compatibility of mobility trends with wider societal goals such as social equity and environmental sustainability is addressed in several projects. Two larger, recently concluded projects exemplify our research:

Time for mobility: The virtual mobility offered by ICTs has entered homes to an unprecedented degree – with disputed socio-spatial consequences. This study explores whether people's use of time and space has changed with increasing access to ICTs. Data from the Swedish Time Use Surveys reveal structural tendencies, while a panel study of urban youth details ongoing change processes.

Results from our analyses indicate *in general* stable patterns of place use in an era of increased access to ICTs. However, the overall stability becomes differentiated when examined in greater detail. A large increase in virtual mobility is associated with a more home-based lifestyle. More time spent at home, often alone at the computer, displaces certain out-of-home activities, such as socializing, outdoor recreation, and travel. This could be understood to further indicate that computers and the internet are part of a growing culture of leisure and entertainment, which is largely home based and individualized.

Read more: Vilhelmson, B & Thulin, E (2008) Virtual mobility, time use and the place of the home. *Journal of Economic and Social Geography*, TEGS, 99(5), 601-617.

Transnational mobility among youth: Much recent writing on transnational mobility has argued that long-distance travel is increasingly a normal and sometimes necessary part of ordinary life for many people in richer countries. This article investigates differences in the extent of transnational mobility between groups of Swedish youth with different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. Comparisons are based on the respondents' mobility biographies – information about all trips abroad taken during childhood and adolescence. Taken together, the results confirm the idea of transnational mobility as a critical, differentiating factor – also between youth in a northern European context. Transnational social relations do not seem to have a prominent role in shaping the distribution of mobility between social groups in Swedish society. Of overwhelming importance in this respect is the extent to which holiday leisure travel is available and prioritized. Read more: Frändberg, L. (2009) How normal is travelling abroad? Differences in transnational mobility between groups of young Swedes *Environmental and Planning A* 41 (3), 649-667.

Current projects concern, among other things, the changing preconditions and gendered demands for commuting; the role of media images in the production of tourism mobility; the introduction and dissemination of solutions to the challenge of sustainable mobility within organizations and cities; and the relation between improved accessibility and changing livelihood in rural regions of developing countries.

Homepage: <http://www.handels.gu.se/hgeo/mobility/>



From left to right: Maja Essebo; Ana Gil Solá; Lotta Frändberg; Lisette Pettersson; Bertil Vilhelmson; Eva Thulin; Daniel Fahlén. Missing: Kristina Lindström; Jerry Olsson.