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VW Campervan Subculture: Tourism Mobilities and Experiences

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ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to understand the mobilities of VW Campervan tourists as they travel for leisure purposes. The aim of the study is to unpack the social and embodied consequences of Volkswagen ownership to contribute to mobilities and automobilities research. By following the 'slow' journeys of VW campervan tourists travelling to festivals in the North East of England and Scotland, the different intensities of interactions between driver and vehicle are mapped in this dialogic account. Mindful of the centrality of the human subject in this case, it was important to ground the research in the new mobilities paradigm and to place meaningful movements at the heart of this analysis of a particular expression of modern social life (Urry, 2000a, Adey, 2010). Further to epistemological rationale of the study, Actor Network Theory is also used as tool through which to unpack, order and reconcile the social, material and non-representational affects that constitute VW Campervan travel. This framework is important as it has allowed knowledge to be captured within a broad spectrum of possibilities rather than as distinct tropes. Within existing tourism literature, interactions between people and velocity on ferries, canoes, motorcycles, waiting in line and so on, have been touched upon (Mitchell and Kubein, 2009; Vannini et al., 2009; Waskul, 2009), but no research has looked explicitly at the dimensions of VW campervan travel as a characterful form which travellers form significant bonds with their vehicles. In terms of the research design, interdisciplinary, inductive and interpretivist methodologies are used as epistemological foundations upon which ethnographic, auto-ethnographic, visual and mobile methods are deployed for data collection.

Fieldwork was conducted during the summer between 2010/13 and the resultant findings developed into three distinct critiques. These include observations on how they travel on roads to the destination, considerations of the relationship between the driver and VW campervan, then finally insights into the experiences of owners at the festival. As a contribution to knowledge therefore, the chapter *Velocity and Time* comprehends the experience of roads as not mundane thoroughfares but instead rich, vivid and meaningful places where travellers are enveloped in speed, nature and communality. Then in the chapter *Sensing the Automobile*, the emotional

and embodied relations between driver and vehicle as they together create mobile leisure are contemplated. Finally in *Home and Away* the paradoxical nature of tourism normally used to escape the everyday, is was found in this case that the mundane realities of home were replicated somewhere else. The third and final discussion examines the relationship between the VW campervan and its owner to propose that their embodied relationship induces a range of social intercourses unique to the Volkswagen brand.

Key Words: *Tourism Mobilities, Slow Travel, Embodiment, Transhumanism, Actor Network Theory*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Volkswagen campervan subcultures are global phenomena with a long and evolving history. Despite this, only a handful of Volkswagen histories by authors such as Bobbitt (1997) and Clarke (2000) have illustrated these automobiles' utilitarian beginnings as a no-frills compliment to the passenger sedan in 1950's Germany, its shift to the hippie-orientated legacy of the bus in the 1960's, through to its contemporary adoption by surfers, nostalgists, mechanical enthusiasts, festival hipsters and so on. Ubiquitous as its presence may be, there is limited analysis of its social, cultural or even economic attributes as a contemporary travel form. Whilst there has been some inclusion in the academic enquiries of mobile home use within camping cultures, with occasional commentaries from cultural geographers such as Phil Crang (2013, p. 277) on his relationship with VW Campervan 'Rosie', the literature review did not unearth substantive knowledge of it as a genre of 'leisure' automobility.

Although the Volkswagen brand, once a symbol of freedom that challenged the status quo, now appears in many populist discourses, commodified as a lifestyle choice through souvenirs, branded clothing, home decoration, owner's clubs, online forums, and themed festivals. Further, with celebrity TV chef Jamie Oliver travelling in a classic Volkswagen on 'Jamie Cooks Summer' (2005), their steady acceptance into the mainstream has been expedient but as yet, relatively unconsidered as a social project. With limited information on VW Campervan Tourism as a UK niche industry, Michael Oliver, Senior Leisure and Media Analyst broadly noted in a report commissioned by Mintel that:

"Camping and caravanning is gradually repositioning itself. Rather than just being the default option for those looking for an affordable way of holidaying, it is starting to be seen as an activity which offers people a high standard and wide choice of accommodation, while at the same time allowing them to reconnect with nature and switch off from their busy day-to-day lives." (Oliver, 2016)

As VW Campervan travel sits somewhere in this leisure mobility genre that is not fully addressed in critical tourism study, this project, inspired by a personal interest in

the brand, seeks therefore to explore this knowledge gap. My expedition into the world of mobilities study began on the internet shopping forum 'Ebay' in 2011. Despite having no previous interest in mobile homes, I became seduced into buying what I described as my 'midlife crisis' van. The insatiable desire to purchase a 1972 Wesfalia Bay seemingly embodying the possibilities of escape, autonomy and freedom, but once delivered to my door however was far from the imagined holiday ideal. I adopted the moniker 'Maud' as 'she' was called by 'her' previous owner, synonymous with the anthropomorphic behaviours many owners share. The so called 'dream machine' however that online conjured up a fantasy of a scenic road trip to escape the everyday, instead arrived into my life as a faulty, rusty, oil hungry, old vehicle, both difficult to drive and expensive to maintain. Contrary to being free to travel anywhere, restrictions on parking in England forced strategic planning of trips. I also had not accounted for the fact that bedding, food, personal hygiene goods, cleaning materials, waterproof clothing, mechanical tools and all sorts of other camping paraphernalia had to be managed before actually setting off.

Paradoxically, despite not wanting to drive it, I still liked the idea of owning a Volkswagen due to its attractive design. Although I did not want to risk driving an old, awkward van likely to develop a mechanical fault, I did not feel inclined to sell it either. As Maud stood on the drive, I was horrified by the idea of having to plan an excursion in it or sleep in the back of what was not a hotel, but a 45 year old van.

Despite the impracticalities however, after about a week of recovering from the regret of buying it, through a process of drinking cups of tea in the back, polishing it, fixing it, organising its interior and telling friends I had bought it, I became familiar with Maud and developed a bond towards her. As Sheller (2004) notes, a "love affair" with a particular vehicle finds its psychic analogue through human desires. Thus, living with the contradiction of an irrational feeling towards what in my view was a very impractical proposition, once the van was humanised I found myself likening it to a fragile old relative adopted as part of the family. In considering my changing perspective towards the vehicle as both fascinating and troubling, this duality presented itself as a plausible research topic. This raised the question: did anyone else have a love/hate relationship with their van? What was their experience? Also, because I owned a VW Campervan, it was practicable to the conduct of a study that

involved travelling to Volkswagen festivals to capture the voices of other owners. It was then that I set out to understand the behaviours, motivations and attitudes of others by joining a VW Campervan club in County Durham. In inviting participation and support for the project with them, the wider community of owners and enthusiasts were also made accessible.

Having introduced a rationale for the project, to contribute to scholarly activity in current mobilities research, this work seeks to understand the ways in which people experience VW campervan travel. To underpin the study from a critical perspective, I first draw upon contemporary debates in the literature review and the new mobilities paradigm (Cresswell, 2006, 2011, 2012; Hannam *et al.*, 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007). Using this logic, VW campervan travel will be comprehended as part of the 'societies of automobility' (Sheller and Urry, 2000) and be tackled not as a dead geography of transport analytics, but as a lively sociality driven by multiple social behaviours, emotions and interdependencies.

Furthermore, as an additional underpinning theory, Actor Network Theory (Latour, 2005) is drawn upon to consider how tourist movement is not only a linear trajectory of A to B, but is a network of human and non-human agencies that, in mobility, affect and are affected. The study is rooted in the understanding that VW campervan tourism is not just about transport mobility, but is an embodied and eventful act that is volatile and contingent upon the constraints and possibilities of travel. To widen the scope of the research this portrayal draws from personal data through using auto-ethnographic methods and ethnographic work, the narratives of which are corroborated using an inductive process. The model of induction is also an important ethical principle as it has enabled participants to lead the research process so their most authentic voices could be represented. Furthermore, in adopting an interdisciplinary stance where arts practice is utilised within a social sciences framework, crystallisation, which embraces the use of multiple methods, is employed to go beyond the usual verifications of triangulation. This multiple methodological approach reflects the richness of data needed to deal with the complex ways people interpret their travel experiences.

In summary, having outlined a general synopsis and approach, the overarching aim of the thesis is to comprehend the multiple experiences of VW Campervan travel as an instrument through which to contribute to the wider field of mobilities research. The second offering, due to knowledge being captured by experimental means, is a methodological output that professes to contribute to research pedagogies in tourism study. The structure of the research in its initial stages was inspired through observations in the field and developed into more formal objectives. From the two distinct scenarios of i) tourists travelling on roads and ii) setting up temporary living environments at festival sites, the research material was captured, distilled and synthesised into three key objectives:

- To understand road travel in a VW campervan through sight, sound, physicality, temporality and velocity.
- To examine the relationship between the owners and their VW Campervans as a transhumanist practice.
- To understand how VW campervans are used for identity formation, leisure, home-making and communality.

1.1 Contribution to knowledge

As a summary of how the thesis intends to contribute to knowledge the aims are twofold. The first is to make a contribution to tourism studies through critical consideration of human machine relations. In this case, the theoretical and empirical dissection of VW Campervan tourism as a transhumanist practice seeks to enhance a greater understanding of the socialites of travel. Whilst other forms of mobility are theorised within tourism research, the distinct nature of the VW campervan with its unique ability to engage its owner in social relations offers further insights into embodied travel. The claim therefore is that in dealing with these particular phenomena, the frontiers of mobilities research are pushed forward as the intensities of interactions between these bodies and machines demonstrate how movement is experienced not as disembodied, but an emotionally charged endeavour.

The second contribution to knowledge is methodological. Due to the interdisciplinary design of the project, the combining of the arts and the social sciences, the foundations to multiple routes of knowledge have been laid. By using experimental techniques such as film, photography, vox-pop videos and drawings alongside an auto-ethnography and ethnography using face-to-face and online interviews using forums, the epistemological dimension has arguably been expanded into uncharted territory. It is proposed because of this approach that the data produced here is richer because the methods used have challenged the boundaries of the archetypal fields of practice. It is hoped therefore that in sharing this process it may enliven research practices and encourage interdisciplinary work within social sciences more widely in the future.

To conclude this section, the wider context of Volkswagen subcultures as a popular icon and leisure phenomenon are introduced. This is followed by a discussion about the owner-researcher's position as a demonstration of the initial inspiration for the project, leading to its subsequent multiple methods approach. As previously stated, a distinct gap in literature in this area is also acknowledged alongside the substantive theories used to make sense of the subject. The project aims are therefore highlighted and briefly discussed in terms of the overarching objectives and the anticipated contributions to knowledge presented. The next section summarises the chapter content of the thesis.

To unpack these outlined areas, the thesis is divided into eight chapters. Following the introduction, two literature reviews, one dealing with mobilities theory to describe highway movement and the second exploring body and machine relations are developed to underpin the empirical discussions. Following the methodology, three empirical chapters address the objectives as a critical analysis and are followed then by concluding remarks.

1.2 Overview of Chapters

Chapter 1 Introduction

The introduction outlines the structure of the thesis. It begins with a review of mobilities research to contend that existing literature on mobile homes and in particular VW Campervan subcultures are limited. To provide context and to explain the researcher's position, a personal address on how VW Campervan ownership was the initial impetus of the development of the project, followed by a section to summarise the underlying theory and philosophy of its approach has been given. Theories highlighted include the New Mobilities Paradigm and Actor Network Theory (ANT), alongside a summary of methods and a resume of research objectives.

Chapter 2 Mobilities

This chapter is a literature review of contemporary mobility as a spatial and-temporal practice. The subsequent discussions underpin the empirical work and guide its direction. Divided into six respective themes, the first is an appraisal of the current field of mobilities research to consider the scope and frequency of modern travel as a precursor to more specific tourism analysis. This is followed by an acknowledgement of the 'Critical Turn' in tourism studies (Hannam, et al 2014) and the development of the 'New Mobilities Paradigm' (Sheller & Urry, 2006) as an underpinning theory where the corporeal, imaginative and embodied sensitivities of tourists are considered. Next, in the *Travellings* section the spaces of mobility are theorised not as metrics but as socialites. Thus the complexity of travel is explored not as a linear trajectory of distance and logistics but echoes Bakhtin's (1981,p.120) thesis that the road is a 'path of life' where mud, grit and tarmac are imbibed with hopes and fears, and where memories of the tourist unfold.

As much of this research is about road travel, a specific section is also devoted to the nature of *Velocities*. This includes some dissection of the Slow Travel Movement (Fullagar et al, 2012) that prompts further discussion about relationships with speed, stillness, friction, society and politics. This is followed by the development of

conceptualisations of touring in a mobile home, where the theory of Dwelling is considered to determine how travellers simulate 'homeliness' on the move and 'belonging' in movement. Finally, to address the specificities of the research topic and to redress the tendency for sociology to neglect the automobile (Hawkins, 1986), the *Automobility* section as a subsection of mobility theory briefly considers the significance of things like the movements, smells, hazards, noise and intrusions of cars and so on as a way of deciphering contemporary life on-the-move.

Chapter 3 Body and Machine

In this chapter, the significance of the body as a producer of knowledge is reviewed through the lexicon of the 'new mobilities paradigm'. By debating texts that converse with the material basis of societal processes through which the body speaks, this chapter argues that the travelling body is not dumb, but a 'thinking body' (Burkitt, 1999). To explore the body further as a sensory receptor of experience therefore, the chapter is divided into five parts. These include *Embodiment Theory*, *Corporeal Mobility*, *the Body and Tourism*, *the Body and the Machine* and *Actor Network Theory*. The first section introduces the concept of embodiment to recognise that the body is a vessel for knowledge production (Black, 2015). Using various presuppositions, the chapter looks at embodiment theory to support the idea that bodies are containers of experiences that can be traced through the analysis of cognitive and visceral data.

In the next section *Corporeal Mobility*, it is argued that contrary to the static, ocular-centric and often disembodied representations of tourism (Rakic & Chambers, 2012), movement mapped as a geography is also a kinaesthetic, embodied and sensory pursuit. As an analysis of social and spatial theory therefore, the entanglements of embodiments, technologies and materialities taking on different consistencies along the journeyscape are contemplated. The *Body and Tourism* section begins with the seminal work of Veijola and Jokinen (1994) who recognise that tourism study tends to 'follow the logic of the corpse' (Thrift, 2004, p.83). By introducing embodiment theory as a new frame of reference therefore, humans are central to the analysis. As also suggested by Lakoff and Johnson (1999), if movement inspires emotions, then tourists are able to narrate their experiences through 'embodied

knowledge'. Similarly, Obrador-Pons (2012) points out that tourism research has started to pay more attention to the body and its resultant emerging theories have been useful in underpinning this project.

The next section, *Body and Machine*, tackles how humans relate to technology by discussing the spheres of integration, co-operation and humans blending into cyborgs. With a gap in tourism theory that engages with the notion of the post-human condition therefore, a critique of the intellectual and cultural movement *Transhumanism* is used to debate the nature of technological enhancements of the body. In touching upon 'automotive emotions', Sheller (2004) is also used to invite consideration of the sociology of emotions and to reconsider the body not as separate, but an extension of the vehicle as metaphor, meaning and humanity. This is followed by a discussion about *Actor Network Theory* (Latour, 2005) as a model by which the 'material relationality' of human and non-human actors are considered. The discussion also engages with ANT as a way to demonstrate that as a theory contingent on emergent and mobile networks, it is a useful structure through which the making and knowing of not one, but many realities is possible.

Chapter 4 Methodology

The objective of this chapter is to explain the methodological philosophy and design of the research process. Having considered a range of possible approaches to empirical data collection, and given the socialities of the phenomena, a post-positivist approach to comprehending human experience is taken (See also Bryman 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Furthermore, as an inter-disciplinarian, an effort to cross the boundaries between the sciences and the arts is made explicit throughout. In terms of the chapter's structure, a number of methodological approaches are implemented. To explain these, the chapter engages in a critical discussion using interpretivism as a guiding philosophy; because this is a social study the relevance of an inductive process is borne out. In the second section the description and purpose of a crystallisation of methods namely, ethnography, auto-ethnography, visual methods, and mobile methodologies are critically considered. In using the ontological and epistemological logic of the interpretivist model, the aim is to comprehend VW campervan tourism not as a fixed idea, but one that is multiple and relative (Hudson

and Ozanne,1988).

As for the inductive nature of the study, as the discussion suggests using an exploratory approach, the theories would be arrived at by identifying patterns through observations in the field. Following on, using the metaphor of the crystal as a prism that casts light in different directions, a *crystallisation* of methods is used to maximise multiple ways of knowing by drawing together fragments of knowledge into a more consolidated whole. *Ethnography* is discussed for its appropriateness so the researcher could participate in the lives of the subjects to gain insights into the Volkswagen sub- culture. This section also introduces the research context and the different positions that researcher and participants take in the development of the data. Next in *Auto-ethnography* the virtues of this method as a tool to mine personal data is unpacked to acknowledge that the relationship between the researcher as a VW campervan owner and the vehicle are embodied. *Visual methods* are then discussed as relevant tools for data collection to take on board the value of multiple representations of the phenomena via film making, drawing, photography and video documentary. *Mobile methods* are discussed as a way to acknowledge the fact that the research subjects and researcher are on the move. This section therefore talks through its ethos to argue that mindfulness of the mobile context induces rich data otherwise not accessible. Finally, in *Ethics*, an effort to clarify the research process on moral grounds, explains the thought process towards transparency and appropriateness of conduct and approach towards the research groups, and compliance with academic research procedures.

Chapter 5 Velocity and Time

This chapter the first of three chapters is concerned with two ideas. The first is a critical discussion on the theory of velocity in relation to the 'slow' nature of a VW Campervan movement, whilst the second considers how time is perceived by tourists as they travel. By engaging in discussions about the politics of speed therefore, this empirical enquiry looks at how driving experiences are interpreted in terms of velocity and time and will assess how embodied affects shape tourist realities. To unpack these ideas further, Actor Network Theory is used to underpin an analysis by looking

at *Slow Travel, Multi-Trajectories of Movement and Mapping Velocities* in the form of vectors. These include: Forces, Elements, Frictions, Other Vehicles and Drivers. These are then analysed as affects that may appear at first glance to be a vehicle moving on a linear trajectory of a fixed velocity in MPH increments, but as is suggested it is also influenced by the variable speed affects of weather, gravity, speed of light, and acceleration and halt due to congestion, highway architecture etc. that determine the speed of mobile objects. In the second section, empirical evidence is deliberated on to consider how concepts of time are contingent on subjective and relative feelings of the participant. To address this, the chapter begins by conceptualising western notions of time and then uses the narratives of VW campervan owners as they experience their journeys; the 'feeling' of time as an embodied subjective experience is unpacked.

Chapter 6 Sensing the Automobile.

To explore the emotional geographies of VW campervan travel, this chapter is concerned with the interrelationships between vision, sound and emotion. To do this the discussion focuses on five areas that have emerged from the fieldwork. These include: the *Tourist Gaze*, *the Travel Glance*, *Embodied Noise*, *Emotional Gaze* and *Anthropomorphic Vision*. By developing theories complicit with the mobility turn (Sheller & Urry, 2006) and the *New Mobilities Paradigm*, this chapter considers how the VW campervan connects the traveller with their mode of transport as an attached union. This debate initially surfaced from fieldwork as it was discovered that whilst owners used the VW campervan as practical tourism transport, it also represented home as well as being identified as a family member, friend or companion. This led to the question of whether emotions felt towards the vehicle as a significant other impacted on the tourist experience. So the impact on the tourist gaze by owners' feelings for their vans is in this case debated. To interrogate this proposition further, the theory of the tourist gaze is used to contextualize how sight can inform leisure mobility. This idea is then developed further in the *Travel Glance* to debate the notion of the cinematic gaze as tourists view moving images. By briefly looking at the history of sightseeing through travel with some analysis of films associated with 'the road trip' genre, the influence of romantic narratives on the experience of driving are contemplated.

In the section entitled *Noise*, some empirical exploration of VW Campervan owners' relationships with their engine sounds as not simply mechanical consequences, but as part of an embodied experience is made. This is contextualised with a number of theories that consider the sonic properties of the automobile. Moving from the auditory to the emotive, in the *Emotional Gaze* the transformative possibilities of van attachment and how the tourist landscape may be conceived through this lens is given attention. Here I draw upon theories around the sociology of emotions to include a brief account of Fischer's (2004) discussion on the chemistry of love, to argue that humans often use a 'soft focus' lens through which to see the world when with the significant other, or in this case the vehicle. The final section *Anthropomorphic Vision* looks at the way people are able to attribute human qualities to non-human agencies. In a review of the theories around this social behaviour, it is used to consider how VW campervan owners humanise their vehicles and in doing so arguably experience their journeys differently than if they, for example, used public transport. This proposition leads to a further debate about whether appreciations of visual aspects of their journeys are elevated as a result.

Chapter 7 Home and Away

This chapter critically considers the dichotomy between home and away in a VW campervan. To understand the social practices at festivals a number of themes are interrogated to include: *Home and Tourism*, *Dwelling in Home on the Move*, *Emotion in Motion* and *Being Together Apart*. To give the project a context, the conversation begins with a theoretical account of the concept of home and unpacks the idea that as VW Campervan owners take their homely practices on the road, they dwell in motion. As 'Homeliness' is replicated on holiday, then tourism as an escape from the everyday is contested. In the *Home and Tourism* section, traditional notions of home as fixity is considered as a Western ideal. This is followed by brief analysis of how home is then conceived once in motion given this displacement. In the *Dwelling* section, as tourism is often conceived as unhomely and adventurous (Obrador-Pons, 2012), empirical evidence is explored for its confirmations and contradictions on this point. Also the notion of belonging yet on the move is unpacked as tourists were found to create home not only materially but cognitively and emotionally. The link between home and identity is also touched upon in

recognition that VW campervans are often styled in line with their owner's sense of taste and personal vision. The discussion *Emotion In Motion* looks beyond taste and domestic ritual to consider in more detail how feelings for the VW campervan can shape tourist practice. This idea is advanced further to consider home not only as a materiality but also as an imaginary to do with culture, class, gender etc. Finally *Being Together Apart* explores an assertion that people travel to be together as they desire to join with imagined collective agency where harmonious socialities can unfold. As the data confirmed however, being together is dichotomous in nature. The discussion therefore unpacks how the mobile suburb where VW Campervan owners retreat is also a place of tensions, hierarchies and differences.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

The concluding chapter summarises the key findings and explicitly answers the project's research questions. The conclusion provides a series of reflections and limitations on the process and the practice of assembling the project. The conclusion also takes the opportunity to detail the contributions to knowledge in accordance with the previous discussions.

1.3 Chapter Summary

Having previously discussed the structure of the chapters, in this section structure of the thesis is clarified. By outlining the content of the main priorities it intends to give an indication of what will be discussed. Following this in chapter two, the literature review is divided into two sections, *Mobilities* followed by the *Body and Machine* as a contextualisation of the mobile, static and embodied nature of VW campervan movements.

2. CHAPTER TWO – MOBILITIES

2.1 Introduction

By considering the seminal and current texts in mobilities research, this chapter will address a gap in the understanding of tourism transport as a spatial-temporal practice. The concept of mobilities in this account pertains not only to the large scale movements of people, objects, capital and information but also local processes such as daily transport and the movement of material things in everyday life (Hannam et al, 2006). In the past decade what was viewed as an accidental by-product of processes happening in places, mobility is now explored by the social sciences as a dimension in the shaping and practicing of societies, cultures, places and landscapes (Urry, 2000a, Cresswell, 2006, 2010). It is pertinent to note that whilst social science has largely ignored or trivialised the importance of the systematic movements of people for work and family life, through the new mobilities paradigm this discussion has been able to towards “critical mobilities” (Soderstrom et al. 2013) in how tourist bodies and information, combine into patterns of movement. Having developed from the ‘mobilities turn’ in tourism studies (Hannam et al, 2006) and initially adopted in anthropological, cultural geography, migration studies, emergent now in tourism studies, the phenomenon of VW campervan tourism can be seen through a number of conceptual lenses on tourists experience what it is like to ‘dwell’ in motion. To explore the human experience of mobility as an embodied experience therefore, this discussion draws from critical tourism and explores the following six themes: *Mobilities theory*, the *New Mobilities Paradigm*, *Travellings* with a particular interest in *Velocity and Time*, *Dwelling* in motion and finally *Automobility* as a logical precursor to the second literature review that speaks of relations between tourists and their transport as ‘hybridic’ forms.

As Cresswell (2014) notes in a recent progress report on conceptualisations of mobility, that Larson, Adey, Bissell and Fuller (2010), and Hannam et al (2006) amongst others whilst contributing to the rationalist paradigm of transport geography, have also engaged in dialogues about the social constituents of travel. In other words, as Deleuze and Guattari (1988) also suggested, everyday car travel is an assemblage

of bodies, materials, objects, ideas, affects and emotions to manifest in the practice of driving. Tourism mobility therefore in this study is not seen just as a flat geography, but is understood instead as a complex matrix of things moving around. The '*New mobilities paradigm*' (Sheller & Urry, 2006) is a way to theorise mobilities not only as a "system" of automobility (Urry, 2004), but to also consider the sensitivities of travellers. According to (Hannam et al, 2014) whilst tourism research has considered relationships with transport previously, the '*New Mobilities Paradigm*' can provide a theoretical basis for which distance can be thought of not only as measurements of space and time, but also as assemblages of multiple distances contingent upon social connections between corporeal, objects, imaginative and communicative travel (Urry, 2004).

In the next section, *Travellings*, the journey from A to B will be unpacked as a trajectory of fast and slow mobilities. This discussion will contextualise travel both as observable linear movements and as a cosmology of motion affects. In relation to the empirical aspect of this research, an interest is taken in velocity and time due to the 'slow' nature of the VW campervan. This in turn has prompted interest in the *Slow Travel Movement*, as theorisations developed by Fullagar et al (2012) and Cresswell (2012, p 645) in his exploration of what he describes as a blossoming arena of research where the world of the 'passenger' in waiting, stillness and stuckness are relevant. The debates of Bissell and Fuller (2010) in '*Stillness in a Mobile World*' are also reviewed in terms of how they make visible the human experiences of immobilities and moorings. In the *Dwelling* section, the paradoxical distinctions between home and away are explored as travel can be inhabited as if at home. This draws attention to the often static nature of home and how this can be experienced in mobility. Then, finally drawing from Featherstone (2004) and Merriman (2004) amongst others, *Automobility* as a dominant form is discussed in terms of its impacts on the geographies and discourses on the social and cultural landscape.

2.2 Mobilities Field

This chapter reveals a broad understanding of mobilities theory to underpin the empirical dimension of the project. As Sheller and Urry (2006, p. 207) contended that the world is 'on the move' in ways once unimaginable; as asylum seekers, international students, terrorists, members of diasporas, holidaymakers, business

people, sports stars, refugees, backpackers and many others fill the world's airports, buses, ships, and trains. The central message here therefore is that tourism's prospects given the rapid growth in the late 20th century (up from 25 million in 1950 to 808 million in 2005, and forecasted to reach 1 billion by 2010 and 1.6 billion by 2020 (World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2006), confers a priority to adopt theories that that respond to people's ability to travel further and with greater frequency than ever before. So whilst as Casson (1984, p 12) notes even in ancient times, new tools such as foot coverings, skis, and snowshoes lengthened the distances that could be travelled and so on, whilst all developments of human transport have their place, for the purpose of this contemporary study, the history of transport however will not be dwelt upon in its entirety, but notes instead from the springboard of technological innovation that has been instrumental in the steady, yet arguably pervasive augmentation of new realities of a more mobile society. Such advances in technology evoked by the industrial revolution and beyond, have allowed people to travel farther, explore global territories, and expand their influence over larger and larger areas.

As a current debate however, the chapter need not elaborate on this extensive transport history per se, but seeks to acknowledge its relevance as a precursor to the ongoing discussions within broader mobilities research as a 21st century phenomenon. As brief context, Franklin (2014, p 76) has recently taken stock of how European mobilities from the mid-nineteenth century up to the 1950's has been built mainly from the technical expansion of steam technologies towards a nationally focussed society. He also recalls in the 1960's that travel was no longer contained in national borders which led to the birth of globalisation through international 'mass' tourism as it is known today. With realisation that travel and tourism is a development project of continuous growth, in the 2000's it would appear that people have unprecedented access to the means by which to cross distances. With exponential expansion of these affordances of travel therefore, academics have taken the opportunity to embrace the situated nature of these socialities to do with tourism expansion.

Acknowledging theoretical perspectives however in what would be deemed a period of globalization, the unchallenged basic assumptions of tourism proved to be epistemological obstacles. In fact as far as into the 1990s tourism was understood as

discrete, enumerated occurrences of travel, arrival, activity, purchase, departure (Franklin and Crang 2001, p. 6). Tourists seemed passive consumers and subjects of the tourism industry. This left tourism as characterized by dichotomies whose guiding distinctions were binary opposites of economic vs. noneconomic, production vs. consumption, global vs. local and also home vs. away, everyday vs. holiday, host vs. guest, domestic vs. international and so on (Cohen and Cohen, 2012). Thus within cultural, spatial and postcolonial turns, tourism research has turned towards questions of knowledge, meaning and representation, of the senses and the body, and of the active production of places, imaginations and experiences through tourist performances and embodiments (Frank,2016).

For the benefit of this account, as current literature suggests, the nature of mobilities can be understood as the flows of people and things along with the immaterial networks of information that support them. This way of describing mobilities i.e beyond the narratives of transport study, infrastructure or migration, is however relatively new. Indeed, despite driving being an important social, cultural and spatial practice it has not been unusual for academics to broach the subject as a solitary, desensitized and somewhat dislocated activity (Merriman, 2004). As Dival, (2014) also confirms, the language of the terms have shifted from a physical dialogue about transport to the more conceptual and thematic developments from the 1990's upwards. Shaw and Docherty (2014) also note that due to the positivist nature of 'Geography and Transport' studies as a spatial science, whilst previously impervious to broader interdisciplinary narratives it has now lowered its drawbridge to integrate new ways of considering movement. So, developments in mobilities research is not only to do methodological enlightenments expanding the field, but also because the increased manoeuvrability of societies (mainly in the west) has prompted the social sciences to explore mobilities as an admissible social fact. It could be said that with cheaper transport, technological advancement of communications, space tourism soon to be in orbit and over two billion cars projected worldwide by 2030, the pace, intensity and velocity of travel through which social lives are designed is in perpetual motion and accelerating. In light of what appears to be a hyper-mobile world on an unstoppable trajectory, the chapter reviews the debates over the last decade that have tried to 'get to grips' with this apparent restlessness.

To capture the current status of mobilities research and to underpin the primary research in this thesis, the most recent debates by Adey, Bissell, Hannam, Merriman and Sheller (2014) are key. As considered cutting-edge research, they have explored the concerns through what is identified as the 'mobilities turn' in tourism studies (Hannam *et al*, 2006). In order to label the somewhat abstract and at times chaotic world of things moving around, the philosophical proposition of the 'turn' is used to see beyond the tracing of the networks to closely inspect how people interact with technologies, places and each other. It is also proposed that whilst mobilities research does not fit clearly into simple and distinct categorisations, i.e. deriving from the tenets of the humanities and social sciences such as sociology and geography, a more reflexive approach to understanding the movement of people is underway. Looking at mobility through issues of identity, difference, the body, gender, post- structural theories of language and subjectivities has led to feminist approaches for example to contest the taken for granted binaries of 'home and away' in migration studies (Ahmed *et al*, 2003), and Uteng and Cresswell (2008) in their critical exploration of transport systems consider not just perfunctory modes of mobility, but also male commuting patterns. In his paper 'driving while black' Gilroy (2001) also looks at mobility in relation to race. Even in Environmental Studies and Criminology, mobilities research has considered the 'circulations' of security and population controls to understand them not only as systemic but human issues.(Aas *et al*, 2008)

As Ateljevic, Morgan and Prichard (2007, p1) point out, the expansion of the ways in which analysis can be conducted has spurred a rethink of the practices of the social sciences in how knowledge is produced. By putting the analysis of 'humanness' at the heart of the study of mobilities therefore as posited in the *Critical Turn in Tourism Studies* (2007) and scholarly activity based around the *New Mobilities Paradigm* in this next section the review looks at positivist dichotomies between 'fact and value' (Best and Kellner ,1997, p,223) as recited by Tribe (2005) are contested. As developed in the 'Critical Turn', mobilities academics have been able to engage across disciplines of history, anthropology, cultural studies and communications, making working in diverse fields less problematic due to an open approach. This is not to suggest that mobilities research does not have a home to go to, but, as Merriman (2016) suggests,

making an argument to gain a foothold as an interdisciplinary practice where understandings of the social are reflexively sought is a challenge.

As mobilities establishes itself as school of thought in its own right collaboration of the social sciences is possible with historically quantitative fields such as *Transport Studies* with Mom (2015) for example being one of a number of scholars who interfaces between mobility history and sociologically inspired studies of contemporary mobility (Mom, 2015; Divall, 2015). As also noted by Adey (2010), Bissell (2009), and Hannam et al 2014, p 5) cross disciplinary commentaries in special editions in the *Journal of Transport History* alongside others are expanding, which if nothing else demonstrates that dissemination of mobilities discussions are on the rise. With the emergence of academic networks that support mobilities research as a standalone activity, global networks have also emerged to galvanise it as a discipline. This is evidenced through developments in the Cosmobilities Research network in Europe, Centre for Mobilities and Urban studies at Aalborg University and Centre for Mobilities Research at Lancaster University with John Urry's ground-breaking work on Tourism that set out to position mobility centre stage in the social sciences (Urry, 1995). Another important milestone was the founding of the journal *Mobilities* in 2005, with the first edition available in 2006 with *Mobile Culture Studies* and *Applied Mobilities* launched in 2016. As Sheller (2014) points out the presence of mobility, especially in geography as a stream of mobilities related papers presented at the AAG (2012) alongside fervent profiling in *Progress in Human Geography* (Cresswell 2011, 2012, 2014; Merriman 2016) is perhaps confirmation that the sociology of mobilities is on the rise. So, with all manner of mobilities research underway, this study is one of a number to adopt a philosophy that uses a sociological approach to understand the phenomena. This means that tourists in this project are not presented as voiceless entities, but as valued interpreters of their own experiences. This approach is already echoed in the work of Vaninni (2009) on ferries, Wong (2006) on the rickshaw, Lorimer and Lund (2003) on walking, Spinney (2009) in an empirical study about cycling and embodiment and Adey (2008) in his commentaries on the experience of flight. With less reliance of physicalist accounts of velocity and distance (i.e moving from A-B) the discussion will look at mobility as an assemblage of material and immaterial frictions in which emotions and imaginaries form influential parts alongside the more visible

attributes such as weather conditions, other vehicles, road architecture, highway police and so on.

With many factors to consider, as Adey (2010) points out, mobilities are essential to a wide range of social processes so appear limitless in scope. A central feature of all things mobile however is the question of *speed* as a determinant of the travel experience. This is a particularly important issue here because VW campervans are slow thus contest the idea that fast movement and efficiency is unquestionably, 'good' for society above all else. As Shaviro (2015) reminds us, the fast, productive drives of 'accelerationism' are normally equated with progress. As discussed in more detail (Bissell and Fuller, 2011) remind us that space is 'enturbulated' so anything that moves at a reduced pace is 'in the way' of systems designed for speedy transitions. Other systems intending to speed things up ironically often slow things down as they regulate temporalities. Time-zones (see Gottdiener, 2001 on jetlag) and train time tables (Schivelbusch, 1979) amidst an array of other travel management procedures and architecture strive to keep travellers on the beaten track; that as Birtchnell and Buscher, (2011) explain in their essays on disrupted mobilities, pre-ordained routes allow movement but only as restricted geographies.

The point is that whilst the idea that "Freedom of mobility" links to notions of freedom (Freudendal-Pederson, 2009) it is questionable when unequal exercises of mobility, dwelling and place-making occur. Just to add to the complexity, it is not only the physical world that is being mediated by corporate and public systems of economy and control, but also technological mobilities or as Geels and Smith term 'hopeful monstrosities' (2000, 879-880). The calculations of background technologies that choreograph movement are perceived as ungrounded yet are underpinned by infrastructures and 'hardware' that enable space and distance to be flattened. As Wiley and Packer (2010) also mention in their interrogations of the securitization of automobility from a Foucauldian perspective, security and surveillance also add to both mobilities and the immobilities of the traveller.

This section has summarised the development of mobilities research and highlighted some of the areas of interest. Whilst there are no doubt omissions due to the extent of the literature emerging in tourism, geography and cultural studies, I have

tried to draw from the most relevant work. The next section will now discuss the *New Mobilities Paradigm* as a critical philosophy to conceptualise movement in a multi-scalar way.

2.3 New Mobilities Paradigm

As noted in the introduction, the 'new mobilities paradigm' is a framework that has emerged in the last decade as a way of understanding better, the unstable and ever-changing interrelations between humans, technology and nature as modern societies become more mobile. As Urry (2007) also contends, it is a discursive framework by which travel can be defined as socially intermittent and intersecting set of entanglements between people, objects and images across physical space. This theory is important to this study as it acknowledges a number of contemporary issues in tourism debate and in particular, those that relate to the unpacking of VW campervan tourism as a practice of travel that is complex, emotive and not in this case described as only about movement on a linear trajectory. In other words, the theoretical approach, whilst not a one stop shop, was formed out of several significant shifts, methodological developments and novel research questions (Sheller and Urry, 2006). It has been a very useful tool that has enabled the acknowledgement of this multi-scalar approach to looking at human movement that has given rise to new forms of inquiry that go beyond the 'environmental' critique of travel (also see, Hollinshead, 2007; Phillimore & Goodson, 2004; Tribe, 2005). (Urry and Larson, 2011). Furthermore, as a contest to the sedentarist theories present in many studies in geography, anthropology, and sociology therefore, as Sheller & Urry (2006. P.210) point out, the notion of sedentarism is treat as normal stability, meaning, and place, whilst mobility is viewed as abnormal to do with distance, change, and placelessness, hence this study has endeavoured to embrace contemporary theory as the shift from modernity seen as heavy and solid to one to a is light and liquid mobile condition in which the speed of movement of people, money, images, and information is paramount (Bauman,2000).

In other words tourism was once seen as an essentially spatial phenomenon but has been re-framed to encompass 'circulating entities' (Latour 1987, 1993, 1999) with the physical transfer of objects, alongside virtual, imaginative and

communicative travel. By deploying a method that abandons essentialist understandings of mobility, Hannam et al (2006) proposed that movement cannot be explained purely by an analysis of territorially fixed societies, but also through imagined and real movements across different space-time arrangements. So, whilst tourism and transport studies previously focussed on physical movement, its social dimension would include a dialogue about the culture of mobility which Thrift (1994, p.65) outlines, in terms of mobility, as a 'particular structure of feeling'.

To explore these distinctions further, five interdependent 'mobilities' are highlighted as the key producers of social life. These characteristics being corporeal, physical, imaginative, virtual and communicative travel. To explain the terms, *corporeality* refers to the movement of bodies within social networks that rely on different mobilities to maintain them. As posited by Larsen (2008a) in a discussion on another sub-development of the 'turns' (the 'performance turn') in tourism studies, research has been redirected to enforce the ontologies not just of looking, but of *acting and doing*. He also maintains that the corporeality of tourist bodies as material, multi-sensuous affordances of places are so often reduced to 'travelling eyes' and dematerialized 'imagescapes'. With a methodological shift of attention towards embodied, multi-sensuous, collaborative and technologized *enactments*, the body can be the central focus of mobility understandings. This proposition is also supported by Urry (2007, p.48) who suggests as bodies move through the sensescapes of travel for work, family life, migration and leisure they are lumpy, fragile, gendered and racialized bodies that are non-neutral containers of thoughts, feelings and dreams.

Another feature of the paradigm is the physical nature of travel expressed through souvenirs, letters, gifts, clothes and consumables moving across the globe. It is suggested that as the material cultures of objects interface and embody movement, they stimulate both the necessity and desire to travel. As Lury (1997) also adds the 'cosmopolitanization' of taste puts diverse commodities and 'travelling objects' into motion. These can be powerful because they can embody cultural and political meanings. Then *Imaginative* travel is also critical to how place can be experienced. As advertising exposes the tourist to 'dreamy' images of people and places, they can be transported *elsewhere* with an anticipation of the 'atmosphere of

a place'. Yet the fictionalised fantasy of 'somewhere' also has the potential to shape the actual destination, contesting the binaries of thought and materiality as polar opposites.

Also as proximity is substituted by representation, imagined geographies can also be about divisions between self and other, (Gregory, 2009; Driver, 2005). This argument harks back to the analysis of the geographies of place by Said, (1977) who in his critical essays on the position of the privileged gaze of European and American authors, argued that representations of people and place are 'non-innocent'. This substantiates a further point that a sense of place can be made through depictions of differences between the tourist and toured, thus 'place' whether imagined or real is constructed through power relations. Mindful of this, the inclusion of imaginative travel as part of current mobility debate expands on mobility theory beyond the spatial and institutional moorings of what Harvey (1989) calls a 'spatial fix', towards an understanding of the fluctuating mobility of imagined places (Coleman and Crang, 2002, Cresswell, 2006).

Another mobility highlighted as an important part of the paradigm is the instantaneous world of *virtual travel*. As Benedikt (1991:9) points out digital socialities can result in 'dematerialising the medium and conquering.....space and time'. Urry (2000a) also adds that virtual travel produces a strange and uncanny life on the screen in what he calls a 'co-presence' of near, far, presence and absence. This creates the effect of individuals leaving traces of themselves in informational space, arguably existing surreptitiously beyond their bodies, (see also Sheller and Urry, 2000). As Adam, (1990) and Giddens, (1990) also pointed out, it is commonplace in social and cultural geography to argue that time and space are always interlinked—changes in space provoke changes in time, and vice versa; the way web 2.0 is used to defy time and space is an exemplar of this. Without unpacking the substantive literature of Virtual Reality (VR) and tourism but alluding to it, as individuals' sense of 'being there' in virtual space, or how the feeling of being together in a fictional realm as tourists engage with 'space adjusting' technologies, it is suggested (Green, 2002) that social relations have arguably shifted from durable co-present interactions to fragmented, disjointed spatial and temporal connections.

The final idea links to the technological advancements of *communications* at a local and international level. Here the paradigm acknowledges how systems operate on multi-scalar levels to shape society. From the most basic forms such as letters, postcards, telegrams and the telephone in tandem with recent interventions such as texting, mobile devices and the internet, it is arguable that such developments have combined to foster what Wellman (2001) terms as a kind of virtual ‘telepresence’. In accounting for the diverse and intersecting ways that communications have developed to produce tourism, some consideration of human and computerized interactions as they enmesh together to move knowledge, people and resources around are additions to the current debate.

With the foundations laid for new ways of thinking, Merriman (2016, p. 5) points out that despite the ‘turns’ and ‘paradigms’ that could lead to academics overstating the impact of their work Sheller and Urry (2006, p. 210) do not insist that the New Mobilities Paradigm is a “grand narrative” a totalising description of the contemporary world, but contend it is a system by which the social ‘politics’ of mobility are given account. With a growing interest in mobilities, a set of questions theories, and methodologies seeking to explain the dense ecology of sociality’s inherent in travel and tourism engagements have emerged.

2.4 Travelling

This section looks at the phenomena of travelling to consider the ways spaces of mobility have been theorised in current literature. As Merriman (2014) points out, the study of tourism has been joined by cultural geographers, anthropologists and historians who have taken an interest in how people ascribe meanings to travel. In light of this, the A-to-B is discussed in terms of different velocities that not only shape the relationship between transport and its environment, but also how it configures as a social and cultural experience. To begin with Bakhtin (1981, p.120) famously argued that the road is a chronotype, a ‘time space’; a ‘path of life’ upon which personal stories are plotted, travelling as a trek through the substances of mud, grit, tarmac, water and so on but can also involve the hope, fears, memories and emotions. As Urry (2002) pointed out even before the formal recognition of the ‘new mobilities’ paradigm, social life involves striking combinations of proximity and distance as intersecting forms of

physical, object, imaginative and virtual mobility that contingently link people in patterns of obligation, desire and commitment. In recognising that the question of mobility is not just about spatial science, but also, as Doel, (1996, p.421) and also Merriman, (2011) describes it, is a 'scrumbled geography' of non-linear topological practices, the discussion moves towards a geography that involves the narratives of the 'feelings' tourists experience as they tour.

From this perspective 'mobility' is argued not as allotted time where 'nothing happens' but instead, a kinaesthetic pleasure. Edensor's (2003) empirical study of motorway driving explores the popular and academic view that routine driving signifies contemporary alienation in a serial "non-space". By refuting the somewhat dystopian view that everyday driving is liminal and meaningless, Edensor (2003) recounts his experience of driving as an enjoyable spatial temporal routine. With reference to Halprin (1996, p. 37) even as far back as 1966, who also recognised the potential beauty in the motorway, he suggested that, " At their best, these great ribbons of concrete, swirling through the land, give us excitement of an environmental dance, where man can be in motion in his landscape theatre".

This arguably romantic idea that travel is not an unavoidable transition to overcome the 'friction of distance' (O'Regan (2012) In Fullagar et al (P,129) instead is contemplated in this thesis as an important and potentially meaningful part of the experience. This counter view also disagrees with Lefebvre (1991) who complained the driver is only concerned with destinations moved through as 'abstract space' as with Marc Augé's (1995) assertion that motorways are un-stimulating and de-socialized "non-places", a poetic (perhaps) reflection on his feelings of blankness, forgetting and ubiquity. Sennett (1994, p 15) also lamented that roadspace is "a mere function of motion," and that car travel en-genders a "tactile sterility" where pacified driving bodies experience swift transit without arousal, needing only to react to "micro-movements." Whilst Cubitt (2001, p. 62) also captured Virilio's dysfunctional car driver thesis to argue that passengers were isolated from the world, "transforming bodies into pure trajectory." He also said motorways are "the scene of picnolepsia in the suspended consciousness of driving on auto-pilot", the car is "a device for immobilisation and subjection."

Although these critical theorists have captured road travel as a disembodied movement, where identity and belonging of the tourist plays no part, Edensor amongst others has highlighted incongruities in the 'non place' theory. Sheller and Urry (2000) for example contend that automobility is as a "complex amalgam of interlocking machines, social practices and ways of dwelling,". By describing them as a "machinic complex" or "hybrid assemblage" of spaces, objects, and signs (,Sheller and Urry, 2000, pp.738-739) they contest the idea that life is on hold until the destination is reached as many passengers purport to be entertained by the process. Indeed (Cresswell, 2010, p18) also adds that travelling is not 'dead time' but full of life. This supposition also alludes to an idea that travellers as producers of meaningful social spaces are in the so called 'in-between' (Turner,2007, p. 95). As Halsall (1992), Gunn (1994), Butler (1997), and Cooper et al. (1998) argued, tourists often see the journey as a necessary evil for reaching the desired destination, Adey (2010) on the other hand suggests that humans also attribute 'meanings' to their journey, as do Gilroy(1993) and Clifford (1997) who both propose that travellers find belonging not in 'roots' but 'routes'.

It is also useful to note that Edensor (2003,p,153) concludes that automobility rather than 'impoverishing' the senses is a sensuous experience. He also argues that it is the act of 'becoming' that foregrounds an affective and sensual experience of place and its analysis should focus on the flow of experience rather than assuming it is desensitized. In other words contrary to the impression that driving on highways is a banal compulsion to 'get somewhere', the experience of roads is susceptible to intrusions of fantasies, random thoughts, peculiar events and uncanny sentiments. In accounting for the less visible affects of travelling, the seemingly featureless road is potentially shaped by arrangements of affects significant to the traveller at any given moment. Also according to Urry (2000a, p.49) there is now a 'developing sociology of personal mobility' whereby travel is understood as an embodied movement of individual pursuits. As Thrift (1994) and Schivelbusch (1979, p:63) also adds, being mobile offers particular ways of 'seeing' the world, dependant on the physical and the subjective experiences of the tourist. In other words the bodily adoption of movement can shape how the 'lived' journey can be perceived, Edensor (2003) also adds that motorways have their own aesthetic qualities and values. In other words they may traditionally be thought of as linear and mundane, he suggests that they are a skein of interesting features to include overlapping signs, markers, and monuments

alongside the sometimes undernoted flourishes of wildlife, planes, rivers, telephone wires and insects. Merriman (2004) also maintains that motoring is about looking at and being in the landscape as an embodied experience, thus the disposition of the vehicle and its driver control the velocity and tempo to shape the relationship with the landscape. As Trauer & Ryan (2005) also suggest, road travel can also be about 'intimacy', or 'Escapism' (Gilbert and Abdullah, 2004) anonymity (Sager, 2006, Sheller & Urry, 2000, White and White, 2004), and personalised feelings.

Pointedly, appreciation of landscape is more possible when scenes are not fleeting. Therefore the speed in which things travel can also shape the experience of place. Larson (2001) likened this to a 'cinematic' experience as the travel glance looks at moving images, whilst the body is a corporally immobile seated spectator. It has been argued however that as a downside to being 'secure' in travel, it can also 'desensualise' the traveller and that absence of worry 'insulates' passengers from the chaotic world leaving them staring through the window from a "enclavic touristscape" (Edensor, 2007, p. 208).

This part of the discussion has considered some of the theoretical conceptualisations of the A-B to suggest that the experience of the road is not fixed but subject to interpretation. As Merriman (2011) points out, the travel trajectory is an unfolding of affects, atmospheres, texts, materials rhythms and velocities. So the motorway as an example is not only a flat and measurable phenomenon, but is also part of the social construction of cultural meanings and values, escape, rites of passage, necessity and leisure as tourists move around (Edensor, 2003). The next stage of this analysis therefore, given the idea that travel can be embodied in different ways, leads into a discussion about speed as a determinant of how tourist spaces are experienced.

2.5 The Velocities of Travel

Having considered theories that focus on the social aspect of travel, this section will contextualise its pace. As Cresswell (2006,p.6) points out movement 'carries with it the burden of meaning.' and in a typical story of modernity speed is often associated with positive values of 'freedom' and 'progress', whilst slowness is marginalised or undesirable (Molz, 2009). Speed is also described by Featherstone (2004, p. 15) as the 'mechanical soul of modernity' where constant acceleration is conceived as a normal by-product of technological progress. Tomlinson (2007, p.53) also reminds us that 'speeding up' is associated with eighteenth century enlightenment philosophies around values of order and efficiency that are linked with emancipation, exhilaration and creativity. Futurist Marinetti cited in Platt (2000) for example in a celebration of speed said that in 1908, that petroleum based cars can attain 'the beauty of speed' (in Platt, 2000) and as Ballard (1994, p.16) poetically surmised, drivers live in a 'huge metalized dream' dependant on a sense of speed, drama and aggression (cited in Wollen, 2002, p.16). In alluding to a preference of speed over the 'slow' in contemporary society, these observations suggest car culture appears to be about 'high speed' attainment. Car chases, racing competitions to break the 'speed limit' etc. as 'daring drivers' are ubiquitous and represent a sense of invincibility despite car crashes and 'accidents' being very common in drive culture (Faith, 1997).

Critics of acceleration conversely disagree that faster paced mobility is 'good' for society. In considering the discourses of speed further, academics have more recently considered the significances of 'slowness' (Bergman & Sager, 2008), 'stillness' (Bissell and Fuller, 2010) 'moorings' (Hannam et al, 2006) and immobilities (Cresswell, 2010). In recognising the temporal dimension of travel, the subjective experience of pace is one of the considerations in an analysis of the socialities of movement. The temporalities of travel are exemplified by a range of studies including Johnson (2010) and Elstrud (1998) in her dealings with how backpackers 'go with the flow' or more currently Vannini (2002) in his critical commentary of the act of waiting at train stations and airports or O'Dell's (2007) analysis of the kinaesthetic slowness of spa tourism. In considering the meanings of speed as tourists associate liberty and cosmopolitanism with fast mobility, i.e getting to the destination quickly as the main criterion, tourists with different aspirations who choose to travel more slowly do so

against the dominant temporality. In light of this, the next section will consider the relationship between mobility and modernity as the social politics of velocity is particularly relevant to the study of VW campervan tourism; as it is about 'slowing-down'.

2.6 Slow Travel

According to Dickinson and Lumsdon (2010) travelling at a slow pace and engaging with places along the way is by no means an innovation. Indeed prior to widespread car travel much of tourism was slow. Travel on foot, horse, stagecoach and transport of the sea led to limited speeds and transgression of distance. It also has antecedents in the Grand Tour, a time when travel prior to the advent of the train and automobile, was by nature, slow (Towner, 2002). Yet the prefix 'slow' is now being added to a variety of sectors, phenomena or industries (Fullagar et al, 2012). As theorized by Howard (2012) 'slow travellers' from a 'fast world' have chosen to control the rhythm of their lives and in doing so subvert the dominant 'cult of speed'. In other words the goals of the slow are seen as in pursuit of something different as an alternative to the dominant ideology of a quicker pace. Therefore as modern travel is contingent on variable speeds, making sense of the pace of tourism transport within the context of culture and society is in order.

This part of the chapter therefore begins by considering the ideological values associated with fastness, slowness and stillness. As Dickinson (2008) reminds us, slow travel has been discussed in a range of academic contexts but is increasingly associated with slow tourism, slow mobility and soft mobility as a form of low carbon travel (Hall, 2007). In a Mintel report (2009, p6) the notion of slow travel was noted as having values not previously highlighted as a way for the 'rediscovery of the pleasure of the journey...in an era of commoditized air travel.' As also forecasted by Euromonitor International's (2007) report, slow travel was projected to grow at around 10% per annum in western Europe during the next five years. Based on an evaluation of international data and supplier feedback, it was concluded it would become "a significant alternative to 'sun and sea' and cultural tourism" (Euromonitor International, 2007, p. 15). In current literature whilst there is a sense that tourism operates in a 'business as usual' fashion, there is according to (Paul, 2014) there has been a shift

towards a slow philosophy to suggest that the philosophy of the Slow Food Movement has expanded further into several directions: Slow Travel and Tourism and slow money to name but a few. Therefore whilst the embedding of the 'slow' in common practices is slow, it is ongoing.

The idea of 'slowness' also embodies the importance of the travel experience to and within a destination, as patrimony and culture at a slower pace supports the environment (Dickinson, 2008). Peters (2006, p1) also takes forward the idea that time spent travelling should not be about time saving, proposing instead that '*travel takes time and makes time.*' With the sociability of travel emerging as a critical context, Urry (2000, 2007) also adds that even something as simple as travelling to commune with others also engages in the slow travel itineraries as people stop, socialise and inhabit places (Dickinson, 2008). Mindful that 'slow' movement is ideologically in opposition to the accelerated pace of modernity, de-accelerated travel is therefore an antithesis to the idea of 'fast' being the 'official' speed of the modern world. Molz (2009, p.271) recently contended, "Certain values come to be associated with stillness, slowness and speed" and such values do not always have positive outcomes. Ritzer (1993) also used a critique of fast food for example to debate the symbolic feature of rationality and predictability to much malign the efficiency of speed as a condition of modernity.

In a world where speed appears to be of the essence, it is initiatives such as the 'Slow Travel Movement' (STM) that have grown out of a subsequent need to challenge the possible downsides to accelerating cultures. In other words "Slow Travel" describes a form of holidaymaking that is different from mainstream contemporary tourism, at least in the context of the affluent world (Dickinson & Lumsdon, 2010). In essence it is about slowing down, travelling shorter distances and enriching the travel experience both *en-route* to and at the destination. According to Fullagar *et al* (2012) the STM is constituted by a global community who recognize that values to do with stillness and slowness involve a moral or ethical philosophy of how things move. These are defined by Peters (2006) as the three pillars of slow travel i.e doing things at the right speed, changing attitudes towards time and then seeking quality of experience over quantity. Pauline Kenny (slowtravel.com, 2007) also remarks how staying in one place for extended time and exploring the locality, is an example of slow tourism. In other words living in as opposed to 'staying' at a location

as more sensitive to the place visited. Gardener (2009), author of the *Slow Travel Manifesto*, also points out that 'modernity comes at a cost', suggesting if tourists acted upon the moral imperative to reduce their speed, then 'responsible' forms of tourism could grow as a consequence.

The 'Slow' agenda also extends to other forms of mobility such as money, cities, food and the media (Cresswell, 2010; Dickinson & Lumsdon, 2010; Honore, 2005; Parkins and Craig, 2006). Furthermore according to Moore (in Fulligar et al, 2012, p 33) this form of travel is often put in the same league as ecotourism, yet as it is still relatively 'niche' it is arguably a symptom of the misunderstandings in institutionalized relations between leisure, freedom and wellbeing. In sympathy with tourists travelling less and at reduced speed it is also supposed that 'Staycationing', bioregionalism and eco-friendly travel encourages a more philanthropic attitude towards community and place. So instead of taking a consumptive view of travel where fleeting packaged tourism is favoured over possible deeper engagements with both self and other, reciprocal relationships between visitors and the indigenous people may initiate social justice and environmental protection.

Yet in relation to automobility, Sheller (2004a) points out that despite strong feelings against cars and the damage they can do to the natural environment, the ethics of anti-car protest whilst a powerful argument often does not eclipse the need for socialities on the move; the day-to-day co-coordinating of family life or interconnectivities of friendship made possible by the car (Miller 2001; Carrabine and Longhurst 2002; Stradling 2003). In other words decisions made about whether to travel 'slow' or 'fast' is often more about necessity in the survival of the day-to-day, rather than always having the affordances to create personal eco-tours. In a travel report by the *Observer* (2009) there are still lots of trips wearing a bogus "ecotourism" tag. Pleumarom (1995) also notes that critics also suggest that some initiatives under the banner of eco-tourism are oxymoronic. Denouncing such labelling as an 'eco-facade', they suggest that exploitative tourism practices can be obscured by the travel industry by simply 'greening' mainstream tourism with an ethical stamp of approval.

As the "Slow Travel" manifesto promotes the ideal of 'tranquil travel' as a hypothesis for sustainable travel by using cycling, walking and other forms of transport

with lower carbon omissions, it is not however an advocate for doing everything at snail's pace (Honore, 2005). Instead its interest lies in the contested notion of using the 'right speed' appropriately applied to a given situation. In basic terms the 'slow' travel itinerary is not only about touring slowly, but also about a way of thinking that favours the quiet contemplation of place over fast consumption of it. Slowplanet.com (2009) for example extols the virtues of 'savouring the journey' and points out if tourists created the time and space to be educated about local cultures, 'meaningful' engagement and a better understanding of place would ensue. This approach has led to greater connectedness to locations, an eco-friendly approach to the environment and micro-philanthropy towards Indigenous people. Clearly the velocities at which people travel and the mode of transport also highlight the moral philosophies inherent in different cultural displays. In choosing to detach from the ubiquitous priority of speed by using slow transport, a meta-critique of the current expected accelerated speed of modernity is in some respects being waged.

2.7 Dwelling

In a climate of increased mobility, as tourists spend extended periods of time travelling, arguably the notion of home as a fixity is changing. In this section therefore the idea of *home on the move* is explored as a phenomenon of time spent in vehicles that arguably could lead to lifestyles reproduced in motion. According to a number of authors (Urry, 1995, 2002; Coles and Hall, 2006; Gale, 2008; Hannam, 2009) for example, the expansion of human movement marks the 'end of tourism' on the basis that "tourism is nowhere but everywhere". Therefore the basis that home is often understood as a static concept is thus under review. In short, the idea that tourism enables an escape from the 'horror of home' (Baudelaire, quoted in De Botton 2002, p.32) which is a longstanding argument in the relationship between tourism and modernity (MacCannell, 1999; Cohen, 1979; Urry, 2002), 'home from home' once experienced in a car, hotel, or poolside means the separations between home, away, work and play are less distinct (McCabe, 2002).

In addition, there is also a body of work that has now emerged to critically reflect upon the idea of dwelling-in-motion (see Jokinen & Veijola, 1994; Crouch, 2000; Featherstone et al., 2004). In these contemplations the binaries between 'home and

away' are contested on the basis that 'home from home' lived through a vehicle arguably makes the ideological point that travellers are immobile in some regards, as they are still at home. Another point as noted by Franklin (2003) is that both the familiar and unfamiliar can be found at home and abroad, thus travelling moves the tourist towards a sense of homeliness. Baudrillard (1996, p.67) for example states that "the car rivals the house as an alternative zone of everyday life; the car too is also an abode....". Morse (1998) also describes the automobile as an 'iron bubble' where drivers can dwell, whilst the Ford brochure in 1959 declared the "The 49 Ford is a living room on wheels." (Marsh and Corlett, 1986, p.11).

Mindful that the car has been described as homely, the concept 'home' is therefore in need of description. In traditional terms, home is often defined as a permanent residence, a family abode or a place to lay down roots, whilst in contrast the automobile is designed for acceleration. Also modern transport has been produced to overcome the potential discomforts of travel by attempting to recreate homeliness inside the car. From a driver's perspective as if relaxing in a living room, the body in a car is strapped into a comfortable constraining armchair, protected by airbags, 'roll bars' and 'crumple zones'. This 'mobile' occupancy is not only insulated from the outside world however, but surrounds the driver with resources that offer convenience and pleasure as though in a homely space. Passengers are cocooned in the way that a house protects its inhabitant, albeit in a flimsy zone of protection from potential external threats. Urry (2000) also contends that the car-driver in the west *dwells-within-the-car* thus averting risks from the outside world. Bull (2004, p.251) also adds that 'You're in your own time capsule, it's like your living room, your mobile living room.' Part of this feeling Bull (2004) also accords to the soundscape that immerses the driver in music and stories often replicated at home. There is also no need for the passenger to move except when keeping their eyes on constant danger watch; their feet and hands making minor adjustments in relation to the terrain. Urry (1999) in his earlier work adds that the process of visions, smells, and temperatures are shrunk to a two-dimensional view through a windscreen when driving; the world beyond he describes as an alien other. Urry (2000, p. 63) goes on to suggest that with today's air-conditioning, modern glazing, power steering and so on that the kinaesthetic experience of the landscape has been separated from the motorist's vision. Pearce

(1999) also adds that the more turbulent the roads are the greater sense of pleasure and dwellingness is actually sought in the car.

Dwelling at speed also arguably disconnects the traveller from their locality. Even as far back as the 18th century, according to (Largassie, 2017. p.230) and his comments on social reformist and romantic poet John Ruskin who suggested the speed of early train travel should be decried due to a passivity that reduced travellers to 'being sent' to a place as merely parcels on board. The velocity of the train was also claimed to be both alienating and a barrier to any contemplation of the picturesque. Yet in contemporary debates Merriman (2004, 2011) for example in his essays on motorway travel, where they are described as disconnecting, mundane and not dissimilar to train travel, also suggests that similar feelings of boredom can also be echoed at home.

Yet in stark contrast to 1800's thinking, the 21st century desire to travel has shifted towards the development of intelligent cars that aim to offer all the modern conveniences of home. Computer assisted operation control systems, satellite navigation along with future plans to integrate the private car into public transport systems and public spaces to further embed the driver into a pre-ordained trajectory, potentially immobilise the passenger in similar ways. That said, immobility can also include the opportunity for relaxation in traffic jams. bell hooks(1991) also adds to the upside to advanced mobility in that for people dwelling in mobilities, particularly wealthy households of the 'west', home is no longer one place but a number of locations. Ingold further (2000b) posits the idea that place need no longer be tied to a location, but instead people can exist inside a process of dynamic dwelling. Cars are also said to offer consumer culture comforts creating a 'home' space as well as the option for drivers to control the social mix as one would at home and in this case socialities can be diverse. This includes behaviours in how cars are inhabited to include doing office work on the move (Laurier, 2004), talking to family members, having sex in laybys, daydreaming etc. (Edensor, 2003).

Yet the idea of travel being a form of escape from the realities of the everyday, and as a form of stress alleviation can be challenged in the act of driving as it is often full of the everyday realities of navigation, maintenance and social tensions due to

being with others. In the case of mobile home use, driving through familiar places on short trips, stocking up on consumables along the way, planning a domestic itinerary of cooking, entertainment and sleeping, fuelling and maintaining the vehicle, and stopping for toilet breaks, etc. are all the accoutrements of sustaining the equilibrium of home life. As Urry (2006, p.27) suggests, 'Unlike "public" transport, the car offers a domestic mode of dwelling. Yet cars, unlike most dwellings, are mobile, and the farther one travels through foreign, unknown and exotic environments the more a sense of familiarity can be maintained. In other words travellers feel they are escaping home, but arguably leave without departing.

2.8 Automobility

Whilst this chapter has reviewed mobilities literature with a focus on the car, the final discussion considers the specificities of automobility as a precursor to the primary research of the thesis. It is also worth noting that it is also an effort to address sociology's neglect of the automobile (Hawkins, 1986) where studies of walking and flânerie have been a priority interest. Importantly Urry (2000b) points out the movements, smells, hazards, noise and intrusions of cars have been considered less in deciphering contemporary life. To begin with a definition then, Featherstone (2004) states the term automobility as a simultaneous achievement of autonomy and mobility. Urry (1999) also adds that it is a social and technical system that constitutes a complex hybrid known as 'automobility'. It is also a mass produced object of personal consumption with machinic qualities, quasi-autonomy and something that embodies culture and environmental resource-use. Yet perhaps more evocatively the car is constitutive of the more general process of urbanisation, evoking a sense of freedom in travellers. In mobilising humans it is possible to say that the car is personified to the status of a 'universal symbol, as an incontestable symbol of movement' (Bohm et al, 2006. p. 5). As Larson (2001) also reminds us, whilst the train is a somewhat 'inflexible' and 'fragmented' form of public transport to initially mobilise tourists, it is the car that has produced sensations of unpredictability that allude to powerful dreams of adventure and freedom.

From the basic definition of automobility as a figure of the contemporary landscape, there seems little need to elaborate upon the extensive history of the

automobile; an area well documented in (for example McShane, 1994; O'Connell, 1988; Sharff, 1991). As a continuum of discussions about the car, as Urry (2007, p.115) reminds us one billion cars were manufactured in the last century and that world car travel is predicted to triple by 2025 (Hawkin et al 2000, Motavalli, 2000). This makes the automobile not only a huge resource issue, but a major contributor to compound effects of congestion, one third of CO2 emissions worldwide, and an estimated global cost of road crashes of around \$518 billion (Featherstone, 2004 p.3.), and road related accidents and fatalities of 1,713 in 2013 in the UK alone, *Annual road fatalities*, 2014). With the automobile industry forecasted for growth, the car is thus a predominant form of transport for leisure, commuting and vacationing that subordinates all others. This makes it profoundly significant to contemporary society and how it will be shaped in the future.

It can also be said that the visibility and impact of the car is a key aspect of mass consumption and mass production (Fordism) that has led to the organisation of roads, city layouts, suburbs, drive-bys, shopping outlets and so on. In other words the social product of the car is sustained through technologies of movement through what Freund (1993, p.31) describes as the 'structures of autospace'. By demonstrating an ability to re-organise people's lives making connections between homes, commerce, family life and pleasure, the car has enabled divisions between home and the workplace, as well as being a mobile workplace as in Laurier (2004) and a mobile home. The automobile is also fundamental to how things operate such as being controlled by licensing authorities, traffic police, petroleum distribution, garages, car maintenance ports, motels (which become networks) and so forth. With over 700 million cars moving around, the car is a product of Fordist principles of travel as self-initiated movement (Urry, 2004).

In his essay on *inhabiting cars and roads* Urry (2007) also points out, the car is not just a transport system but a way of life. As Gartman (2004) contends in his article "Three Ages of the Automobile: the Cultural Logic of the Car" the 1900-1925 era was the age of the specialist crafted luxury car only available to the elite, whilst 1925-1960 sees the mass production of the car that led to public appeal, then from the 1960's to the present day fragmented subcultures have grown out of the social, cultural and economic affordances that have led to customising and product differentiation.

Gartman (2004) also insists however, that with the emergence of 'lifestyle enclaves' there is a decline in civility due to drivers being less able to identify with each other; inducing social tensions brought on by a somewhat individualist transport age.

Leading on from the idea that 'car' can be a metaphor or marker that travellers can identify with, Featherstone (2004) makes the point that it is part of a cultural process, as objects can represent national and personal identity. As Merriman (2011) confirms roads matter in different ways and people use them and diverse cultural contexts give rise to diverse cultural attitudes, customs, speed, conduct, roadside activity etc. (Miller, 2001; Edensor, 2003; Merriman, 2009; Dalakoglou and Harvey, 2012). As Sheller, (2004a, p 225) recommends they are also objects of desire to be collected, washed and worshipped. Cars can also provide status through sign-values to do with home, sexual success, freedom, career achievements etc. Particular vehicles are seen as cheap, cool, youthful, boring, feminine, boy-racerish and so on, and as Moorhouse (1991) points out owners attempt to differentiate and 'improve' their own appearances through such automotive performances. Thus social relations, embodied practices and ontologies are vital in the understanding of these enduring attachments as they become conjoined as vehicle-drivers; Merriman (2007, p.8) describes them as cyborg figures where subjectivity and objectivity are (re) configured in momentary dwelling on the road. With a suggestion that mobilities can shape what it is to 'be' in movement this section is a precursor the second literature review which develops a deeper analysis of body-machine relations as car and driver arguably become one.

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed the current practices of mobilities research to broadly contextualize this study of the tourist experience. Through critical discussions drawn from mobility theory therefore, the *New Mobilities Paradigm* was introduced to consider VW Campervan tourism not only as a phenomena of movement, but as a social project. This particular mode of travel as a particular case study seeks to address the gap that has appeared progressive theories of travel by embracing the corporeal and imaginative aspect of mobility in tandem with environmental and speed based discourses. Indeed the mobile world, normally quantified as transport

geography of planning, management and infrastructure, due to advancements in critical theory as previously discussed, automobilities as human experience can be acknowledged as an embodied practice. Also although the relationship between the body and machine are discussed in more detail in chapter three, it was important to highlight the *Slow Travel Movement* (Fullagar et al, 2012) in order to raise the question of movement not only as something political, but also in how it occupies a social framework where bodily interpretations of velocity play a key role. In the *Travellings* section, the A-to-B of travel goes beyond a study of transport, to conceptualise travelled space as a place where humans and environment by conjoining in movement shape the terrain. Also as this research is about travel in a mobile home, where the ontology of travel is conjured in the '*Dwelling*' section. In other words by considering the ontologies of being, VW campervan leisure by virtue of physically being able to support home - on- the move, such theorisations have enabled a further unpacking of this paradox. Finally in a discussion about the social significance of the automobile, in this case discussions about the nature of the VW Campervan in how tourists emotionally connect with them, some of the issues to emerge from the new mobilities paradigm are able to be addressed.

3. CHAPTER THREE - BODY AND MACHINE

3.1 Introduction

The new 'mobilities paradigm' challenges the static, disembodied and representational understandings of travel and it is in this context that the chapter considers tourism mobility mediated through the body. As Blackman (2012) points out, the body is not a place of retreat, but a material basis through which to discover how social processes take hold. In the current study of VW campervan subcultures, this chapter considers the body as an important site of disclosure due to the embodied relationships owners have with their vehicles. In current literature, the focus is often on the touring passenger, whilst this research reveals the tourist-owner who in driving an anthropomorphised vehicle it is proposed, experiences mobility in an embodied way.

To bring corporality as a site of knowledge into tourism debate therefore, the chapter is organised into five parts. The first section introduces embodiment theory to contextualise the 'matter' of the subjective human as a producer, rather than consumer of experiences. This is followed by a debate on corporeal mobility as a precursor to the idea of the body and tourism, where the nature of travel is analysed as an embodied process of corporeal, multisensory, cognitive and affective processes. The next section introduces the notion of 'transhumanism' to locate the body-machine hybrid within social and cultural theory to question how leisure ontologies can unfold through relations between human and non-human subjects. Then finally Bruno Latour's (2007) Actor Network theory (ANT) is introduced as a way to consider the materiality of the social world as a complex set of relational orderings. In this case, (ANT) is a framework through which the potential agencies in the network that makes-up road travel are highlighted. In other words, VW campervan movement through the theory can be considered not only as a linear trajectory of A to B, but as a rhizomic map of materialities and affects.

Instead of explaining the social world through the binaries of human and nonhuman, self and other, material and immaterial, the discussion explores it as a set of brain-body-world entanglements. As Csoras (1990 p.5) points out, the body is not

an *object* studied in relation to culture, but is a *subject* of culture. Defined by a capacity to affect and be affected the chapter considers the human not as self-contained, individualised and clearly bounded but as an entity with borders and boundaries that are porous and permeable. This literature review therefore seeks to contemplate the body as more than just a closed physiological and biological system but as an open participant in the flow of passage and affect (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010).

3.2 Embodiment theory

In analysing the meanings that the body can ascribe an introduction to embodiment theory is in order. Whilst there are many definitions and different ways to consider what embodiment is, according to Hanson (2003) in simple terms *to embody* is to put into a body an idea or spirit, and to give it concrete form or to express principles, thoughts or intentions within art, action, word or institutions. As Blackman (2012, p,x) suggests in an analysis of speed, movement and immateriality, the ontology of subjectivity and corporality in cultural studies means that 'the subject has dissolved into a concern for processes, practices, sensations and affects which move through bodies that are difficult to see understand and investigate.' It is proposed that whilst viewing bodies as containers of exteroceptive (senses) and proprioceptive (internal feelings) can offer insights, due to their complex nature these phenomena are difficult to comprehend.

Following Thrift (2001, p.36) who suggests we could conceive of 'non-cognitive thought as a set of embodied dispositions (instincts if you like) that are biologically wired in or culturally constructed; the exact difference between the two Thrift finds fascinating in itself. As Blackman and Venn (2010) also assert, the intractable non-cognitive, trans-subjective, non-conscious, non-representational, incorporeal and immaterial networks that affect human perceptions are potentially traceable through embodiment theory. Before explaining further the nature of embodiment and its relationship to this study, it is useful to point out that the body as traditionally presented in social theory is situated in ableist, gendered discourses. Body politics has found its ways into liberal domains of cultural studies, gender studies, and queer theory, however as Johnston (1997) points out, tourism studies and most social science

knowledge is slow to catch up on more nuanced paradigms and is built on Western hierarchical dualisms producing hegemonic and masculinised biases.

Grosz (1994, xiv) also notes the social sciences have been built on a mind/body dualism that privileges the former over the latter. In short, the 'mind' has been associated with positive terms such as 'reason, subject, consciousness, interiority and masculinism.', whilst the body is more negatively associated with "passion, object, consciousness, exteriority and feminism." As a western rationalist tradition, that accords primacy to the mind therefore (as Lloyd (1993:2) puts it), femaleness and therefore bodiliness is associated with the subordinated and excluded, leaving the body historically disassociated from the notion of 'reason'. Bodies have often been conceived as "natural" phenomena of "raw material" that is pre, or non-social and therefore understood as not rational, and rather as primal or even savage. As a result, Grosz (1994, p.21) suggests that the 'matter' of the body has remained elusive and problematic in cultural theory, 'lacking in its own weighty materiality'.

Therefore, the dominance of 'reason' has often been linked to masculinity and the mind as prioritised over the sensualities of the body understood as a feminine, less significant 'other'. Grosz (1993, p.187) notes in the "Crisis of reason" how social scientists have been forced to examine the production of knowledge to question the founding epistemological assertions of these dualities. As scholars have recognised inequalities, changes in academic thinking led to approaches from the 1980's towards a 'turn to corporality' that has been characterised by a call for the body to be taken more seriously in social analysis. As a reaction to this the 'sociology of the body' pioneered by British sociologists including Mike Featherstone have argued that embodiment studies should not remain confined to medical sciences because the body is more than just surface and appearance. Their claim of writing the body into trans-disciplinary fields of enquiry has meant that corporeal knowledge can offer new ways of understanding the social world.

To explore this further, phenomenology as a study of lived experiences underscores the embodiment discussion. The term phenomenology derived from the Greek term phainomen (an appearance) and logos (reason or word) is often depicted as the study of essences (Merleau-Ponty,1964) and the exploration of human experience (Polkinghorne, 1989). Phenomenology according to Pernecky & Jamal

(2010, p. 1057) has become popular as a research perspective in humanistic and social science disciplines in what they call a valuable yet under-utilised approach to understanding tourism. They also point out that phenomenological research is highly complex and as Szaryz (2009, p.48) asserts most attempts to apply it result in a 'potpourri of ideas', as researchers fail to be true to the origins of particular phenomenologies. Whilst this can be the case, complex and often contested arguments from phenomenologists such as Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, are introduced here due to their concern for appearances of things as they are brought to human consciousness, or as Pernecky and Jamal (2010) suggest as they appear in our experience. By seeing things from a first person perspective therefore, in this case that of the traveller, it is suggested existence is not just one reality 'out there', but can be altered by the knower (Lavery, 2003). In other words, to consider the lived experience as embodied means the 'hidden made visible' can be the inner thoughts and feelings of the subject.

In considering how social experiences relayed through human subjectivities result in diverse interpretations from cognition and emotion, as where Haldrup & Larson (2010, p.3) in discussions on the '*ontologies of acting and doing*', note, they suggest that being embodied contests the traditional Cartesian dualism of thought as separate from action. That means travelling to or experiencing a 'place' may not be a detached experience, but a process through which lives, myths and identities are constructed. Crouch (2000, p.63) also adds that individuals grasp the world through mind and body to include, all of the sensate, affective (emotional) and cognitive processes. In other words embodiment rejects the idea that the body is an inanimate object, arguing it is an active 'thinking body' that creates meanings and experiences (Burkitt, 1999, p.2). Harrison (2000) also adds that embodied subjects experience the world in three ways. First, multi-sensually; second surrounded by space multi-dimensionally, then third, the body expressing itself through space, to change its meaning. From this perspective, objects and people understood as distinctly apart is questionable as humans affect agency. To add complexity to the debate, if the body is a tool through which to relay experience, Black et al (2012) remark that it has also extended beyond itself to species bodies, psychic bodies, machinic bodies and those otherworldly all capable of producing bodily representations of knowledge.

Based on the idea that embodied subjects are diverse and perceive social realities in different ways, a short discussion of the phenomenology of perception is in order. Whilst the philosophical and methodological debate on perception is substantive, this discussion focuses on the idea that the body as a form of consciousness is not merely an object, but a subject too. To underpin the argument that the body is a producer of knowledge, the notion of bodily subjectivity is critical to this understanding. The basis of phenomenology said to begin with the ideas of principle founder of twentieth century phenomenology, Edmund Husserl (1982, p.5) questioned 'reality' by proposing that in using the term 'natural attitude' this is a human disposition that is used to interpret it should be suspended for new ways of seeing to emerge. By shedding doubt on explanations of the world through causation and science therefore, he questioned the validity of the fundamental characteristics of representation to consider how humans 'constitute themselves' in consciousness.

Inclined to look for essential structures of consciousness and intrinsic structures of experience, according to Cerbone (2006, p.22), Husserl described this process as *bracketing* or excluding "All questions and claims concerning whatever might be causally responsible for conscious experience." This leads ambiguously towards the notion of 'pure' thought which once paired back to its basic elements suggests that precognitive responses toward existence have the capacity to influence or nuance what most people experience as representational worldly understandings. Whilst this theory has been extensively debated and contested due to lack of scientific rigor (Le Vasseur, 2003) if consciousness is a social construction experienced through objects and social structures in a literal sense, then imaginaries of 'being' as alternative, other, abstract etc open up explanations of human experience through non-representational and sensory experiences (Thrift, 1999, 2004c). This is where subjective understandings of space, place and self can arguably include the body as a form of consciousness as it feels its surroundings, or that individuals encounter things in an embodied way through feelings and actions (Harre, 2003).

To consider the notion of embodiment further, Romdenh-Romluc (2011) notes that although the theory has been considered by others, it is through the work of philosopher Merleau-Ponty for his account of our existence as physical creatures situated in the world, that it is most renowned. By taking on board Husserl's theory as

it shifted away from the Cartesian view of the mind-world divide, (the proposal by Descartes that the inner realm (the mind) was independent from external realm (the world)), Merleau-Ponty suggested experience is understood by embodied knowledge. Merleau-Ponty through empirical testing came to the conclusion that consciousness is not a disembodied concept, but something historically situated and essentially embodied Romdenh-Romlec (2011, p.13). This counteracts Descartes' claim that the body is on the 'world side' of the division with consciousness and therefore not part of it. Since then, discussions have led to a number of theories that argue the body is not just a vessel, but can 'think' for itself.

Merleau-Ponty came to propose that objective thought has its roots in perception itself. That is, the ability to become aware of something through the senses. He argued that objective thought, conceiving the body as a mere object, its behaviours explained by causal laws, was not applicable to explanations of consciousness as it was not physical, so could not be understood that way. In relating these arguments to a debate that focuses on the importance of the body as a producer of experience, in Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (1996) insights from his account of patients with motor skill problems due to accident or disability, led him to suppose that the bodily self knows how to act with a motor understanding of its surroundings that is not reducible to conceptual knowledge. In defence of embodiment theory, the body he argued can work autonomously from the mind to act and so act as a form of consciousness.

The bodily consciousness to which he refers initiates actions and coordinates the body towards certain movement that is often confounding and difficult to describe. Perception he argues is a discovery of the inter-subjective world of things that have character and location, and we move through the experience of ambiguous and indeterminate things towards what is determinate and shared by others. Thinking through Merleau-Ponty's theory, Crossley (1995) remarks that individual turns, resistances, ideas and feelings are furthermore triggered by human engagement in the social realm. Considering human experience in relation to worldly objects therefore, Merleau-Ponty argues that the experiencing subject is not lying wholly outside the world, but instead embodied within it.

To sum up, some of the initial theories to do with embodiment have provided a basic understanding that embodied technology, in this case the emotive, and kinaesthetic connectivity's both psychological and mechanical are incorporated into a person's body schema and by implication become part of the bodily space of, in this case the driver. As Brey (2000,p.11) also suggests in a discussion of Ihde's (2002) work, as the appendage becomes part of the repertoire of the bodies motor and perceptual skills, it is a medium through which they are expressed. This means the comprehension of the world through the object as directed by perceptual and motor embodiment has the potential to reshape the landscape of experience in relation to it.

3.3 Corporeal Mobility

This section introduces the notion of embodiment to consider the body as a producer of knowledge in relation to mobility. As Sheller (2011) points out, mobilities research considers the individual body up to the most complex systems. By combining social and spatial theory in new ways therefore, mobilities theory has become a bridge towards micro-interactional research by drawing upon phenomenology to reconsider the embodied practices of being-in-motion, privileging the senses, objects and kinaesthetic engagements. Edensor and Holloway (2008) in contesting the idea of the tourist as a duped, passive and shallow figure, consider Lefebvre's (2004) rich and suggestive analysis of movement in the rhythmic assemblages of coach tours. In their study, they argue that the travel experience is always changing and in a flow of becoming, replete with unplanned happenings that are inevitably sensual and affective. Whilst Haldrup and Larson (2006) point out that most forms of travel are deeply corporeal and sensuously experienced through joints, muscles, tendons etc as we move across the physical space. Mels (2004) also conceives forms of mobility as multiple articulations of individual and collective; the subjective and inter-subjective, body and world as well as spaces of experience, memory, symbol and action.

In other words, the experience of tourism transport involves the entanglements of embodiment, affective registers, technologies and materialities that take on different intensities and consistencies at different parts of the journey. In a similar account, Sheller (2004a) considers the 'automotive emotions' of drivers to look at the phenomenology of car ownership alongside the sociology of emotions. In this work it is proposed that everyday car cultures are more than just modes of transport but

significant within the context of affective and embodied relations between people, machines and spaces of mobility. Whilst these are two select examples of how the corporeality of the body can contribute to tourism debate, it is argued that the body is not an inert passenger, but intrinsic to the production and experience of movement.

To consider these ideas further, Urry (2000) begins with a critique of 'hypermobility' to remind us that over 600 million passenger arrivals, one car for every 8.6 people worldwide, and international travel accounting for over one-twelfth of world trade, are examples of the extent to which bodies live in motion. In his essay on proximity and social capital, he notes that as new communication technologies have enabled virtual forms of travel not requiring the physical body to be present, it prompted the question "Why bother with the risks, uncertainties and frustrations of corporeal movement?" In an effort to explore this paradox, Urry (2002) asserts despite our access to virtual socialities, the need for 'co-presence', as a physical and immediate presence with others is still essential for many forms of social life to flourish. Despite virtual travel connecting people instantaneously it is arguably little substitution for being with someone somewhere. Whilst there may be many answers to this question and again for Urry (2002) telecommunications produce an odd and uncanny life onscreen that is near, far, present and absent that he suggests fails to compensate for one-to-one interactions. This is not to say pre-virtual co-presence implies integrated community ties as compared to the seemingly airy, fragile relations of the virtual world.

Urry (2002,p.266) also notes, co-presence has always been a blend of proximity, distance, solidity and imagination even in travel requiring physical crossings of distance. Kaplan (1996) also surmises having been born in to a national culture of travel as increased mobilities led to proliferation of 'global diasporas', movement was 'unavoidable, indisputable and always necessary for family, love and friendship as well as work.' Yet as Boden and Molotch (1994) suggest, humans travelling to be with one another involves 'thick' co-presences of rich, multi-layered conversations that not only include words but expressions, facial gestures, body language, turn taking etc. not achievable in virtual reality environments. According to Simmel (1997) eye contact establishes intimacy and trust as the most direct and 'purest' action. Whilst Boden

and Molotch (1994, p.263-7) again conclude that letters, faxes and email and so on are less able to establish long-term trust relations.

As the unifying component indicated in the term *corporeal* travel, it points out travel is embodied as people are bodily in the same space as various others, including work-mates, business colleagues, friends, family, or they bodily encounter some particular landscape or townscape, or are physically present at a live event. As one of many examples, Shields (1997) notes that tactile pleasures of walking in crowds are the embodied participation of one's body in relation to others resulting in fulfilment and belonging. By considering that critical tourism debate has taken an interest in the body in space, the discussion aims to develop sociologies of personal mobility to explore the nature of corporeal travel. As suggested, as people engage with space they not only become part of places visited through embodied relationships, but also propel themselves forward using different mobilities not disembodied, but intrinsic to place. In light of this, the definitions of corporeal movement in this discussion lead to the next section which examines the hybridities of the tourist body as it pursues leisure.

3.4 Body and Tourism

This section introduces embodiment as a theory to consider the role of the body in tourism. Much of 'body' thinking in tourism studies stems from the work of Veijola and Jokinen (1994), who were amongst the first to theorise how the senses could shape how place could be understood. This has led to a range of other contemporary accounts such as Chronis (2015, p.125) who remarked that 'the staging of tourist places have been overwhelmingly conceived as a discursive formation, leaving untapped the productive potential of bodily presence, movement, and interaction with surrounding space'. Whilst previous epistemological priorities leaned towards representation therefore, meant detached forms of knowledge and dominant tropes of explanation tended to 'follow the logic of the corpse.' (Thrift, 2004c, p.83). This, according to Harrison (2002, p. 489), renders objects and subjects of study 'lifeless and docile'. Paterson (2007, P.6) also alludes to this in his comment 'the forgetting of the touch' as an example of an array of sensual dispositions and structures of feeling and mobilising experience in a bodily way that should be captured. Massumi (2002,p.1) similarly suggests that the omission of sensation and movement in modern

cultural discourses undermines both body and change, trapping it in the clench of pre-coded cultural meanings.

In taking the body and tourism debate forward therefore in the spirit of a greater attention paid to the subject of late, as Bruner (2005, p.24) suggests Tourism is a 'somatic experience' whilst Lakoff and Johnson (1999) pointed out that emotions illicit in tourism and travel are forms of 'embodied knowledge'. Similarly Sheller and Urry (2004) have argued experience of 'places are not simply encountered...but performed through embodied play' (p.4). So, doing tourism is not just being in space or representing space, but it is a matter of practising space and practising through space (Obrador-Pons,2003, p.51). As Crouch (2001, p.70) also argues, people are encountered, associated with and symbolized by particular manifestations of space and Gorz (1988) notes that 'non-commodity values' in people through places and things as Merleau-Ponty (1962) suggests, occupy a *body-space*. In other words, the body is not a separate object, but part of the space that engulfs it as it seeks agency in people and the environment. As Deleuze (1986, p.58) points out 'a body affects other bodies or is affected by other bodies, it is this capacity for affecting and being affected that also defines the body in its individuality'.

In highlighting the toured space, apprehending tourism as embodied and relational also means the profile of the tourist has emerged not detached from space, but either mastering or representing a destination (Selwyn,1996). Being 'embodied' also contests the ocularcentric view (see Urry, 1990, 1995) of the 'tourist gaze' as primary mediator of experience, as consumption and construction of places is not just about looking but understanding through corporeal, multi-sensory, cognitive and affective processes. As Hughes (1992) points out, space can be a context as a 'given' composite of leisure and tourism, whilst place is a physical image of metaphorical content in brochures. In other words, the symbolic meanings of place often constructed by historical or touristic means, are experienced in the mind before re-imagined at the place.

According to Obrador-Pons (2012) tourism study is sensually diverse now that more attention is given to the body. As Crouch (2000, p.63) adds there is also a revived comprehension of embodiment in social sciences that takes an interest in the body as a subject, rather than an object of policy or practice. Yet whilst these social relations

are embodied in places of tourism and leisure in tourism studies itself, the tourist gaze often renders bodies and places as exotic “Others” to create difference, exoticism, recreation and displacement (Johnston, 1997). In recognising that tourism study has initially been built on Western dualisms of self/other, masculine/feminine, gay/straight, host/guest etc. Veijola and Jonkinen (1994, p148) were prompted to ask, “How are we going to change our research practices and tourist practices in a way that prevents us from constituting the Other out-side of ourselves?”. Because of the situatedness of the body, yet with a profound ability to convey knowledges, it is suggested that the embodied approaches of researcher and researched can be catalysts for deeper understandings of the tourist experience. If the tourist for example fosters a sense of ownership of place not simply understood through legal and financial structures, but through feelings, empowerment, attachment and value (Crouch, 1994), the embodied narratives of self and other move closer together to contest these divisions.

Following Wylie (2005) who took inspiration again from the writings on phenomenology by Merleau-Ponty (1962), Obrador-Pons (2009) has considered the haptic sensibilities of the beach. In his discussion, the sensitivities of building castles in the sand are critically discussed in an attempt to reposition the untouched beach as a tactile performative space recognising the carnal, sensible world of the traveller. In other words, the theory of beach tourism is not only of travel, but also of the caressing of nature through the senses. As Franklin (2002, p.188) also observes in his example of the ‘virgin’ beach that privileges detached observation over embodied tactile participation, it is proposed that it reproduces a topographical modernist imagination that re-establishes a demarcation, or separation between culture and nature. As Sheller (2004b, p.3) contends in a study of embodied relations with cars, driving is not only about road transport geography but also about touching the metal bodywork, upholstery and curves and miming driving ‘with all the body’ to suggest conjoining human and machinic bodies.

In widening the dialogue with travelling bodies, Obrador-Pons (2003) points out that tourism as metaphor alludes to a particular way of being-in-the-world that gives priority to embodied practices before consciousness or structure. Dreyfus (1993) also suggests tourism is an embodied way of coping or engaging with the environment, whilst Crouch (2000, p 63) reminds us of the shift in emphasis towards an embodied

sensuous, social and poetic route: a human orientated understanding of tourism. In other words, tourist phenomena are not just about what the tourist does, but how they make sense of their own experience (Crouch et al (2001). This idea is also supported by Crang and Franklin (2001) who note that tourism has awarded the social sciences an opportunity to inquire about mobile realities that configure western societies and the constitution of places, bodies, subjectivities and sensibilities. Therefore, as a practical ontology, individual actions and physical events are considered simultaneously within the context of 'representations' and embodied practices.

In this discussion, the relationship between the body and tourism has been critically considered. Once constituted as an embodied practice, the tourist experience can be conveyed not only as a physical geography, but as a journey of the senses. The discourses of such sensualities developed in tourism study have unearthed new ways place can be understood through subjective bodily interpretations. In order to develop this further in terms of the travelling body as an expression of machinic mobilities and sensitivities, the next section introduces transhumanism as a means by which to contemplate how technology mobilises bodily practices.

3.5 Body and Machine

This section discusses body and machine relations as a contemporary practice. To expand these debates and to apply them to tourism mobilities, I start with Kona's (2008) observation that one of the most notable characteristics of the modern world is the vanishing of borders between the natural and artificial. A concern that even Heidegger in (1977) proffered in a somewhat dystopian vision of the future as a 'cybernetic world project', noting that we perhaps live in an era where the difference between machines and living things are disappearing. Virillio (1977, 2006, p. 9) also added through his statements that 'the metabolic bodies' of soldiers and transport bodies of naval vessels – mutually prostheticise each other in the pursuit of the competitive advantage of speed.' In his descriptions of the masses as a 'metabolic multitude' therefore, the point being stressed is that bodies in society if understood as raw material, once rendered into a mobile trajectory, he argues they become domesticated into suburbs or channelled into cities that 'galvanise both human and non-human metabolisms,' Virillio (1977, 2006, p.11). Yeoman (2012) also adds to this

story in his acceptance that acceleration is a consequence of these hybrid practices to suggest that the pace of discovery and progress in technology will experience more innovation in the next ten years than in the last 150. As argued by Yeoman and MacMahon-Beattie (2015, p.1) technology now operates in a sphere of integration and co-operation to the point that the 'human' and 'computer' are blended into one as a cyborg. Whilst Clines and Klines (1960) also described the cyborg as a cybernetic organisation of a self-regulating human-machine in 'outer space', the cyborg today tends to be associated with metaphysical and physical attachments of humanity and technology.

To consider the relationships between humans and cars, computers, prosthetics, mobile phones and any other devices of contemporary living as a social concern, the intellectual and cultural movement 'transhumanism' aims to address the changing nature of humanity in relation to technological advancement. Also referred to in Huxley's brief chapter "Transhumanism" in 1957 in what looked like a work of science fiction at the time, it was described as, "man remaining man, by transcending himself, by realising new possibilities of and for his human nature." Wolfe (2010) further adds a reminder that the cyborg has a genealogy traceable as far back as to the Macy conferences on cybernetics from 1946-1953, which half a decade later from the postmodernist era upwards in the spirit of revisionism, the cyborg has become part of a social critique. Whilst the term 'transhumanism' is variously interpreted it is an intellectual and cultural movement that analyses the evolution of human life transformed through science and technology. This is a transformation that transhumanism as an ethical movement recognises as not utopian (and that humans may not strive for perfection), but seeks "continual improvement in ourselves other cultures and our environments" (More, 2013,p.14).

The similar term 'post-human' is often used in different senses by different authors and according to Bostrum (2013), it has worked its way into critical literature in the humanities and social sciences. In terms of semantics 'Posthumanism' is often confused with 'transhumanism' and whilst it encapsulates similar ideas it is more about humans exceeding physical limitations that define less desirable aspects of the "human condition"; for example using technology so as to no longer suffer disease,

ageing and death Bostrum (2013). As futurist Kurzweil (2005) also suggested, the growing improvement of humanity as described through Moore's Law (1965) that computer technology may lead to robots self replicating to the point of 'singularity', where people and robots may steadily converge as entities that once were distinctly apart. As Seltzer (1992; p19) also notes from his book *Bodies and Machines*, these dualities are a 'psychotopography of machine cultures', where psychological and geographical space can cross the natural and the technological, between interior states and external systems. So rather than the machine/human dyad being a simple question of self versus other, for many it is a blurring of embodied self and the computer, transport system, communications systems and technological objects.

As technology and humans become embodied, Grosz (1994, p.80) explains that an inanimate object, when touched or placed on the body for long enough can become an extension of body image and sensation. In the case of a prosthetic limb, a bike or a pair of skis that can be physically invested in the self to the point where they stop being a separate thing, they become vehicles through which new humanities can be expressed. Understanding the world through prosthetics Grosz(1994) concludes, offers alternative ways of seeing and experiencing the world. In a more recent contribution to the embodiment thesis, Don Ihde (2002) has also looked at the role of technology in human experience to consider the 'symbiotic' relationships humans have with telescopes, probes, hearing aids, mobile phones, transport and computers. These items he suggests are not acted upon in one's environment, but are the means through which environment can be encountered as embodiment relations (see also Ihde,1991). Further to this du Gay et al (1997, p.23-4) also claim in their account of the significance of the Sony Walkman to its user, that it is '*virtually an extension of the skin . It is fitted and moulded, like so much else in modern culture, to the body itself...*'.

Following the above argument, Brey (2000) recounts how Merleau-Ponty suggested that once the skill of handling an object is learned, it functions as an extension of the body and is incorporated into the body schema. As an example, the skilled typist embodies a typewriter as a direct extension of the hand. Therefore the boundary between subject and the world is positioned at the end of the subject's hand, whilst the embodied artefact after the initial habitation period often fades into the

background of awareness. In addition, philosophers Wittgenstein and Anscombe according to Brey (2000) have argued that we have a special way of knowing about our bodily position in relation to objects not gained by ordinary sensory perception. In other words, artefacts may be appendages to bodies which help movement which (Brey, 2000, p.9) are called motor skills and navigational skills as part of the body consciousness. Inanimate objects also require motor skills as interactive skills for example playing a trumpet or using a remote control that again Brey (2000) suggests are embodied within the body schema.

Yeoman (2012) adds that technology is becoming increasingly more sophisticated to include on-body control mechanisms and cameras that can successfully read emotions and translate body language with greater success than we do, whilst Li et al (2014) have developed a “wearable oral sensory system”. This is a sensor embedded in a tooth to monitor diet or speaking. To further explore these theoretical proposals further Hayles (1999) was one of many who discussed these relationships in *How We Became Posthuman*, along with Donna Haraway's 'A Cyborg Manifesto' (1985) to engage in the science-fictional thematic of hybridity and perversity with an ambivalence about cyborg futures. The idea of the “Posthuman” as a theory is that it encapsulates various movements and schools of thought to include philosophical, cultural and critical posthumanism and transhumanist discourses. According to Krueger (2005, p.78-79) although bio-technological relations are often described differently in scientific literature, its main concern is that technology can transform the mental and physical capacities of humans and is therefore instrumental to how society evolves.

According to Wolfe (2010) as humanism is pushed further by the drive towards technogenesis, in other words human species defined by co-evolution with technologies or as transhumanism theory seeks to describe, the incorporations and extensions that enable bodies to live and respond to changing conditions appear to challenge the idea that the body is ‘fixed’. In other words, the body-subject due to armatures and prosthetics is reconfigured by technical and material extensions, such as a prosthetic limb for example. This alludes to the idea that in the history of humans that technology in regenerative medicine, nanotechnology and prosthetics and mechanical transport systems, have impacted upon lifestyles, behaviours and

capabilities. To consider therefore what it is to be human, once only a biological form with increased ability through prosthetics, re-contextualises the entire sensorium of the subject and other living things in their own autopoietic ways, in how they “bring forth a world” (Wolfe, 2010, p xxv). In short, technicity and materiality whilst not human, make the human what it is. So in what can be described as the post-biological threshold’ as bodily matter displaces distinctions between organic, inorganic and so on, Thacker (2010) argues that when we talk of bodies we might now talk about them as human/machine assemblages.

The human is a communal animal that as it transforms, does so in a social context. Yet as (Ferrando, 2008) suggests, particular to the West, the question of what it is to be human can also be put on a hierarchical scale of human through to the non-human realm. Differentiations between humans depicted in the Didacus Valades (1579) in a drawing the *Great Chain of Being* (Lovejoy, 1964) posits a hierarchical structure of all matter and life placing a god at its pinnacle devolving down through the supernatural, animal, vegetable and mineral elements. Such conceits amidst other social constructions have arguably not only sustained primacy over non-human animals, but have also arguably led social judgements of a sexist, classist, homophobic and ethnocentric kind. Whilst the cultural context of the human is one part of the account, biological and technological evolutions of human enhancement have also added further transformations and thus assertions about status. Whilst mobility is regained by wheelchair use for example, the recipient could be subject to ableist commentaries. In contrast paralympians might be regarded as higher in the social order due to their relative social status. Equally, drivers of fast expensive cars can express greater affordances than public transport users for example. To add complexity to the debate, Garreau (2005) contends that the evolution of ‘post-humans’ defined as beings who demonstrate capacities that far exceed those of present humans can no longer be unambiguously ‘human’ by current standards. Just to clarify although the term post-human and transhuman is often used interchangeably, the differences according to La Graneur (2014) are that the former can be described as humans and intelligent technology becoming increasingly intertwined where the shift from humanness to information patterns leaving ‘new’ humans conceptually in the realm of function over form. Whilst the latter is more focussed on prosthetics and

modifications, genetic engineering and so as a means to compensate for, normal human functions.

Mindful of the differences, regarding this project as a transhuman study, it is considered that human body and its relationship with technology more broadly has been the subject of intense debate during the late twentieth century and as Bernard (1993, p.9) puts it, there has been an 'epistemological dispersion of the human body' where the humanities have adopted body criticism to talk more widely about societal processes. As highlighted in this chapter, whilst there is substantial work done on the body in tourism and tourism mobility, rarely is the touring body discussed in relation to transhumanist discourses. Whilst examples such as the Swiss National Competence Centre of Research in Robotics with its first Cyathlon in 2014 showcasing athletes assisted by knee prostheses, powered exoskeletons, and powered wheelchairs recognised these new relationships in special events, arguably tourism theory has far to travel in terms of extending its links to transhumanist theory and travel.

The argument is that hybrid travellers by virtue of their hybridity can experience places differently to those not embodied in mobile technologies. Whilst these discussions exist in cultural studies and anthropology, in terms of leisure studies as an adjunct to broader tourism debates, scant examples include Brighton and Sparks, (2014) who in a recent conference paper suggest from empirical study on wheelchair bound athletes that in using *cyborg embodiment stories*, they demonstrated a sense of agency enabling them to reject various dualisms such as able/disabled normal/abnormal to construct 'proud' identities. As travellers share their '*being*' with machines and technologies, the question of what is human, therefore what is a tourist? is raised. Within the social sciences, with a slow inclusion in tourism studies, a review of 'cyborg cultures' as a transhuman development (Haraway, 1988) along Lury (1997) in a critique of prosthetic technologies have started a conversation about what it means to be human in this context.

According to Castri (1994) a host of rich complexity theories which have prompted dialogues about the relational connections between machines, objects and technologies neither dominant nor subordinate to, human practices can perhaps shift the human from centre stage. Taking the definition of a cyborg from Donna Haraway's

Simians, Cyborgs and Women (1991) and the idea of the *Post human* (Hayle, 1999), a cyborg is a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality and yet also perhaps a figment of science fiction. Haraway is also committed to the idea that by the middle of the Twenty-first Century we are all perhaps theorized and fabricated couplings of machine and organism due to how we use technology to enhance communication and mobility. Haraway's premise is that the notion of the cyborg is evocative not only as a material reality but in terms of how the mechanical and technological combine. She maintains however, with a degree of complexity, that if nature is a construct, then how nature is fabricated is fundamentally political and therefore it can be used ideologically to consider ontological and political social tropes in current debate.

Wegenstein (2006) shows that is much discussion in post-human studies to consider the blurring between real and artificial conditions of humanity through hybridisation. In terms of the basic mechanics of a VW campervan they idea of the vehicle being an implant of mechanical engineering that is not separate from the driver but part is central to this thesis. Pointedly, Urry (2000) in similar terms has drawn into the debate the notion of the 'driving body' (see also Freund 1993:99; Hawkins 1986; Morse, 1998) to suggest that it is a symbiotic extension of the mechanical body – where all physical parts are disciplined by machines either by constraint or facilitation. Not alone, other examples by Flink (1988, p. 143) also include a suggestion that 'Southern Californians have added wheels to their anatomy' due to the significance of the automobile in their lives and so on. Whilst this research is more about the simple auto-mobile and how impacts on human lifestyles and to the extent to which it is inextricably intertwined with the human body, the bio-politics of this union are not to be dismissed but instead acknowledged to better understand the role of human biology in shaping human/machine behaviour. Having therefore completed a review of the priority literature that centres on body and machine, it is useful to note that in essence it is a discussion about the crossing of boundaries between flesh and metal, human and non-human, and here driver and automobile. Mindful of these binaries, this is where Actor Network theory has been an important tool in order to not compartmentalise these as discreet elements, and whilst unpack certain strands to consider them as parts of a whole.

3.6 Actor Network Theory

This section briefly sketches out the origins and characteristics of Actor Network Theory (ANT) as a way to consider the material relations of mobility. To explain the background further, it has originated from sociological science and technology in the 1980's with an emphasis on considerations of 'relational materiality' and the environment (Law, 1992). Developed by Bruno Latour (2005) this conceptual theory aims to understand the relationships between human, non-human agencies and the interactions between them. By comprehending the social world, Latour (2005, P. 8) argues that 'the social' is not the glue that holds society together, but something only visible by the 'traces it leaves behind'. By rejecting the potential distinctions between things therefore, this theory focuses on the idea of 'collective' agency in which as Rogers et al (2009) point out, seeks to understand the mechanics of power through the construction and maintenance of the human and non-human networks involved.

As Ashmore et al (1994) also add, if all entities are part of the translation, they should also have equal standing for the purposes of analysis. In other words, ANT does not strive to uncover the "order of things", but recognises that action is about modes of 'ordering' as a set of relational and spatialities of multiple mobilities. Objects he contends are 'immutable mobilities', i.e they hold their shape unless the circuits in the network that bind them become broken, degrade, lose their form or turn into something else.

To provide an example, Law (2002) uses a ship vessel with its imagined network of hull, sails, ropes, food stores, sleeping quarters and crew to argue that it only remains an object whilst everything stays in place and if the neighbouring entities hold steady. In other words, storms, being lost, fatal diseases on board, sinking vessels or termination of the trip would reconfigure the networks that bind everything together in human experience. As an 'alternative' social theory based on relationalism therefore Emirbayer (1997) suggests ANT does not ask the usual question of *why* things happen, but *how* social arrangements are accomplished, stabilized or fall apart. By using ANT to challenge the purified and often static conceptual paradigms of a contemporary episteme, the workings and doings of tourism in ordering, materiality, and multiplicity therefore can be analysed not as linearity but as a set of rhizomes.

Any asserted 'order' according to this proposition is somewhat precarious however as there is not a final root order on which the ordering work is based (van der Duim et al, 2013.).

In current tourism debate, ANT finds itself increasingly applied to understandings of the ontological condition of travellers (Duim et al, 2013). Also with commonalities to the new mobilities paradigm, it enables some comprehension of the inherent and residual affects' that inform the travel experience. So, whilst this theory is often criticized for being "*too light on theory, inconsistent and unclear*" (Cohen and Cohen, 2012), agreeing with Law (2004), it can be modestly used to levy a plurality of research, as opposed to staying with monolithic theories. In considering how actors mobilize allies and resources that lead to heterogeneous networks, (Garrety,1997) these arrangements according to van der Duim et al (2013) are the entanglements of technologies, bodies, imaginations, memories, and materials bundled together which can be examined through ANT. ANT serves as a challenge to science being 'black boxed' as established 'facts', instead allowing for divergent thinking of the messy realities of a world that can be made, remade and unmade (Smith et al, 2010). According to (Latour, 2004), "to do ANT" in tourism studies is to turn matters of so-called fact, into matters of concern.

ANT is a useful analytical framework to explore these processes in mobility therefore, according to Johannesson, (2005), and for studying emergent tourism projects that question the nature of reality. Tourism is a practice in space that involves multiple mobilities, occurring in various networks, reliant on different spatialities. ANT is useful to this research because it diverts from management-orientated views of tourism to multiplicity-orientated approaches (Gad and Jenson, 2010). These in turn open up the touristic world as seen, felt and travelled (Franklin, 2003) where human experience is understood not as limited selections of social aggregates born out of the power relations of the economic and the organisational, but also as mediums of the cultural. Law (1989, p. 167) adds to this debate by describing so called networks as "a seamless, interconnected fabric composed of heterogeneous elements". To apply this theory to understanding how bodies travel with machines, Maturana and Varela (1980, p.95) add that "Collective action is...a concatenation of actors and non-human

entities” as it argues for ‘the body’ to be unavoidably virtual in a multi-dimensional space as “embodied enaction.”

So, whilst the environment is radically different for different life forms, arguably in imagining them as a network or chain of actions consolidated by mediators, actors and non-humans they are all associated with the same project. (Paget, Dimanche, & Mounet, 2010,). In considering ANT as a way to understand this, the same agency is attributed to both non-human and human entities in a network of objects, technologies, machines, implements, computers etc, and Ren (2011) giving an example in tourism, talks about the smoked sheep cheese of Oscypek. In Ren (2011) their view that the object (in this case the cheese product) is enacted in different versions as it engages in tourism, tradition, craftsmanship, hygiene, legislation and so on. Within this particular example the tracing of various discourses with place, locality, documents, objects, travellers and tourism experiences are transformed, highlighted or “othered”. Similarly, tourists travelling to remote beaches may not occur without planes, cars, brochures, timetables, payment systems, cards connected to ATM networks that facilitate global travel and so on. In other words, without these systems and objects “time-space” compression would disappear.

In a similar vein Cloke and Perkins (2005) also note in their study of “unusual” destinations that the role of cetaceans in the tourist performances in Kaikoura in their tactile relations with tourists led to place sensualities being ascribed through the attachments tourists made. As Law (1992, p,5) ponders the stability of networks that enable particular socialities to form, he suggests that “punctualization is always precarious, facing resistance that can degenerate into a failing network.’ Here punctualization as deemed by Law as a process not a thing that enables activations and deactivations such as stopping an operation, immobilising or control of time intervals of objects and affects. As Callon et al (2004) also adds in trying to explain that things are held together through persistent and stable networks, he reminds us that as networks collapse their ability to uphold a version of the ‘truth’ disintegrates and collective interventions behind the scenes to invent tourism are revealed. As war breaks out in the Middle East for example or due to energy price drops, or borders closing, or viruses like bird flu wreak havoc on mobility, or volcanic eruptions halt air

flight – what becomes visible in these unfolding is who and what has been “acting” inside the black box.

Finally, to summarise in the words of van der Duim et al (2012), ANT offers a radical new way of looking at tourism and mobilities research. This section has demonstrated that tourism study can import the tools and sensibilities of ANT to enable new outlooks in dissecting what is going on in human mobilities. Admittedly ANT is in itself not a stable solution to fix a particular version of reality, but instead an inspiration to produce a range of accounts, or as Law and Urry (2004, p.98) puts it the theory serves as a mode of discovery and as a “set of tools for making and knowing new realities.” So, in terms of the perception and enactments of tourism mobilities in this case, it’s reality can be understood as processual and relational with the use of ANT to understand the absences and the otherness of the consciousness of ontological politics as a viable approach to research that discusses new possibilities, but makes no particularly strong claims to universal knowledge.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has identified five areas of critical theory as a way to include the body into tourism debate. These have included embodiment theory, corporeal mobility, the body and tourism, the body and machine and actor network theory. By introducing concepts of travel as a corporeal practice, the discussion has underpinned the study of travel as a challenge to the static, ocular-centric and often disembodied representations of tourism (Rakic & Chambers, 2012). In this review, the position of the tourist as a mediator of experiences has been explored through embodiment theory to develop an argument that travellers are not merely acted upon in mobility, but are often co-creators who engage emotionally and physically in co-creating tourist experiences. Further to this, in a critical discussion in which ‘embodiment and tourism’ are linked, it is suggested that embodied sensitivities of human and non-human actors conjoin to play a significant role in how place is understood. The next part briefly considers the nature of ‘transhumanism’ as a theory that locate body-machine relations in a social and cultural context. the discussion on ‘Transhumanism and Tourism’ some attempt use theory to bring together issues of enhanced or adapted humans into the field of tourism studies to better understand the tourist experience

has been broached. Then Actor Network theory (ANT) was introduced as a framework to consider tourism mobilities in terms of multiple relational orderings. In this case, the methodological orientation of ANT is applied to unpack the social aspect of mobility in relation to natural and imagined forces that arguably come into play as tourists engage in road travel as a social and natural proposition. By using ANT to contemplate observable movement on a trajectory of A-to-B, as the theory suggests travel can not only be comprehended as a linear process, but also in terms of constellations of materialities and affects. In this chapter a general discussion of embodiment theory has been followed by a discussion on how through the sensualities of the body human mobility can be understood. As a contemporary discussion therefore, the affect of technology in the form of mechanical engineering, prosthetics, digital technologies etc have been included by discussing 'transhumanism' as an embodied ontology in which body-machine relationships mediate the mobile world. Finally Bruno Latour's (2007) Actor Network theory (ANT) was introduced as a means and metaphor for travel that embodies a dynamic range and to add further specificity these issues have all been discussed at the specific level of relations between driver and machine.

4. CHAPTER FOUR - METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodological principles and practical research methods used to study VW campervan subcultures, tourism mobilities and experiences. Having considered a variety of options, it was concluded that an interpretative approach would be adopted to deal with the rich socialities of tourists (see Bryman 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). In looking at how communities socialise, share common interests and seek leisure through travel, as Silverman (2000) notes, 'meanings' can be derived from an understanding of social life and that qualitative methods can be used to focus on how humans make sense of the world in which they live. By adopting an inter-disciplinary approach to this work, the research aims capture what Geertz (1973) calls 'thick descriptions' of the mobile experiences tourists as not one, but multiple 'truths'. To discuss the methodological rationale in detail, the chapter is divided into two parts. The first section will highlight the researcher's philosophical position through the tropes of interpretivism and inductive reasoning. The second part discusses approaches used in fieldwork in terms of crystallisation, ethnographic, auto-ethnographic, and visual methods and touches upon the contemporary practice of 'mobile methodologies'. It also discusses the importance of ethics in research to highlight the guiding principles of this thesis.

4.2 Interpretivism

In this section interpretivism is introduced as a guiding principle of the research and is discussed in terms of its ontological and epistemological logic. To unpack this, in Weber's (2004) metatheoretical characterization it is suggested that authoritative knowledge is based on natural phenomena and their properties and relations and that positivists believe that reality is separate from those who observe it, thus if the object and subject are distinct and independent, then the researcher can only be a disembodied observer. Whilst interpretivists on the other hand believe that the object and subject are inseparable, leaving the researcher as an instrument of measurement through which humanness can affect and be affected. As with Husserl's notion of a "life-world" therefore, it is proposed that the subjective characteristics of experience

reflect a world where humans are negotiating reality relative to each other. In looking at how knowledge is therefore produced, a further assumption in terms of epistemology is noted.

As Weber (2004) reminds us, positivists believe human experience reflects an independent reality as the foundation of human knowledge, whilst interpretivists recognise that people's knowledge can be built on ambitions, culture, history and so on. There is also the pragmatist argument particularly highlighted in the work of Richard Rorty in his essay on *The Consequences of Pragmatism* argues in the spirit of reducing ambiguity in the 'meaning' of data, he argues for a shift beyond standard epistemological underpinnings stating that a vocabulary of theory can be too 'literary' and that making anti-philosophical points in a non-philosophical language part mitigates a barrier towards a closer representation of the subjects. Rorty (1982, p.2) Mindful of the problem of how academic language can be used to form particular knowledges, this thesis is mindful of the options, that for example that positivists are epistemologically objectivist, while interpretivism is epistemologically subjectivist. Given the nature of this work, the preferred route to follow given that human experience is at the heart of the study produced through fieldwork, the 'sense' of the world discovered is made through activities that occur within the context of the life-worlds and subjects that constitute knowledge. Klein & Myers (2001) also go on to say that interpretivism is a way to filter knowledge through constructions of language, consciousness, and shared meanings. By choosing a framework that does not seek statistical data to measure frequency of social interactions therefore, Schwandt (2007) reminds us that qualitative methods offer techniques to decode, translate and comprehend meaning. Weber (2004) also notes that interpretivists tend not to seek large data sets but lean towards ethnographic and phenomenographic studies in order to analyse human experience at the micro-level.

By accepting in qualitative research that only partial truths can unfold, then this study is not about finding a universal statement of fact about a given phenomenon, but is an evolving process of discovering new ways to present reality; none of which are fool proof or sacrosanct. As Ellingson (2009, p.119) reminds us, with reference to

the crystallisation method in particular, to defend analytic work that offers a rich yet incomplete picture, the sharing of what you did and what you did not do is the most convincing way to contextualise or 'validate' the research position. As Halfpenny (1979) also contends in dealing with the complexities of human subjectivities, interpretivists make assumptions that people engage meaningfully with the world through cultural codes, rules and norms. This suggests subjects are context-bound and not free from time, location or mind and so bias can also be formed by humans trying to understand humans. In this study for example, I am a researcher as well as a VW campervan owner and so a 'subject' with insider knowledge. As an ontological question therefore in which nature and reality are being unpacked, Weber (2004) points out that interpretivists follow the idea of truth based in an initial interpretation of phenomena by conforming to the meaning given to the researcher's lived experience of it. Or, as Bevir and Rhodes (2003, p.17) put it, 'interpretive approaches' to political science focus on the meanings that shape actions and institutions, and the ways in which they do so. In other words, it is not possible to begin with a blank slate because the researcher is familiar with their subject prior to the formal research engagement, meaning their views may be tempered by what is already 'known'. As Smith (1983) points out, research participant's encounter the context in which they find themselves through a veil of ideas (beliefs, understandings and meanings) so the same must apply to analysts. This is also in line with Haraway's (1988, p.13) refutation of the idea that knowledge production is truth coming from "nowhere", i.e. founded on a neutral, all-seeing stance and argues instead that knowledge is situated, partial, multiple and embodied.

Taking on board the idea that the participant is instrumental in how experience is mediated therefore, important knowledge can be drawn from how VW campervan owners relate to their modes of transport. Law (2004) contends in recognising that complexity is important to social enquiry, i.e. that single disciplines are less spectral than interdisciplinary perspectives. Further, as (Keast et al, 2004) point out, qualitative methods are more likely to unravel 'wicked' and 'messy' problems encountered in social study. The intention therefore is to see VW campervan tourism from diverse perspectives and to use creative approaches where less intellectual inhibitions lead to new ways of seeing (Rosamond, 2005, Smith, 1998,). Holden (2005, p.1) similarly supports this view by suggesting that narrow approaches can

negate a wealth of understandings, whilst Graburn and Jafari (1991, p. 7-8) add, 'no single discipline can accommodate, treat or understand tourism and can only be studied if disciplinary boundaries are crossed and inter-disciplinary perspectives are sought and formed.' Furthermore in linking this to the following section, it is pertinent to note that interpretivism and qualitative approaches are often underpinned by inductive research. The next section therefore seeks to introduce the philosophical premise of inductive reasoning and how that synergises with the study methodological position.

4.3 Inductive Research

In using the logic of inductive study, theories would be arrived at as a result of discovering patterns from observations in the field (Goddard and Melville, 2004). With the primary objective to understand the mobilities and experiences of VW campervan leisure from the initial stages of fieldwork which was experimental, more focussed questions were developed through the emerging material. As most data was collected on the way to festivals or during them, an exploratory approach was used to best comprehend these mobile subjects. As VW campervan tourists are inherently mobile I worked on a presumption that allowing data to be mobile and fluid would result in as yet, unimagined results. This approach is also in line with innovation and diversification in mobilities research methods to allow researchers to 'be' with mobile subjects and 'see' with them (Fincham et al, 2010). As Neuman (2000) also affirms, inductive approaches begin with detailed observations that do not offer the rigidity of a controlled experiment because findings are not reducible to universal and abstract generalisations.

Whilst this project is not seeking reduction but the expansion of ideas, as Flowerdew & Martin (2005) point out, 'truths' can instead be assembled into themes that emerge from the data. In this case data is mediated through the researcher as a 'participant observer' of both reflections on personal experience alongside the humanness of VW campervan activity. In this case using creative methods was a sensible route. Taking assurances from Barton (2011) therefore who also suggests that when dealing with a social study, almost every element of life can become data. To take this on board however is perhaps best achieved through a reflexive approach

to generating a diversity of data. So, whilst a traditional ethnography was conducted, the practices of photography, drawing, filmmaking, vox-pop interviews, audio recordings and visual methods have enabled other interpretations to surface. As noted by Day (2002) ethnographers often negotiate and construct their multiple selves during data collection. As a VW campervan owner therefore, it was useful to conduct an auto-ethnography so layers of personal experience would inspire other levels of understanding.

As part of the inductive process, I also used pencil drawing as a way to think about the relationships between the van, owner and the surrounding environment. Inspired by Actor Network Theory (Latour, 2007), (also chapter 3 *Body and Machine* for a more involved discussion), Figure (1) illustrates the ways in which the object (VW Campervan) and (owner) make connections between things through their mobile relationship. In considering the combined effort of the materiality of the vehicle and its driver as a biological and thinking agency, potential influences on the travel experience have been visualised.

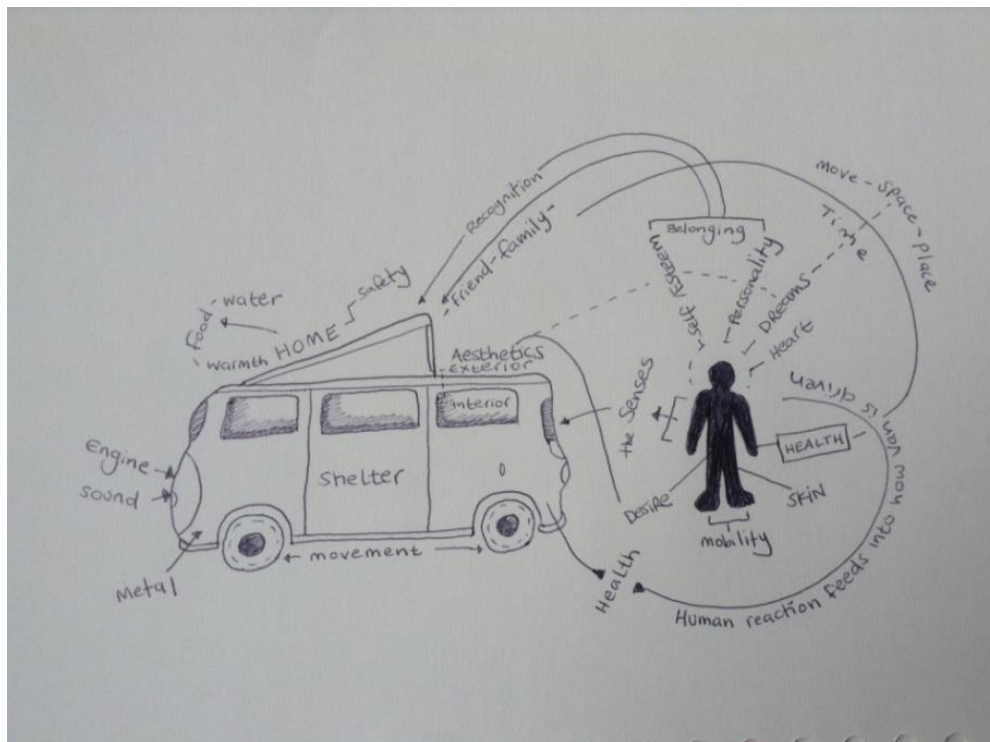


Figure 4.1 Researcher Drawing- Van/owner/Space relations

The diagram (Figure 1) considers in simple terms the material qualities of the van; i.e metal body, rubber tyres moving on tarmac, homely interiors, engine parts

and so on. Once coupled with a human traveller it is also a carriage, companion, family member, an expression of identity and so on; thus imagined in different ways. Having experienced this first hand, I found that the owner's personality can determine the relationship with the van and how it is used, therefore an important determinant of the travel experience. As I had owned a campervan before the study, the auto-ethnographic method allowed some consideration of the possible factors that influence the travel experience. That said these initial thoughts were by no means exhaustive, but they were a way to use insider knowledge as a starting point for observational work. In Figure 2, a diagrammatical exploration of the van-owner hybrid allowed for further development of the idea of embodiment and what that might entail. Physically, the body and machine are reliant on each other to be mobile and so it seemed reasonable to think about how these relations converge as an embodied travel experience.

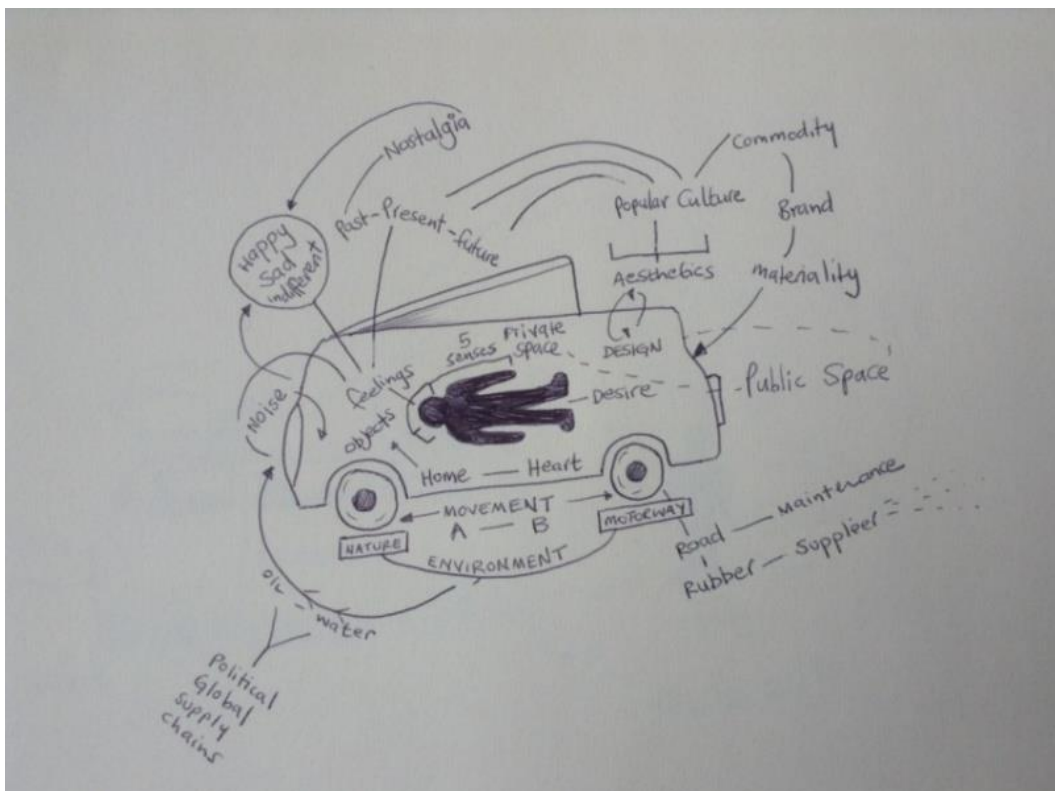


Figure 4.2 Researcher Drawing- Owner- Vehicle- Embodiment

In Figure 1 human and van objects are thought of as part of a wider network of possible relations, the second illustration attempted to imagine them bound together

to constitute movement. Developed in the first stages of fieldwork, this picture sets out, not only to explore the materialities of the assemblage of things, but also as an attempt to consider immaterial affects of emotion and imagination. These were brought into consideration as I found that I had a strong emotional attachment toward the van and so wanted to explore this unusual side effect of ownership more widely. Being able to visualise this meant questions could be raised about whether strong feelings of belonging and attachment were common in other owners. My own self reflection of travelling in a Volkswagen also included feelings of emotional, nostalgic, aesthetic and sensory natures. By considering these as guiding factors of the VW campervan experience therefore, the aim was to use ethnography to collect participant perspectives as a diverse and subjective data set. In addition, the diagram (Figure 2) shows external forces that either facilitate movement or are part of the landscape of physical and social mobility. Everything from oil companies, popular culture, weather, roads, nature etc. can contribute to the overall affect and so have been noted. Having discussed how visualisation has contributed to the inductive process of the research project, initial observations from this process have led to the development of three objectives. As previous stated to understand road travel in a VW campervan through sight, sound, physicality, temporality and velocity. Secondly to examine the relationship between the owners and their VW Campervans as a transhumanist practice and finally to comprehend how VW campervans are used for identity formation, leisure, home-making and communality. Therefore logically following these objectives in the next section, the research context of VW campervan festivals and events are introduced, followed by an explanation of the methodological design of the thesis to include crystallisation, ethnographic, auto-ethnographic, visual methods, mobile methodologies with a brief resume of the guiding principles of ethics as related to the project.

4.4 Methods

4.4.1 Crystallisation

In this part of the discussion, the method known as crystallisation is used to coordinate and articulate a number of 'lived' truths. In using the metaphor of crystallisation, Richardson (2000, p.934) argues that diverse interpretations are analogous with viewing something through a crystal: "Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colours, patterns, and arrays, casting off in different directions."

Crystallisation in other words can maximise a variety of epistemologies towards multiple ways of knowing. Relating this method to social science research in tourism, which has been criticised for operating within a narrow lens of empirical enquiry, shrinking the scope for ontological, epistemological and methodological developments, Ateljevic et al, (2012a) explain through 'hopeful tourism', that the application of interdisciplinary approaches can challenge the archetypal principles of anthropological practice (Ferguson and Gupta, 1997). This is achieved by using disciplines such as poetry, personal diaries, performances and multi-media texts as alternatives to the reporting strategies that pervade the academy (Denzin,1997). By encouraging researchers therefore to cross genres and to use 'crystallisation' as a working principle, it is possible to push beyond the conceived paradigmatic boundaries for different kinds of data to be in the mix.

That said, as Ellingson (2009, p. 5) points out, crystallisation does not radically depart from recent developments in qualitative analysis in that it is not a formulaic method, but offers a way of thinking through grounded theory and creative genres of representation to combine the dualistic partitioning of the arts and sciences. It was Richardson (2000) that broadly introduced this concept by arguing that academics in analysing the same topic differently could draw freely from a vocabulary of literary, artistic, and scientific genres for a potentially deeper understanding of the topic. Whilst Atkinson (1997) on the other hand rejects this as being dangerously experimental in the pursuit of knowledge, Ellis (2004) argues that moving beyond defining art as 'not science' and science as 'not art' is an important lateral rethink.

Using crystallisation is about integration, layering and blending of material. The aim of using it in this context is that the tourist experience can be represented as a compilation, seeing travel through different prisms. It also means 'scraps' of data are considered as infinite possibilities that could be embraced through improvisation during fieldwork. In terms of a researcher's position, producing a 'bricolage' therefore, as Ellis (2004, p. 12) notes, means the line between narrative ethnography and auto-ethnography can shift continuously because ethnographic stories often reflect the researcher's self, even as they construct the selves of others. In this light, crystallisation texts have acknowledged the researcher's self as a reflexive agent in the design, collection and representation of subjects (Finlay, 2002) To explain how Crystallisation as a method is used here, the following diagram brings together the many methodological approaches and synthesises them; see Figure 3. The illustration shows a crystal motif in the centre containing the two main approaches, ethnography and auto-ethnography. From these, a range of interdisciplinary methods are united to blend the findings together, fusing different understandings of the phenomena.

Crystallisation has been a useful framework for a range of methods that constitute rich yet often fragmentary knowledge. As Hunter et al (2002) note the more experience one has of multi-dimensional thinking, the greater number of perspectives can be drawn.

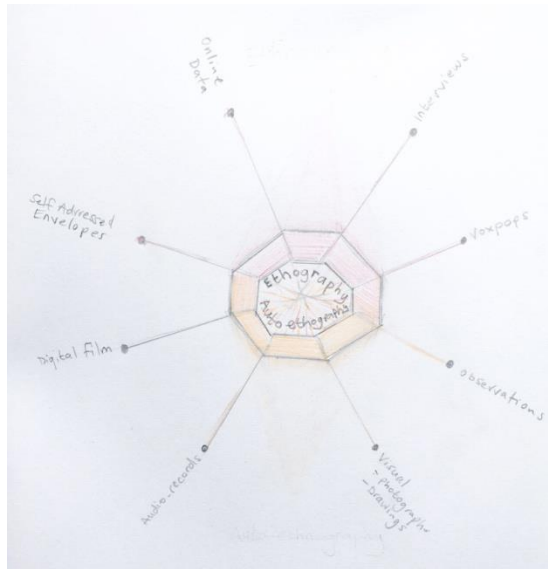


Figure 4.3 Researcher's drawing of crystallisation map

In this case the diagram shows two distinct methodological paradigms of ethnography and auto-ethnography, which through applying the crystallisation method, the distinction between each type of data can be merged. The ethnographic part of the study is a combination of interviews of a semi-structured, unstructured and conversational form. Video was used for the vox-pop interviews as well as voice recordings, observational work and note-taking so interviews and conversations could be recorded. The auto-ethnographic methods included film making, audio recordings, photography and a field diary.

To explore the aims of this project through crystallisation further, I concluded that rather than each method having a distinct goal, an open-ended approach would lead to diverse perspectives. To meet the aims of Objective (1) i.e. to understand road travel in a VW campervan in terms of sight, sound, physicality, temporality and velocity, the auto-ethnographic part took the form of a digital film made whilst travelling on the road – the M1 and the A69 –, alongside audio recordings of monologues taken whilst driving. Semi-structured interviews and informal conversations were also employed in order to explore with the participants the question of road travel. Objective (2) to understand how tourists use VW campervans for identity formation, leisure, home making and communality was met using ethnography to comprehend the social

life of the festivals. Data was mainly captured through semi-structured interviews and vox-pops, but with additional participants completing an A5 booklet of interview questions sent back to the university. Finally, in regards to Objective (3) to examine the relationship between the VW campervan and its owner to consider it as a transhumanist practice, the data was collected by note taking and observational work during the festivals, along with about 3 hours of digital film footage.

To conclude, the crystallisation method has been an effective framework by which data from a variety of texts, visuals and audio have been overlaid to form a claim to knowledge. By visualising the phenomena as a 'bricolage' therefore, the VW campervan experience is represented not as a lineage of so called facts, but as an assemblage of propositions. Now in the next section a description and rationale for the use of Ethnography is undertaken.

4.4.2 Ethnography

This section discusses the importance of an ethnographic approach to this study. In terms of its philosophy and process as Herbert (1991) suggests, the work of the ethnographer is to observe the everyday *lifeworlds* of groups and to disclose the social structures within them. Further to this:

'In its most characteristic form...[ethnography] involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions in fact, collecting whatever data is available to throw light on issues that are the focus of the research' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007., p.1).

According to Cloke et al, (2004) ethnography is a flexible model retaining an unstructured style that can include all the voices and opinions of the participants. As far back as the early 20th century Malinowski (1922, p.25) pointed out that ethnography should aim to 'grasp the native's point of view....to realise their vision of the world ". He also said however, in dealing with people as the mediators of the knowledge, prior life experiences, personal feelings, aspirations and ways of being can also lead to

unpredictability and contradiction. As Flowerdew and Martin (2005) also suggest, human reactions and interactions have both order and randomness. Human desires for example are not always to do with cause and effect and are relational, hence the texts that serve to explain them can only be only 'partial truths' and lack the ability to be generalized (Bryman, 2012). Qualitative methods thus problematise this notion of certainty to propose that data is fluid, cultural and evolving. This has also led to an application of mobile methods in that the phenomena in question are not only social, but also on the move. This calls for some appraisal of the way research can be constructed on-the-move and what critical theories have been developed to support this. As a final point Crang & Cook (2007), argue that due to the inter-subjective nature of researchers they could 'go native' and have no critical distance. Mindful of this as arguably I was already 'native' to the VW campervan scene in some respects, I used this to my advantage and opted for the auto-ethnographic option to explore my own situatedness.

Participants involved in this ethnography are members of VW campervan clubs from the North East of England, alongside non club attendees and visitors from other parts of the UK. In addition, I offered participant knowledge as a Volkswagen owner. The sites in question visited included Harwood Hall (Leeds), Volkspower (Redcar), The Mighty Dubfest (Anlwick Garden) formerly Druridge Bay, Durham Dubbers, (Gibbsite Hall, Gateshead), Volksfling Festival (Biggar) in Scotland and the VW Rally (Tynemouth), all of which were visited twice between the late spring and summer period 2010-2012. Most events were three days long and held between Fridays and Sundays. Due to the informal relationships developed with the VW campervan community prior to the study I had easier access to individuals and groups. As Wolcott (1999) reminds us, fieldwork needs the researcher to be immersed in the field and to be familiar with the spatial and socio-cultural arrangements of the subject. Yet as Maykut & Morehouse (1994) point out, a qualitative researcher's perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one as it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meanings of others – to indwell – whilst at the same time to be aware of biases and preconceptions that may be influencing what one is trying to understand – thus issues of positionality are important, and a practice of reflexivity is required.

The owners' club in question – *Flat 4 Dubs*, consisted of about 600 members offering a great potential for responses, but on average only 50 participants attended festivals at any one time. In terms of the methods used to collect this data, participants were invited to take part through informal conversations with a view to conducting in-depth interviews at a later stage. Using an interview checklist of stock themes outlined in the objectives (see appendix 1), the inductive process of an open-ended and informal approach meant I could 'go-with-the-flow' and let the participants take the lead. Whilst the convention of semi-structured interviews was intended to gather a substantive amount of information, the data from more informal conversations such as those undertaken using the video technique were of equal value. (See appendix 2, Vox Pop Videos CD). An example of the interview questions used included: *What attracted you to the idea of a VW Van? Did you give it a name? In terms of feeling about the van, can you describe that? Do you attribute the features of the van to yourself, your personality? I hear people say you either love them or hate them what does that mean?* (See appendix 3, for the full list).

Data was also collected through the dissemination of an interview question booklet called, 'Why did I buy this campervan?'. These types of questions were established through an inductive process and developed through observation as the project developed. Stamped addressed booklets were handed out to participants unable or unwilling to be interviewed to complete them in their own time, this generated a further 12 responses. Example questions for this process included, 'Do you consider the VW campervan as a family member?', 'Have you ever talked to your VW campervan? Does your VW campervan make you smile?'. (See appendix 4 for the full list).

Using my artistic skills I also planned and delivered a 4 hour 'Colour in the Campervan' art session as a family activity at Druridge Bay, Volksfest (See Figure 4). Facilitating a participatory arts session enabled informal conversations to happen, with about 18 VW campervan owners contributing.



Figure 4.4 Researcher art workshop at Druridge Bay (2012)

Again, employing the general interview checklist, this method worked well in that it captured data that may not have otherwise emerged. In terms of the approach, it was most appropriate to socialise in the session rather than use any formal process and then just make general notes after the event. Any data was then transcribed and coded similarly to the semi-structured interview data. Additional information was also collected from an online post of 26 interview questions on two Volkswagen club forums. These were *Flat 4 Dubs* owners' club totalling 261 responses from an online forum were collated and coded alongside *Just Kampers* a national forum with 10 respondent comments also added into the data set. (See appendix 5 for examples).

In terms of approach to fieldwork, approximately half the time was spent in and around the *Flat 4 Dubs* owners' club area. The rest was used to engage with the wider community. This was achieved by using a type of snowball sampling by taking advantage of the social networks of identified participants in what Thomson (1997) describes as an ever-expanding set of potential contacts. This process is based on the assumption that a 'bond' or 'link' exists between the initial sample and others in the same target population, which according to Berg (1988) allows a series of referrals to be made within a circle of acquaintance. As a Volkswagen owner therefore, strolling around the site using conversations to connect with participants was an optimal approach. Although there was occasional resistance, most owners were keen to share their views. Many of the voices represented were owners as opposed to hirers or

general visitors due to my research interest in the embodied nature of ownership, and the fact that the experience of ownership was the main focus.

I was also aware that being part of the *Flat 4 Dubs* community made me question whether I was taking an insider or outsider position. As Rose (1985) contends however there is no neutrality in the researcher's position, arguing that research is often conducted from a glass house. Asselin (2003) also comments that a researcher who is also an insider has to mine data with their "eyes open" and assume they know very little about the group in question. This emphasised the point that although the researcher may be part of the culture they are researching, they may not understand it. Kanuha (2000) also adds, being an insider has the potential for enhancement of depth and breadth of understanding a population, although critically the researcher may be too similar or too close to the people studied. As Asselin (2003) recommends, the researcher needs to therefore bracket their assumptions. For example, as an owner I began to record my own experiences as auto-ethnography, but could allow myself to be distracted by other owners and was able to turn my attention to them and capture responses in a spontaneous way. I also found as the event was constantly in flux, intermittently stopping one enquiry and starting another suited its temporality.

Once the fieldwork was complete in terms of data analysis, all texts were transcribed and imported into the qualitative tool NVIVO. This is an online system that allows text and visual data to be organised into nodes and themes. At this first level of coding, distinct concepts and categories in the data formed the basic units of the analysis. This data was broken down into first level concepts, or master headings, and second-level categories, or subheadings. In this project, the transcripts were refined down into a number of distinct nodes and then stored in the three categories which aligned with the project aims. These themes set out to explore the project objectives, i.e the embodied relationship between driver and vehicle to include nodes such attachment, love, personality, anthropomorphic, tactility. Then in road travel encounters nodes such as dwelling, domesticity, slow travel, sightseeing, freedom, and romanticism to name but a few were considered. Then the final set of nodes relating to life at the festival included being together, aesthetics, identity, mechanical interest, affordances. All data was stored in NVIVO and enabled select quotes within

subheadings to be accessed easily as empirical justification. (See Appendix 6 for NVIVO screen shots)

4.4.3 Auto-Ethnography

This section introduces the auto-ethnographic method as an important tool to mine personal data. Admittedly a contested field, and an approach often maligned for its outcomes being subjective and uncritical, auto-ethnography can arguably be an 'alternative' method and form of writing that Neville-Jan (2003) explain falls somewhere between anthropology and literary studies; potentially useful in crossing borders in the research process. In an attempt to break the 'self /other' dichotomy therefore, in this case the researcher is also the subject. In this sense, the method contains elements of auto-biography that cross the borders of personal and professional life-space. Yet as Ellingson (2009) argues, whilst the self is a good piece of evidence, she warns it must not be romanticised. She also suggests that identities are also known through comparison and interaction with others as determinants in how knowledge is produced.

As Richardson (2000, p. 926) also notes, whilst the complex relationship between social science writing and literary writing has led to a blurring 'between "fact" and "fiction" and between "true" and "imagined", Ellingson (2009) again reminds us that these performative selves whilst in-flux are not false, but constructed and maintained through communication with the social world. In this case I was a VW campervan owner prior to the study so chose auto-ethnography as a way to convey first-hand not only driving to festivals, but also sharing the tourist experience with others. Ellis and Bochner (2000) also note that auto-ethnography is a method where researchers use their personal lives in their studies by paying attention to physical feelings, thoughts, and emotions. This allows them to explore a particular life and through stories, try to understand its ways of realisation. Also by emphasizing the centrality of the personal, this account backgrounds the social or cultural world in which the writing occurs, or, rather, the social and cultural world being investigated can be read through the personal.

Conducting an auto-ethnography to discover insights into VW campervan tourism is appropriate, as it enabled the embodied relationship between researcher and Volkswagen vehicle to be deconstructed. (See figure 4.2). Inspired by Spry (2001, p.708) who argued that auto-ethnographic approaches are viewed as 'academic heresy' by some. In concentrating on her own body as a site from which data can be generated she suggested that auto-ethnography was an emancipatory method where body and mind could be integrated into the scholarly activity. In other words, corporality and the production of textual knowledge normally has distinctive boundaries, here the separate worlds have been drawn together.



Figure 4.5 Researcher with VW Campervan, Harwood Hall, Leeds (2012)

In practical terms an auto-ethnography was conducted when travelling to and from festivals and documented using audio-visual methods. The outcomes were approximately 3 hours of digital footage taken on a mobile phone. See Appendix 7 for an example of an uncut sample footage including a 7.2 minute version of extracts. This shortened version was compiled at the discretion of the researcher taking footage from day through to night and also on the road then at the festival. In other words, it was a series of extracts selected as a representative sample even though all the footage collected was analysed and key contributions noted. Audio recordings were also taken at spot times during these road trips in the form of recorded oratories that attempted to describe the sights, sounds, feelings and physical experience of VW

campervan mobility, (see Appendix 8, for audio samples). This approach Madison (1993, 1999) calls “Performing theory/embodied writing”. As will be addressed in more detail in the visual methods section, this data was important as it is visual and time based and so capturing the experience in ‘real time’ after the fact is vital. The journeys on the M1 and A69 were then analysed and the commentaries transcribed and also loaded into NVIVO within the thematic structure.

4.4.4 Visual Methods

This part of the chapter explains visual methodologies as a context for the image-based aspect of the study. Beginning with Holliday (2000, p.5043) who lamented that visual representations have been ‘largely ignored’ by the social sciences, as Rose (2014) contends, one of the most striking developments in the last decade is the growth of visual research methods in social sciences. As Witzgall et al (2013, p. 10) also points out in the past two decades, debates have once again erupted as artistic research has re-engaged due to emerging skepticism towards science’s claim to truth and a valorization of the image due to the so- called iconic turn. Science researchers such as Bruno Latour, Karin Knorr-Cetina, or Donna Haraway, since the 1970s have campaigned for what they describe as a “more realistic account of science-in-the-making” (Latour 1999, 15). Having considered these adoptions as alluded to by Witzgall et al (2013), it was important for this research to follow on from growing interest in visual representations and in image-based research in sociology and anthropology. Through my artistic adoption and examination of ethnographic methods, I consolidated the relationships between these two disciplinary fields by applying my own potential of to make art as a research tool, as a useful lens through which to comprehend the phenomenon. This adoption of creativity has ultimately led to my hybridity as artist and ethnographer positionality.

Through application of an image orientated method as one of the processes, visual research has been used to generate evidence against the research objectives. The method itself can take many forms to include producing photographs, film, videos, drawings, media images and graphical representations. In terms of the wider theory

around the visual in tourism, it is useful to note that in accordance with Westwood (2007, p293), tourism by nature is a people-centered experience that is ludic and sensory. This is partly to do with “The centrality of the eye in Western Culture”, which Urry (2002) adds is elevated above all else. Jenks (1995) also concedes that the ideas of seeing and knowing appear inextricably intertwined, contending that the author of the image has thus power over representation. Rose (2012) also states that images often reveal visions of social categories, such as class, gender, race, able-bodiedness etc. leaving the researcher responsible for moderating biases or moral judgements based on representation as well as inclusion of knowledge mediated through embodied experiences.

Having set the scene, Prosser & Loxley (2008), in locating a model of visual practice, have identified four main types of visual data to consider. These include ‘found data’, ‘researcher created data’, ‘respondent created data’ and ‘representations’. In some projects, the visuals are created by the researcher whilst at other times they are created by the participants. In this study, I produced the visuals but was aware of a potential ‘othering’ of participants so ensured a collaborative approach. As mentioned, the main visual method used in this study was the creation of digital film. To create this, a mobile phone was strapped to different parts of the vehicle to film different vantage points. In terms of direction, I did not begin with a formal plan but started with a process of driving the van and by interacting with speed, landscape, other vehicles and its interior during the journey; locating interesting images along the way. As shown in the film still (figure 6), the atmosphere of the journey was influenced by weather, light, other vehicles, highway obstructions alongside driver feelings and fantasies, and noise and velocity that could not be represented by the visual.



Figure 4.6 Film Still, VW Researcher, 2012

At the festivals, the visual material was gathered to capture the ambiance and materiality of participant experience. The option to use visual methods meant that a choice of mediums could be harnessed, depending on how participants interacted with the research. This project produced over 100 digital stills taken on the camera of a mobile phone as well as a 35mm digital SLR camera (see Appendix 9). In this case informed consent was negotiated in order for images to be used in the thesis and consent forms completed (see Appendix, 10). The decision to use visuals in this case was to capture movement on the way to the festival but to also use video as another way to record stories. The additional 'stills' were used as pictorial evidence often as owner portraits to illustrate points within the discussion, whilst the 'Vox Pops' videos (although visual documents) functioned to provide a different platform for which participants could be interviewed. Finally, the film of the journey to the festival was also analysed for its visual content; an expression in 'real time' of what it was like to drive.

This material was insightful because it could be reflected upon after the fact, contributing significantly to the thesis. Finally, as touched upon in the inductive research section of this chapter, due to their visual nature drawing techniques were used to visualize the structure of the networks around VW campervan travel. As Taussig (2011) declares in his use of sketchbooks, it is not just about drawing, but a way of seeing. By using the Deleuzian concept of 'diagram', i.e that it can be used to trace 'relations between forces unique to a particular formation' (Deleuze, 1988, p.72),

we can enable considerations of the agencies involved in the production of the social and mobile phenomena. Barry (2016, pp, 1-02) also adds it is a method that can also be seen to supplement current non-representational practices, which in this case led to Actor Network Theory being used as a guiding trope throughout the analysis. As Larson, (2008b), and Van Der Duim et al, (2012) also point out, these are the materials and media used for documentation that enable researchers to 'do' mobile research and to establish ways to move with a range of research subjects and objects (Merriman, 2014, p. 74). In other words, a diagram is not a static representation of information, but instead arguably a collection of relations to emerge through events and processes. With the capacity to deliberate over what Manning (2009, p. 124) describes as a 'technique or series of techniques for the open conjugation of intensities', the diagram he argues is less content driven but operates at the interstices of composition where form and structure are not fixed, but fluid and in motion. This point leads on to the following section which introduces an important tool by which the rich data of mobile subjects can be captured in ways the still imagery cannot replicate.

4.4.5 Mobile Methodologies

Having conducted research that involved both subject and researcher in motion in the field, this part of the discussion highlights the academic context of mobile methodological practices to suggest it benefits data collection in this account. As Barry (2016) points out, mobile subjects in tourism can require a variety of techniques to gather, correlate, interpret or produce insights. Further to this, in contemplating the contextualizing practices associated with the new mobilities paradigm therefore (Ricketts Hein et al, 2008), a brief review of the tenets of a roving methodological approach is in order.

By acknowledging the reality that technologies have enabled everyday life to be more mobile compared to pre-modern times, exploratory approaches to research have been developed to comprehend an unfolding array of mobile phenomena. At the heart of epistemological debates around knowledge acquisition in social science research, mobile methods can capture the narratives of human experience in ways traditional approaches are perhaps less equipped to do. From the initial developments of Hagerstrand (1970) for example, Thrift (2008) has characterized the importance of

'time-space' geography to support the idea that the spatialising of social theory has demonstrated human action is not static, but situated in time and space. Hence, as with the practice of automobility the micro-worlds inside a car, or in this case a VW campervan, are comprehended not only as transport geography, but as a set of social relations on-the-move. In this study of travel, immobile methods although arguably limited in design due to their sedentary nature, can be complimented by mobile methods because they engage more effortlessly with temporality.

In other words, conducting an interview with a participant post travel is reliant on memory and reflection, whilst interpreting a travel film that captures a moment of time arguably has a rawness and intimacy less affected by introspection or the passing of time. Whilst both approaches are useful in dealing with human experience, it would be fair to say that they differ in possible representations of it. Drawing upon Wylie (2006) to support this, in his analysis of landscape, identity and place, it is argued that in acknowledging embodiment as a consequence of humans engaging with place, stories of travel can be told as emotional geographies. As Sheller and Urry (2006) also point out, in the 'recentering' of the human body through which place is constructed, the body, once thought of as an 'irrational' factor, can instead be used as an explanatory force. By taking this method forward, Thrift (2004b) has considered emotion as motion both literally and figuratively. In his investigations into sensory experiences of sight, touch, smell and so on he suggests that intensities of feeling that people experience in places make them actors in the spatial politics of affect.

By following the mobile connections between the volatile and always emergent flow of things, humans and information, mobile research can consider the 'micro-geographies' of social relations and meanings as new representations of space through a moving lens. Although these complex theories are only touched upon here, their basic pretext nonetheless is to understand how social space can be measured not only quantitatively but also in terms of how humans feel it. Building upon the idea that humans are intrinsic to how place is experienced, Elsworth and Martin (2000. p.649) also add on a practical note that 'Interview sites are inscribed in the social spaces that we as geographers are seeking to learn more about'. In this case fieldwork is often conducted on-the-move or in a temporary resting place which mobile methods have been useful in acknowledging the fluid nature of the subjects. Compared to data gleaned from sedentary interviews therefore, mobile research methods allow

researchers to travel with the subject and so to some extent experience it in similar ways. Participatory techniques whereby the researcher 'walks in the same shoes as the participant', this approach arguably leads to insights not possible through detached observation. In this project, capturing the sonic and motionful journey through film footage aids access to such experiences after the fact.

The above is a process supported by Sheller and Urry (2006) who suggest that participating in patterns of movement whilst conducting ethnography and using methods such as time-space diaries to record movement or cyber-technology to explore imaginative and virtual mobilities allow data to be mobile. Furthermore they recommend that when explaining aspects of the tourist experience, consideration of notions as 'atmosphere' for example, through poetry and literature can also reflect how feeling and affect shape perceptions of place. Furthermore photography, audio and film have played essential roles in supplementing interview data. Paulos and Goodman (2004) as a case in point took photographs of commuters and showed the participants them a week later, measuring their social interactions. Dodman (2003) also used disposable cameras to engage children in Kingston, Jamaica, whilst audio diaries were used in an investigation of sleep to mine data otherwise inaccessible to researcher and participant (Hislop et al, 2005). Another project which facilitated participatory diagramming to generate maps and flow charts is an HIV study used by Kesby (2000) to allow participants to take ownership of the data that inspired thoughts about the possibilities of mobile methods in this project.

This brief appraisal of mobile methods has critically discussed the methodological theory underpinned by a need for the new mobilities paradigm to expand its methodological horizons. By adopting mobile methods to understand VW campervan travel, dynamic data reflective of the social and mobile conditions of the phenomena has been produced. Whilst the application of mobile methods are comparatively new compared to participatory research it is its use of technology that enables the mapping of what Hagerstrand (1970) calls a 'time geography', a concept taken forward by Thrift (2005) to concludes that social theory is spatialised. In this case mobile methods have been useful in terms of being able capturing a more embodied experience of road travel.

Finally having discussed the key tenets of mobile methods as the researcher conducted some of the research driving a vehicle, the next section now summarises the other participants who were involved in the study.

4.5 Details of the Research Subjects

A total of 53 VW campervan owners and two families who had hired a Volkswagen participated in the research. Out of those involved, 32 were male whilst 21 were female. Whilst some effort was made to attain an equal gender split to ensure that if male –female behaviour differed there would be no gender bias, so despite the scene being male dominated it was important to equalise representations as women were an important participant group in the study. In terms of participant ages then, just under half were around 25-40, whilst around 30% were aged between 50 -60 and with some 60 plus retirees. Very few interviewees were in their late twenties due to the fact that Volkswagens are quite expensive to own and it was mainly owners who participated in the research. In terms of social class, the respondents were predominantly of a white working-class background, although approximately 15% of research participants could be described as middleclass.

Only one Black British research participant was interviewed and generally Volkswagen Campervan festivals were not multi-cultural, albeit due to their family orientated atmosphere they were open to diverse audiences thus appeared inclusive to those who owned a Volkswagen. It was observed that two thirds of the groups travelled as family units often with children of various ages, albeit teenagers were less prevalent than toddlers and pre-teenage children. Children were not interviewed for ethical reasons but participants often mentioned them in recollections of their experiences.

A substantial amount of single males and occasionally single females were noted. In terms of the types of employment many of the owners were teachers, business administration, sales coordinators, sales executives, mechanics or they worked in the hospitality industry. Occasionally doctors, musicians and artists attended the festivals but they were the exception not the rule. Out of the 53 participants 18 undertook in-depth semi structured interviews as audio-recordings or

as video vox-pops, 11 filled in question booklets and posted them back to the researcher, 24 respondents commented to questions on an online forum and some information was captured out in the field through a range of informal chats and semi-structured interviews conducted ad –hoc.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

To illustrate the importance of ethics, it concurs that most universities now require their researchers to seek 'ethical approval' before they begin empirical investigation. As Allen (2008) points out this is mainly to do with institutional risk of a financial and reputational nature. As with all academic institutions therefore, as a researcher I am committed to maintaining the integrity and probity of my academic research. To this end the University regards it as fundamental that the conduct of research must conform to good academic practice: that the dissemination of the results of research must be truthful and fair. All members of the University are under a general obligation to act in a professional and ethical manner, and to preserve and protect the integrity and probity of research. As Gregory (2003) states, all individuals have a moral outlook of what is right or wrong and what guides their behaviour.

Ethical approaches and frameworks are required in research to apply a set of norms of ethical behaviour to take moral issues into account and strongly influenced by the regulatory influence of the University research guidelines. That said on a more critical note, ethical guidelines however do not provide answers as they in their humility recognise the situated, contextual nature of the research. As Wiles, et al (2006) point out despite some criticism, they do provide a necessary outline for principles of thought the researcher can apply in any given scenario. Israel and Hay (2006) define a range of approaches to research ethics on offer, however this project generally adopts a non-consequentialist approach that according to Beauchamp & Childress (2001) draw upon the principles of respect for peoples autonomy, beneficence and justice to guide ethical decisions in the research. Also in terms of representation, Ellingson (2009,p.40) also states that whilst there is no single answer on how to be ethical in presenting others, a profound awareness of their multidimensionality before making knowledge claims is also critical.

When conducting the research, the VW campervan community in general were assumed to be a communal and peaceful subculture. That said to ensure minimal personal risk interactions with participants were usually in the social spaces at festivals, either as one-to-ones or in family groups standing outside their vehicles or inside their vehicles but in public view. In terms of the festival site, the general atmosphere was congenial and friendly overall, with no negative occurrences to report during fieldwork. That said although the events were family orientated, some alcohol consumption did occur onsite and so to maintain a safer working environment I tended to conduct interviews during the day where the propensity to drink was less. Also in compliance with child protection issues, no children were interviewed or spoken to unless in parental care and none of their narratives were included. As with the University code of conduct the Research Ethics Committee consider that under normal circumstances, a person over the age of 18 years – who is legally an adult – is sufficiently competent to be able to understand what a research project will involve and, therefore, is able to consent to participate. In terms of consenting to the research this was often done in an informal and verbal manner, however if I was recording data either as audio- visual responses a permission form would be signed by the participant. (see Appendix 10). Individuals were also given pseudonyms to maintain their anonymity.

In terms of moral dilemmas as a researcher, my own insider position did raise questions. Being familiar with members of the owners' club prior to the research did prompt inner conflicts as to the correct moral behaviour towards them as 'subjects'. The trouble with belonging to the group informally prior to the study was a limitation, because having a research agenda made me feel like an imposter. I found that the camaraderie from past meet-ups, i.e. enjoying eating, drinking and chatting appeared less authentic or even possible due my changed role. In hindsight, the moral implications of conducting the fieldwork more covertly may have been an option, but in knowing the participants informally challenged the moral justification to objectify them. With a desire to work collaboratively despite this emotional discomfort, I endeavoured to be as open as possible. Yet when my intentions for the group were explained, it was met with mild confusion and suspicion even though some owners were still willing to participate. With awareness that at any point I could be researching them, I feared the group would become distant. With observational work, however it

was not always obvious that research was taking place, so if I was not obviously note-taking or holding a digital voice recorder, owners were not certain if I was researching or not.

To reduce the potential obstacles of not feeling relaxed or 'othering' the research participants when I was observing, I made comments such as, 'That sounds interesting, I might stick that in my research if that's okay?' and 'I am not researching now, just chilling out guys.' to let them know that I was being a tourist and not a researcher. Interestingly when I announced I was no longer researching, participants relaxed into what appeared to be normative behaviour. This of course was a challenge ethically because it was often at that point that interesting stories were told. As Lett (1990) points out, researchers positioned as insiders allowed for the voice of the participants to direct the research. At times, however it was difficult to discern if other owners acknowledged me as a VW campervan owner or not, which meant the responses would be less honest if I was secretly expelled from the group. That said by spending committed time with them as a tourist, the idea of 'being researched' appeared to be forgotten or back staged. Of course, whether my presence created an artificial environment where participants conducted a front stage impression of reality, which when absent would turn into a backstage performance with a different script was a debatable point.

4.7 Chapter Summary

To conclude, this chapter has outlined methodological principles and qualitative research methods used in fieldwork. In choosing an inter-disciplinary approach, the study has been unpacked in different ways by challenging the boundaries of academic schools of thought by integrating the social sciences with the arts. As Barry (2016) also notes, because they were informed by their artist-researcher position, for them, practice and theory were inseparable. In this case a creative inter-disciplinary approach was used to provide an opportunity to find new knowledge by exploring the entanglements between 'personal' and 'science'. (Ren et al, 2010, p.892). Furthermore by applying an interpretivist philosophy to contemplate the diverse realities of VW campervan tourism, thereby recognizing that human differences are the complexion of the phenomena, its unfolding data was understood therefore not as

fixed or absolute, but contingent on multiple and relative concepts (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988).

To consider a panoply of data therefore, from its inception the 'crystallisation' method was used in the study to underpin its design to allow sources of data both substantive and fragmentary to be extrapolated and formatted into a consolidated body of knowledge. This chapter has also engaged in a debate about its inductive approach to ethnography, auto-ethnography and visual methods where both personal and public data could be collected, then analysed with a logic more nuanced than as a simple progression from particular/individual instances to make broader generalizations. Furthermore, the approach taken also adopts a mobile methodology in that the phenomena itself is social and mobile. The resultant bricolage of visual, oral and observational work was transcribed, coded into themes in NVIVO and then separated into three distinct areas for analysis as evidence for the empirical chapters that follow. Finally, the ethical position of the study has been discussed to clarify my position as a researcher both procedurally and philosophically and in doing so has outlined the potential problems and implications inherent in this ethnographic research study.

Having summarised the methodological and ethical approaches to the project, the next section introduces the importance of the relationship between the body and the machine and how together they produce a mobile experience.

5. CHAPTER FIVE - VELOCITY AND TIME

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the relevance of speed in relation to VW campervan travel is considered. The impetus for this study began from the disclosure that the majority of VW campervan owners found that the slowness of their vehicles was an important reason for buying into the Volkswagen brand. This firstly led to an investigation into the logic of how the owners experienced a 'slow' form of travel, in preference to other more speed-thrift forms. As the nature of temporality was significant to the tourist experience, the discussion naturally leaned towards an ontological enquiry into how speed affects tourist perceptions of time during automobility. To explore the phenomenon in some detail therefore, a combination of empirical work capturing the narratives of participants moving from A to B has been combined with a discussion of contemporary theory that unpacks notions of velocity and time. To begin with, authors; Virilio (1986) *Speed and Politics*, Latour (2007) *Actor Network Theory (ANT)* and Fullagar, S. Markwell, K. and E. Wilson (Eds). (2012) in their essays on Slow Travel are included as key texts to begin an examination the contextual affects that subscribe to shape this travel form.

The most prevalent literature used in the debate is the application of Latour's (2006) explanatory framework (ANT) as a means to comprehend how the substances in question, i.e. time, speed and space, configure when humans interact with them. ANT has further enabled the phenomena to be understood not only as an observable object on a linear trajectory, but as something atomised that expands and contracts producing different velocities within its lifecycle. The discussions in this chapter therefore, in analysing the qualitative data, have sought to identify the composition of VW campervan travel in terms of velocity-speed paradigms and to explain how tourists then experience these affects. The second part of the chapter looks at how time contextualises that experience. To do this, theorists such as Hammond (2013) are used to illuminate through their time analysis how humans variegate their notions of time relative to age, gender, history, lifestyle, environmental conditions and so on. In other words, it is proposed that the temporal aspect of motion has some bearing on how time is then 'lived' by participants. How these are then

interpreted arguably dictates what kinds of sensitivities then prevail from the travel experience as it unfolds. Yet how the notion of time has been understood from pre-history up to the present day is admittedly complicated. This thesis however, whilst unable to cover every aspect of time theory, has acknowledged some aspects of it as a means to gain a greater clarity on how human perceptions of movement embody the effectualities of time.

5.2 Slow Travel

In this discussion it is argued that the corporeal mobility of the travellers in question determine how time and space is lived, perceived and conceived as a consequence of the 'slow'. This is because VW campervan travel compared to the 'hyper-mobility' of mainstream traffic is relaxing in pace and therefore offers an alternative to the speedy velocity of urban flows. Its slowness also positions it as a transport form complicit with some, although not all, of the ethics and values of the 'Slow Travel Movement', (also see Carl Honore's book, *In Praise of The Slow*, 2004). Other authors also cited in the literature review to support this thesis include: Gardener (2009) *Slow Travel Manifesto*, Fullagar et al (2012) *Slow Tourism* and Kern, (1983) and Tomlinson, (2007) on the 'teleology of immediacy'. These theories have proved insightful in terms of how VW campervan travel can be interrogated as a slow temporality, set against normative travel practice of modern civilizations as accelerated cultures, as they are not 'fast'.

In the first instance, compared to most modern automobiles, VW campervans rarely exceed 40 mph, so are sluggish in relative terms. This also makes them an extraordinary tourist choice because unlike most forms of transport they purposely delay. In other words, VW campervan movement allows for time and space to be understood by tourists not as a fast-track to going places, but as a trajectory where they don't just travel but dwell in contemplative space. To take the Virilioian (1997, p.12) position that travelling at speed permits seeing, hearing and conceiving more intensively the present; then the 'slow' affects of a motion ride arguably alludes to 'being' in the world as a particular resistance to the mainstream flow; a desire for something that is perhaps less intense. Mindful of velocity as a guiding vector

therefore, the holism of affects that result from 'leisurely' road travel are discussed here in order for the logic of this particular embodied movement to be analysed.

5.3 Multi-Trajectories of Movement

Whilst the VW campervan is technically a slow mode of transport and thus operates within a particular range of velocities, this discussion examines how it produces multiple trajectories as it traverses through space and time. In other words, whilst 40mph is shown on the vehicle's speedometer, it is argued that not all velocities are observable in their own right yet may be understood as material impacts that reveal themselves as other velocities (speed of light, weather, blood circulation, terrain and so on) and in doing so contribute equally to motion affects. The phenomena of movement in question, derives from the interplay between driver, mobile home and urban setting as they assemble as a homogeneous motion-mass. This assemblage is arguably made possible as Vannini (2009) points out in his review of Thrift (2008) that, "The human body" —Thrift tells us— "is what it is because of its unparalleled ability to co-evolve with things" (Vannini, 2009, p. 10) and it is this evolution, he argues, that gives immaterial and material things the same conceptual and empirical weight as their human companions.

In other words, as multiple velocities inherent in this particular mobility form are considered as substantive elements in the narrative of movement, so they have to be addressed not as singularities but as pluralities of dispositions. In consideration of the idea, it was imperative to use the logic of Latour (2007) to underpin the empirical work so that the different velocities of VW campervan travel could be traced. Latour's *Actor Network Theory* is thus used as a lens from which to view the topography of this social mobility as a morphology of occurrences which are understood not as linear trajectories, but as atomized intensities of circulations, uncertainties and affects.

The *apriori* of this discussion is that as Latour (2007) understands 'the social' to be a convergence of equitable parts; i.e. nothing is possible without every association of it present in the mobility mix. By applying this theory to an understanding of the VW campervan assemblage e.g. vehicle, driver and highway not

as separate parts, but as phenomena that express unification in volatility, then a critical debate follows. By returning to Merriman's (2004) thesis that motorways are non-places, interestingly many participants in this study reported having meaningful experiences in their vans and enjoyed motorway travel for its views, communality and adventure. As Latour (2007) does not exclude the human from a description of the social, seeing them as part of its fabric then urban highways are 'something places'. This is argued because since humans are authorized through actor network theory to have an equal stake in the production of that mobile totality, then their emotions are pulled into its vortex.

Or in other words, if the human sensorium is deemed as a fundamental part of a network that creates movement, then urban highways are arguably not just passing places but sites where humans produce a liveliness of 'meaningful' mobility (Cresswell, 2006). This is because the 'feeling' body is a container that mediates the tourist experience via the corporeal. Arguably once the senses are involved in interpreting time, space, motion and so on, as Lucretius (1951) cited in Adey, 2010, p.164) suggests, bodies mediate the 'vital spirit' of the social. Anderson & Harrison (2010, p. 9) also add by advocating that beyond the human, the 'background' of the social is hardly inert as it is made up of tangible presences and absences from virtual memories, hauntings and atmospheres. So, whilst the observable features of the VW campervan moving from A-to-B can be debated, the aim of this discussion is also to explore the sociality of this tourist travel as a body of volatile affects.

As suggested, the empirical data showed that most participants appreciated travelling on roads. VW campervan owners also contended that movement was critical to their experience of enjoyment and freedom. These summations raised a second critical point. For as Latour (2007, p. 59) contests in his substantive work 'reassembling the social', no movement equals no feeling. He also argues that physiologists have demonstrated that for perception to occur, continuous motion and adjustments are also crucial. In light of these propositions, the 'sense of the social' is not possible without new associations emerging (Latour, 2007, p.159) and arguably if human agency is central to how tourist mobility is 'felt', then the movement experienced will be determined by emotional perceptions of it. Whilst it could be pre-supposed that tourists using other modes of transport have a similar story to tell, the

argument here is that the VW campervan induces a deeper engagement with it due to a design that emphasises humanness, as a blank canvas upon which owner identities are expressed or as transport that offers tourists the ability to dwell on the move. These features in turn appear to result in a positive connectedness with all objects in the network, not just their van. Further to this Massumi, (2002, p.2) points out, the mobile body 'feels as it moves and moves as it feels'. Because owners are often emotional, affectionate and even claim to be in 'love' with their vans, a correlation between movement, collective purpose, common understandings and 'well-being' are not beyond the realms of rationality in this case. (Brennan, 2003, p. 70)

The level of sensitivity of owners towards their vehicles is also captured by Sheller (2004a) who talks about 'automotive emotions'; or feelings towards cars. A natural precursor seemingly to the supposition that 'emotive motion' then occurs as a result. This in turn mobilises the world in which they travel as affectations that are mediated by each other. Such transactions are only made possible through the prosthesis of body and machine to produce motion affects in the first place. So, whilst much has been said about velocity per se, arguably the sensations tourists experience as they travel are particularly intensified in this case due to a propensity for VW campervan owners to be sensitive to their vans. Such intensities are the inventions of the proprioceptive awareness of humans as they negotiate space. This leads to a further proposition that flesh is therefore inscribed by these actions of movement as they flow through space and time.

In considering where velocity fits into this contextual debate, the emphasis on 'slow' travel exerting the polity of the body as a physical expression of that temporality, according to James (2007, p.29) in his discussions on Virilio, concludes on a metaphorical note ;

'We cannot properly approach the reality of social, political or military history unless we first realize that social space, political space and military space are at a decisive and fundamental level, shaped by vectors of

movement and the speed of transmission with which these vectors of movement are accomplished.'

Participants are bound to a 'slow' velocity and embodied by their transport thus subordinate to its machinations. Similarly as part of the vehicle's mechanical engineering as somewhat cyborgian, humans moderate machine velocity relative to their capacity to control it. In the case of the basic technology of the VW campervan it meant users interacted with it with a certain specificity. In fact, it was observed that driver behaviours were somewhat combative as a battle for supremacy perhaps between human and machine, i.e. the driver grapples with their physical and emotional limitations as they negotiate space, whilst the vehicle due to its archaic bodywork and engine, pushes to sustain motability against the natural forces that surround it. This fusion of these material things inherently results in a co-creation of a median speed that is reconciled into temporary harmony by the hybrid. In other words, driver and vehicle as they move together moderate each other's behaviour.

What is clear from observing these body-machine interactions is that humans, when they experience VW campervan movement, create complex tourist narratives that are physical, emotional, abstract, imaginative and so on as a result. Therefore, to make any sense of these animate, inanimate and spatial relativisms as affects, a return to Latour (2007) was paramount. This is because ANT is useful if not for the comprehension, certainly for the recognition that agencies are not singular entities but as affiliations to emerge through mobility. Or simply put: using Latour's (2007) predications, they no longer need to be considered as individually impactful, but instead they can be described as components within the moving holism. As Latour (2007) refutes the notion that the social world is definable *per se*, his theory has been used here as a means to consider all attributes within the VW campervan consignment as interwoven trajectories of human and non-human substances. To deconstruct these networks further, Latour adds that the mobile world can be seen as a network of associations made up of both warm-blooded connections and cold structural systems. Some of these are embodied, whilst others are institutional. James (2007) describes seemingly disparate objects coming together as 'bundles of ties', where micro and macro elements enmesh as

relevancies at the point of their appearance, before disappearing. In other words, in terms of considering this kind of travel on motorways, everything from the blink of an eye reflecting the sublime qualities of a mountain vista, to a car tyre rubbing against the uneven road surface, to an unexpected road diversion where accident victims paint the hard shoulder with blood, are some of the irrefutable actors in the unfolding plot of travel. Other types of velocities it is suggested also play their part. For example, heart rates dependent upon exhilaration or sedation, adrenalin rushes, mood swings, daydreams and so on could also affect how perceived time mediates these tourist encounters. So, whilst the XY coordinates of a road journey have some relevance, what is more important are the ways in which tourist experiences can be co-constructed by material and immaterial frictions as they coagulate.

It could be said therefore that even with limited scientific knowledge on the quantifications of velocity, it would not be improbable to suggest that these forces are moving at different speeds even though the rapidity of the entire unit (VW campervan and owner) can be technically measured in increments of clock orientated time. The collective output of metal, flesh, fire, the supernatural and all other manner of objective and subjective materials contestably act as dynamos to push the biological body (driver) and the mechanical object (vehicle) forward. Latour's proposal also bodes well with Serres (2008) who sees the senses not as separate channels from which human experience is interpreted, but as knots of matter that intermingle. This means that the human sensitivities combined in any given moment are fusions of metal, flesh and nature and have the potential to provide an explosive force of multi-velocities. Also, whilst many velocities work simultaneously to generate propulsion, it means that they can also affect halt. In the first instance, the most axiomatic measurement of speed is calculating it in MPH on the vehicle's clock. As discussed however, tourist experience can be understood as a set of consequences both imagined and real. In the spirit of ANT everything that is 'VW Campervan' can be described as a set of associations which align themselves into in a web of actions with diverse reaction times. Arguably these incorporations can be understood differently by each driver. For example, participants will interpret the speed of thought, the rush of adrenalin, the affects of depression or bodily hunger on travel perceptions at different rates of transfer. This

research has clarified however that not all participant experiences were the same either, even though they were all travelling to the same place at a similar time. This idea was echoed by a male-female couple who travelled together in the same van but described their experiences differently.

The idea was more wonderful than the reality of it. Whereas Michael was keen on sticking at it and seeing through those bad things so that we could have family holidays, as we are happier when we are on holiday. He was more willing to ride through those problems than I was but they stressed me out and the holiday flew over for him, whereas for me it usually dragged. (Amanda, VW campervan passenger, 2012)

This quote is a prime example of both tourists travelling in the same vehicle experiencing the same speed along the motorway. Yet the notion of time was perceived very differently by Michael than Amanda. This clarified that what they experienced were different trajectories thus they had different experiences. Amanda's interpretation of a 40 miles per hour journey was slower than Michael's. This appeared to be due to his willingness to mentally overcome the challenges of travelling in the van, whilst Amanda was more stressed thus everything for her slowed down.

5.4 Mapping Velocities

In this section descriptive analysis is used to explore how the velocities of VW campervan mobility define the process of travel. Here the relationship between the natural sciences and human mobility are broached using cultural theory. To make these associations and affiliations tenable however this analysis is located within the previously discussed methodology of Latour (2007). The aim of this section therefore is to unpack a range of affects in participation by considering human 'feeling', the materiality of the machine and external environment in equal measure to expand upon the dialectics of velocity in this case. To do this, a tool has been created to visualise the vectors of speed from the start of the VW campervan journey to when it

stops. By using this diagrammatic implement as a means of interpretation, the analysis of multiple actions produced by (a) the human body (b) the van and (c) the spatial domain that contains them has evolved. In short: the pictorial representation illustrates how things can move at different velocities yet they arrive at the same place at the same time. A mixture of separate energies of all kinds electrical, biological, metaphysical, cognitive and mechanical combine as a galaxy of interconnectivities such as the speed of light, the velocity of thought matter, the weight of a campervan compressing the earth, impacts of night and day on visibility and so forth. Admittedly it would be impractical to propose a pursuit of all such matters due to the scale of this study, but as 'affects' of mobility they cannot be denied.

Whilst the discussion is not concerned with a scientific measurement of the processes of velocity per se, it does acknowledge that the natural conditions that press against all moving objects potentially affect 'slow' transport to a greater extent than technologically advanced vehicles that can slice through ambiances with a 'slickness' of speed. Also, natural science theory is only levered as a backdrop for which participant travel experience is tackled from a socio-cultural perspective. In terms of this study because the external environment impacts how VW campervan travel is experienced, it would denigrate the work not to consider how scientific representations of the resultant affects influence this. In summary, for the sake of simplification but not reductionism, whilst concepts of gravity, atmosphere, weather and so forth have quantitative explanations, here it is accepted that they have common meanings that have developed from knowledge production during the enlightenment period. It is however important for this work to acknowledge them through empirical data as significant tropes of contemporary travel.

As stated whilst the nodes highlighted are not exhaustive, the research findings also implied that the most consequential themes could be separated into 5 categories. The reason for coding them as separate elements allows clarification of them as individual features. However, it is important to note that they are not to be understood as separations, but as parts of a whole mobile assembly. On the diagram (Fig,5.1) V1 Forces V2 Elements V3 Frictions, V4 Other Vehicles and V5 Driver are represented. In this chapter, these dominant themes are deconstructed in terms of how they operate as 'affects' in VW campervan mobility.

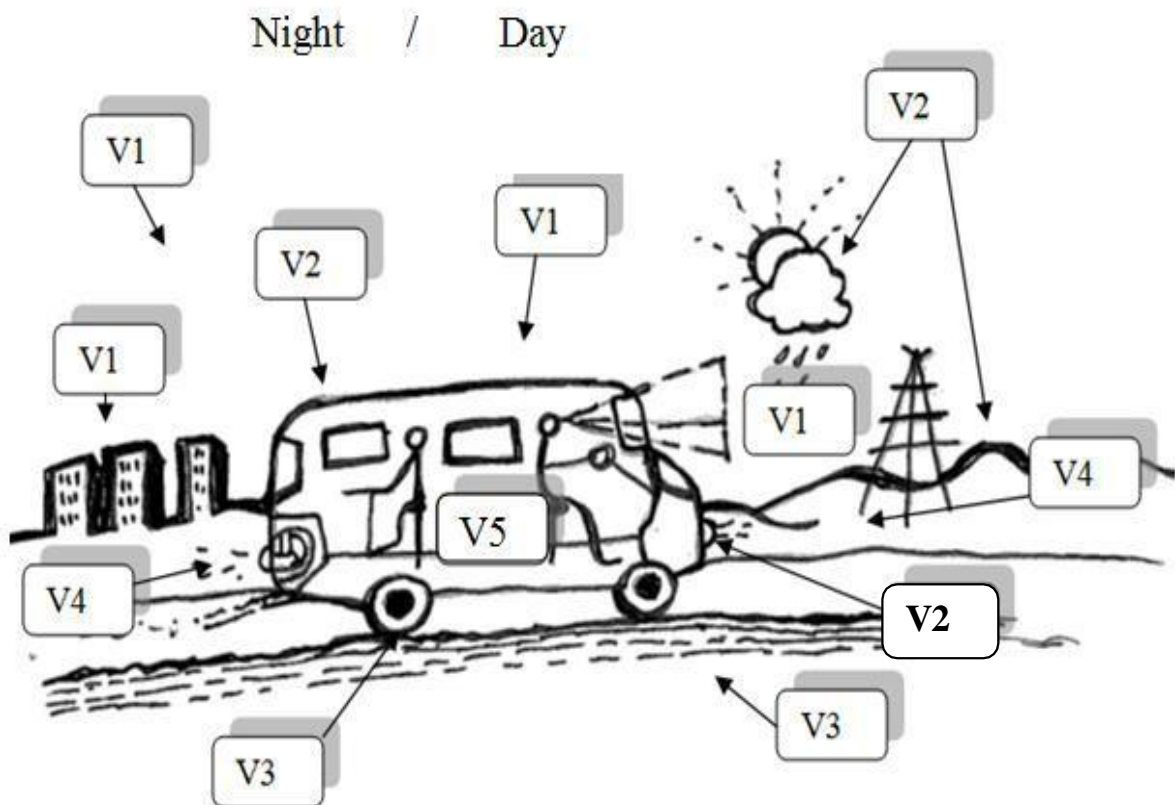


Figure 5.1 Researcher Diagram (2014) Velocity Model.

5.5 V1 Frictions

This first vector represents the frictions that play a part configuring this mobility. (See V1, fig.5.1) These stem from the natural properties of the earth conveyed through the moving vehicle. The VW campervan as it travels on roads is subjected to a number of influences both seen and unseen, some of which have direct impacts on velocity whilst others are subliminal. Example frictions at work include: Gravity, atmospheric pressure, artificial van light and weather. Yet whilst other frictions are potentially active at the same time, these themes were selected due to their significance to VW campervan owners.

5.5.1 Gravity

In simple terms gravity is the force that attracts the body towards the centre of the earth or towards any other physical body with mass (Oxford Dictionary, 2014). Gravity's effect is felt as the weight of a body, pulling down towards the centre of the earth, a downwards pull. Whilst more could be said about how gravity may affect the velocity and driver experiences in relation to its impacts, the nature of affects are briefly introduced here as examples of products of slow movement. In this case the weight of the VW campervan will affect how the vehicle presents spatially. This is a relevant consideration because the VW campervan is cumbersome, thus it moves with less haste than modern cars due to its heavy body weight in relation to its engine. Thus as it is the older models which are the subject of this research, the mobile unit is thus not capable of fast acceleration. External drag factors have less impact, i.e. the relations between motion and stop are materialised by the specificities of the moving van in terms of sluggishness, delaying, weighty bodied etc. The vehicle's torpidity also has other ramifications, as Virilio (2005) points out. Dromology or rather 'a hidden science' (that of speed) is concerned with the way velocity shapes the appearance of phenomena; speed being its guiding motif.

Applied to the VW campervan however suggests it is not just a physical expression of assuaging against the natural elements; as the earth tries to draw the object back beneath the soil, but as a metaphor for the ideology of the 'slow'. Admittedly tourists are not always conscious that in de- accelerating they are perhaps taking a political stance on issues of environmentalism and so on, but the VW campervans sluggish nature can arguably be an example of something that does regress modernist ideals of 'betterment'. To add some empirical evidence to the theory that VW campervan travel rejects the idea of 'speed equates to progress', one participant in the study was recorded to comically celebrate the difficulty their small engine had pulling a heavy load up a steep incline:

Yeah you start talking to it. Come on Betty you can do it! (Laughs)
You either get to the top or I'm going to beat you with a piece of wood! (laughs) It's funny the way you talk to them, but I wouldn't

want it any other way mind you. (Peter, VW Campervan owner, 2011)

The following quote also shows how the VW campervan communicated with its owner via heat emanating through the chassis. Its owner also commented on how they also found difficulty in finding the right gear in order to overcome the incline, this ongoing struggle with the apparatus of the van they pointed out, was rarely faced in modern autos that handled the weight felt due to gravitational force with high velocity.

I used to go off in this big van we called Torty, and one of us used to sit in the middle on the engine where it would get really hot and the same VW thing, you couldn't get the gear right and you could hardly get up a hill. (Sonja, VW Campervan Owner, 2012)

Participant Sonja summarised her physical experience of being in the van as subject to intense heat, a difficulty in using the gearing system and had a far reduced velocity on steep inclines. These sensations clearly charged the tourist experience with affects particular to the age and strength of the VW campervan which led to drivers experiencing the effect of gravity due to slow velocity. Ironically most owners described these interferences as the quirky yet positive outcomes of travel. In other words, they enjoyed experiencing such affects because these were part of the physical abrasion.

5.5.2 Atmospheric Pressure

Atmospheric pressure in simple terms is defined as the weight of the atmosphere (Oxford Dictionary, 2014). In short: pressure varies smoothly from the earth's surface to the top of the mesosphere, the atmosphere gradually fading away to nothing until space begins. Pressure deviates with the weather and is also impacted by altitude which as it increases, atmospheric pressure decreases. Temperature and humidity also affect the atmospheric pressure creating inadmissible ambient affects around the VW campervan. This force has potential to affect the driver and vehicle with kinetic energy, and it is argued that such

omnipresence's wrap themselves around objects as an ambience. Arguably the weight of air particles, have a lesser impact on things that are still and more influence on objects that are pushing forward with any force. Yet whilst VW campervans like all automobiles are subject to the air pressures associated with weather conditions and so on, here speedier forms of transport are less affected due to their ability to resist less. By considering the influences that natural forces have on mobility, it is important to note that VW Campervan owners responded to these interferences in a unique way. It transpired that due to the 'elderly' nature of the VW campervan, owners drove with due care and attention and did not push their machines to the limit. This meant that they were greatly subjected to affects of gravity, the machines being heavy and therefore slow. Because many owners appeared to care for their vehicles by not 'over doing it', that had a bearing on how they then engaged in the thrust and recoil of propulsion. In other words, VW campervans were not driven with only utility in mind and it was found that owners were purposeful in reducing speed due to a sensitivity toward the vans' 'feelings':

To be honest it's a rusty old bucket and if I put my foot down the old girl might drop to bits. I have to be careful with her otherwise she might get upset. (Bob, VW Campervan Owner, 2011)

Here the character of the vehicle has been feminised. As Miller (2001b, p. 24) suggests "it is this highly visceral relationship between bodies of people and bodies of cars that forces us to acknowledge the humanity of the car in the first place". Yet participant (Bob) was observed to drive slowly because he imagined that the van may react 'emotionally' to being driven unnecessarily fast. It also implied that whilst the driver thinks practically about not damaging their engine, such attitudes are underpinned by the anthropomorphic interpretation of the vehicle that manifested as a reduction in speed based on its so called 'humanness': Here the participant talks about the fact they have to go carefully or in a Geordie dialect 'gan canny', with their vehicle as speed was effecting the physical aspect of the van. .

Sometimes she rattles like a bucket o' spanners in the back. Like it's going to explode so I have to gan canny' (Bob, VW Campervan Owner, 2011)

Because VW campervans have old mechanical parts, when they accelerate often a clanking and rattling can be heard. Thus, impacts materialised as the physical object of the van handling road conditions are subject to such movements. As mentioned before, the natural forces and frictions which bear down on an old vehicle influence how motion is processed. This affects how the driver interprets its health then proceeds to drive differently:

I tended to drive carefully and cautiously because I feared that my rattling van might start to dismantle itself. It was like screws and bolts were unwinding themselves as we went. (VW Researcher, 2012)

The basic engineering of the VW campervan in relation to how it pulls its weight, determines its ability to affect propulsion. How its shell is preserved in terms of 'wear and tear' is also an issue due to its age. Conversely, modern cars with light frames and turbo engines are able to challenge frictions with their ability to push through them in a dynamic way. Also, due to sophisticated bodywork it can thwart the regression of paintwork, metal etc by slowing the process down, at least up to the point where speed is so high that it creates the opposite, destructive effect on engineering, unable to sustain momentum because of it. Here the 'slow' mobility of the van due to its encumbering carcass compared to the engine size makes it hard to drive and less resistant to frictions in and around it. Also, the degradation of parts and paintwork is accelerated as outdoor elements attack aged metal. The density of the VW campervan object surging against these frictions has the potential to be more 'felt' by the driver who is not cocooned in a high-tech pod. To try to describe these

subtle inferences are admittedly complex, however data suggests that these affects do have some bearing on the speed owners choose to drive:

Compared to my run-around car with power steering, especially when I was tired, I felt the weight of the van almost dragging along the road. The combination of its sluggishness with accompanying rattles of the mechanical bits made me feel at times that I was physically carrying the load myself. (VW Researcher, 2011)

When driving the VW campervan it felt heavy rather than light unlike new cars (VW Researcher). Other owners also acknowledged that the engine limitations and weight of the van affected its ability to move fast. It was found most owners appeared to like the analgesic effect, confessing to enjoying travelling at a slower pace.

5.6 V2 Elements

5.6.1 Lighting

Another force impactful on velocity is interaction with light produced by the VW campervan and the surrounding environment. Projections of light, the speed of light and the affects of light are embedded alongside the observable speed (MPH) of the vehicle. As Ingold (2000a) points out visual awareness is not often accounted for in terms of an 'experience of light'. Whilst Merleau- Ponty (1962) still cited today by many contemporary theorists, also claims that light is an experience of being in the world as something ontologically prior to the scopic of seeing things. In this he alludes to new-borns or those who were visually impaired and who regained sight and are overwhelmed by its abstract and somewhat non-referential nature. He also adds that we are grounded in the 'soil of the sensible' where self and world are comingled through light (1964, p.160). Even prior to the discussions about the phenomenology of perception, James (1892, p. 14) also suggested that 'the first time we see Light...we are it rather than see it'. In this enquiry, the artificial light source of the VW

campervan is argued to determine how the driver navigates various lighting conditions which illuminates how they move through and ultimately perceive the world. To give an example on the journeys in question, as day moves through shades of visibility toward the darkness of night this in turn regulates the speed of the vehicle as a result. In the case of the VW campervan, its front lights when on full power are unusually dim, which means on country roads with no road lighting VW campervans travel slower than normal due to poor visibility:

Driving down the country lanes to Volksfest in Northallerton was particularly hard because my headlights even on full blast were not enough to shine on the sides of the road. I had to drive at the pace of a snail to make sure I didn't crash. The poor lighting on an old campervan makes them very impractical to use if you are driving in remote places where the roads are pitch black. (VW Researcher, 2011)

Here the lack of intensity of the lights in the vehicle influenced how it was experienced in terms of ambience and visibility. As again Virilio (2000) suggests, 'it is speed which lights up the universe of perceptible and measurable phenomena' or that 'light remains the unique revealers' of sensible appearances' (Virilio 2000, p. 55). From the phenomenological meter of his thinking, i.e. not scientific in the purist sense, despite, or because ideas such as 'the light of speed' he argues can be related to the scientifically determined constant of the 'speed of light', then their impacts are critical to how things are experienced whether viewed scientifically or not. As the perception of light is affected by velocity, the way VW campervan owners experience this, cannot be seen in isolation but instead it alludes to ambiances or affects on the overall experience of mobility; which in this instance due to the lack of light emanating from the van headlight due to basic technology, a gloomy lack of visibility was produced.

It felt like a creepy road movie as I was going very slowly down some very narrow roads and could barely see a thing. It was like I was

lost with a desolate feeling of eerie claustrophobia. (VW Researcher, 2011)

In terms of this tourist ontology the affect of the low velocity lighting was observed to evoke an 'embodied' reaction. The somewhat 'haunted' elicitation likely due to the researcher being exposed during her lifetime to images from popular culture, such as horror films, road movies etc. meant that the peculiarities of this subdued lighting provided a backdrop for the driver to project imaginaries on to the scene. Yet the VW campervan is just a mode of transport driving down a country road, not for example the 'Mystery Machine' campervan on a cartoon mission to catch a ghost. Or indeed any other fictional representation that has the potential to imbue an eerie affect on mobility. Yet the researcher and other owners likewise found themselves projecting representations from the media onto real life experiences; making that experience like the fake.

5.6.2 Weather

In this section, how weather conditions such as snow, mist, sunlight, hail etc. frame the perceptions of the road are considered. As Ingold (2000a) points out in his discussion on visual perception and the weather, theories about how landscapes are perceived have in the past rarely considered the affects of light associated with different celestial conditions. In his essay, he talks about how a dramatic shift in climatic conditions made for a short period the world look and feel completely different, despite him gazing at the same view. In this case not only does weather affect the surfaces of the van within the environment it travels, but it can also have a psychic effect on the mood of drivers. Jonny (VW Campervan Owner, 2012) for example said on grey days he tended to drive even more slowly as the road had a depressing 'vibe'. Interestingly the opposite effect was experienced by the owner-researcher:

I wanted to drive quickly just to get out of the madness of window wipers swishing, poor visibility and the van being attacked by water.

All the windows steamed up as well and with no air con, I had to drive one handed and try and swab the mist off the windscreen with the other. Torrential rain also disturbed the views outside and I wanted to go fast but was concerned that the van would slide around. (VW Researcher, Audio Diary, 2011)

Another owner commented on how the weather affected their mobility as well as enjoyment of the trip as they were not protected from the natural elements by the vehicle. Also, because VW campervanning is a quasi-outdoor pursuit, the temporality of the weather is, for better or worse, fundamental to the tourist experience:

For me it's an anxious thing. Like we had a holiday in Skye and it just rained every day. It even rained when we were driving home to the point where I thought they are going to come off the road in a minute (laughs) (Craig, VW campervan owner, 2012)

The link between the VW campervan's ability to resist the frictions of the weather and how drivers then proceeded to handle wet surfaces is expressed here. It appears that tourist anxiety led to mistrust of the capability of the van. Later the owner commented that they proceeded with caution because they felt quite vulnerable driving what was thought of as a fragile vehicle. Yet it was evident from participant commentary that beyond a perhaps dramatic interpretation of events the van did not actually have a problem gripping the road surface, but it was the poor conditions which made drivers fearful of potential danger not only to them, but to their van:

When it's pouring with rain and the windows are leaking, we frequently consider a motorhome. When we can't use it in the winter we frequently consider a motorhome but not yet, we have got more VW years in us yet(Jenny, VW campervan owner, 2012).

Another owner, Jenny, remarked upon her vehicle's lack of resistance to water and cold conditions. Yet whilst these challenges were seen as negative affects humans tried to live with, they still convinced themselves that these downsides could be overcome, staying loyal to the brand.

In summary; whilst this discussion is not exhaustive the enquiry has looked at ways in which material and immaterial forces influence driver perceptions of the road. Some of the affects incited emotive responses: fear, euphoria, danger, inspiration and so on, whilst ice and rain, crash debris, oil spillages etc created frictions and surface tensions. How participants then responded to these changing textures will be examined in detail in the following section.

5.7 V3- Frictions

The third vector represents the frictions of surface textures encountered on roads. Observed conditions include; smooth surfaces, tarmac, gravel tracks, muddy by-roads, hilly landscapes, parkland and so on. Whilst these topographies often only have minor consequences for the tourist, the way the VW campervan moves across terrains is nonetheless subject to adhesive frictions which will shape its mobility. Considerations include the physical weight of the vehicle pressing down on wheels and suspension, and the relationship between vehicle speed in relation to the abrasion of tyres rubbing against contrasting plains. Also, the velocities produced are dependent on factors to do with how the VW campervan grips, holds and slides on the ground. The issue however is not only the speeds owners are confident with when driving, but also how changing textures affect the tourist experience of travel:

When I was at Druridge Bay I parked by the lake on the grass. Unfortunately, due to rain during the night, the next day the conditions were so wet, the van had to be towed away from the water's edge and back up the hill onto the farm track. (VW Researcher, Audio Diary, 2011)

Due to them being used as holiday vehicles, VW campervans find themselves in challenging locations, muddy byroads, mountainous roads and busy motorways. This coupled with the volatility of weather means that road surfaces can change dramatically in a short space of time. Due to these ongoing affects experienced as unknown probabilities both on and off the highway, they often resulted in owners being anxious about their trips. Particularly in wet weather owners worried if their campervans would manage to climb steep hills or if water might 'get in to the engine'. Also as the festivals were outdoors, this meant that inclement weather would confine them to their vehicles on the campsite, so environmental conditions played a huge role in how these tourists moved around:

It was cold and raining but it was fine. It just totally chucked it down with rain and it leaked everywhere and the awning leaked generally but, the bus leaked through the sunroof as well so the seals needed doing. There were things which caused problems and we could of had happy times but the stress it caused due to holes in it was just shit. We could only go away for the weekend at that point as Michael was working, leaving on the Friday, setting up at night. If it was raining we would basically go out and find some indoor activity for the day like soft play which we could have done in Newcastle without the bloody bus anyway. (Amanda, VW Campervan – Owner-passenger, 2012)

Due to the age of their VW campervans, it was usual that they would have reoccurring faults allowing the inclement weather to seep into the vehicle. Water leaks, dangerous road surfaces and inconveniences caused by temperature complemented the holiday experience. In terms of navigation most festivals were also held in fields, so rain also created difficulty in driving on and off-site due to slippery and uneven coverings. It concurred that by simply having to move through variable conditions, drivers were not protected from circulations of heat, cold, damp and ice. When driving as a researcher there was an occasion when one of the VW

campervan window wipers stopped working during a storm. That meant the driver's side window was not clear and resulted in temporarily being off the road. Because the vehicle in question was old, it was constantly subject to minor problems which compromised smooth drivability. Thus, because more often than not the tourist was not as shielded from direct environmental conditions as with modern forms of transport, participants became part of the geography of the climate by the way they moved with and through it.

5. 8 V4 Other Vehicles

This vector is concerned with the impacts that other vehicles have on the tourist experience of the road. Vehicles moved in front and behind the VW campervan which caused it to be driven at a speed not always preferred by the driver. These factors include how the road was populated, the speed limit and the driving conditions that determine how objects intertwine, set the pace, find unity or produce discord. In simple terms; having other vehicles trailing behind or in front prompted an urgency to move faster, slower or to remain at a constant speed. Yet whilst these affects of road occupation are not exclusive to VW campervans, it would be fair to say that they do challenge conventional road behaviour in many respects due to their slowness, design and public reaction to them. They also represent the sociality of the road in ways that conventional cars do not by virtue of the ways owners through their vehicles engage with each other. As Laurier (2004) points out drawing on the work of Harvey Sacks, everything from doing office work, to bringing up children to listening to the radio is all done whilst in motion, yet also surrounded by others doing the same. In this case the description confirms that other drivers had a constraining effect on the speed and transmission of the VW campervan:

On my way to Northallerton (North East) I drove down a busy motorway. I had to dodge out of the way, try to keep up sometimes, and other times pull in at a service station to have a rest from the hectic road. People seemed to hate me trundling along. I didn't

mind the experience but it was at times quite stressful having to avoid what was a chaotic situation that wasn't relaxing. (VW Researcher, 2011)

Research indicated that impressions of road travel are subject to the volatility of humans stopping, speeding up and changing direction. So it was not only the speed of the vehicles on the road that set velocity, but interpretations of the space of other drivers. For example, when VW campervan owners acknowledged each other by waving, smiling or beeping their horns, everything from startled reactions, a drop in speed, waving at others and so on influenced slowing down and speeding up as a result. Also, some VW campervan drivers chased other VW campervan drivers, hurrying to catch them up so they could socially connect:

I mean we get waved at by normal cars never mind other VW campervans, Scarlet (6 year old) loves that in the front. Simon (partner) keeps saying stop waving at people (laughs) (Gilly, VW campervan passenger, 2012)

Whilst some drivers avoided people's reactions to them, most made a point of chasing and reciprocating reactions from other Volkswagens on the road. This was also echoed by other VW campervan participants who purported to react in different ways to the different stimuli, all changing their driving tactics to suit:

People do beep at you and wave and it makes people smile. We sometimes get carried away and flash our lights at them as well (Margaret, VW campervan owner, 2011)

There's also that element when you're driving down the street and kids go 'cool van!' as you go past (laughs) You can buy a Ferrari for many hundreds of thousands of pounds and you wouldn't get that same recognition. (Sonja, VW campervan Owner, 2011)

Because road drivers usually only signal to warn of perceived danger, the VW campervan promotes reactions that go beyond survival as a communal gesturing. This in turn induces alternative ways of 'being' with people on the move.

Well we have had the opposite as well. We have charvas going 'Get out of the fucking way, you stupid hippies'. We did have extremes erm, people beeping but 'Get out the fucking way, slow coaches you fucking hippies' (Amanda, VW campervan passenger, 2012)

: N.B the term Charva according to YourDictionary.com this is a Geordie Perjorative that refers to an unemployed youth with a poor sense of taste. As commented about by Amanda she explains about public opposition to the presence of the van. Their response to negative public reaction was to speed up to avoid further engagement. Again, it is the particularities of the brand that force their owners to engage with a social world, usually a place where the drivers of fleeting cars show a marked indifference to one another. At other times however owners ignored the gestures of others and continued at a 'slow' pace regardless of external reactions:

De-stressing after a week of work and inwardly laughing at the big cars flying past trying to get where they want to be because they get less time to spend in their car- we are the opposite, ours is a pleasure to be in so we take our time. (Kenny, VW campervan owner, 2011)

Kenny maintained that a 'slow' choice allowed for a more enjoyable road experience. He implied that the VW campervan unlike cars were designed to be

'lived' in whilst cars were not. He also expressed smugness about the value of travelling using more time, seeing speedy travel as denigration.

It appeared that the sociality of the road transformed the way VW campervan tourists constructed mobility. This contention is based on observations of the interplays between owners as they responded to each other on highways. Before explaining this idea, it is important to note that these human to human interventions were also subject to everything else in the wider network of things making travel happen. In other words, as Latour (2007, p. 21) in his discussion on 'the social' notes, 'There is something invisible that weighs on all of us that is more solid than steel and yet so incredibly labile'. So drivers' reactions to each other are, it is proposed, in accordance with set directions of where and how to travel created by policy, geography, law enforcement and so on. Road behaviour is therefore the result of all these frictions that exert pressure and release on the driving object within this circulation of mobility. So arguably what is observed superficially, i.e. the VW campervan heading in one direction navigates the road in terms of speed, direction, ability to keep moving on challenging surfaces, driver travel decisions etc so its orientation is also subject to less visible affects.

To conclude this section, empirical dialogues have illustrated how other vehicles connect, disconnect, push and pull against the VW campervan object. Because the contemporary highway is a terrain built for speed, the VW campervan fits uneasily into that equation with an ambition not for efficiency but for leisure. Taking this position results in a driving context that is explosive in terms of tensions, frustrations and elucidations of other road users. This is due to the vehicle's 'slow' velocity and unique appearance that results in social reactions such as adulation, disrespect, avoidance or 'rubbernecking' of the VW campervan.

5.9 V5 Driver

This vector illustrates the guiding intensities of humans as they reside in motion. Here VW campervan owners interact with each other to evoke a range of velocities both propulsion and retraction. Variable energies result in humans

bumping against each other, forging relationships, consuming food, entertaining themselves, concentrating on the physical challenge of driving, daydreaming and so on. These actions both affect and are affected by movement which creates velocities which can also impact on the final output velocity of the van. To give an example, participant Amanda declares that she is still in work mode as she sets off on her journey. Still locked in the sedentary practice of desk work, she was met with complaint by her partner. She had not acclimatized to the relaxed pace, so was found replicating a fast paced trajectory, in a 'slow' holiday setting:

Michael's driving, I am in the back sometimes doing appointments with my phone with my paperwork with him going 'stop it!!' I need to be encouraged to put normal life away but when I do I am fine.
(Amanda, VW campervan passenger, 2012)

The second comment by an owner about his children playing with gadgets during the trip, suggests that technological devices can offer hyper-charged trajectories that work in parallel with the slower pace of movement:

Their phones and DS's games are good for long journeys like to Cornwall but I go oh look at the views and no one even looks.
(Steven, VW campervan owner, 2011)

These comments also suggest that kinaesthetic, social and communicative inventories can take place in the van that are less achievable in a car. This is because the van as a mobile home is able to accommodate people moving around, offering a more physical environment where it can even be used as an office space. Also, because passengers can pass the time as though they are at home, it is perhaps reasonable to suggest that lived time is slowed, as tourists are taking extra time to do things that would be cut short had they been travelling fast:

The space of travelling together, and certainly the children love it because they're all in the back, they've got more space, they

interact more they aren't just sitting in the seat with their headphones in. They're actually sitting facing each other chattering, they can have a table up and can play cards or something, so I felt the children had a much more positive experience of being together and being on a trip than just sitting in the back of the Audi or something so that to me was a really different, sort of slow lane type thing and you know you don't aim to go anywhere far, and it's true that journeying is the adventure. (Angela, VW campervan owner, 2012)

Finally, evidence suggests that the speed of the van can be determined by the embodied reactions of the driver. This is reflected in the researcher's descriptions of the same journey taken at different times of the day:

Unlike the nightmare last night of trying to get to the campsite at dusk and ending up taking a wrong turn, fighting with the gearstick and generally not being comfortable on the road, this morning I felt relaxed and actually temporarily enjoyed driving. In fact it was almost a bit like a road movie now, except in road movies people are usually happy to be going off somewhere, I on the other hand I am happy to be heading home. I feel I am getting into a real rhythm of it now, I feel at one with the world (jest), the speed of the van and my bodily feelings seem really connected. I think it's interesting that yesterday I saw the van as a real disability, almost forced immobilization, trapped in a chair with lots of stuff hurtling towards me. Whilst on the way back it was more liberating and the opposite of what it felt on the way there. Some of it's probably to do with my mindset. Like some resistance to the idea of driving to Redcar partly due to an obligation to do research, so when I get there I'm tense about the fact its work it reflects on my attitude to everything. That said whatever magic these vans work on people; I feel that some of that is in play this morning. Today the sun is up

and because it's Sunday the roads are really quiet. It can't be that I just like the van all of a sudden when normally I hate it. It could be to do with a natural rhythm, a flow, a change in attitude, which is possibly needed to enjoy these vans. (VW researcher, 2012)

In other words any resistance to driving the van resulted in it being awkward to mobilise. It seemed that the tension felt by the driver was conveyed negatively through the van. This embodied response echoed the driver's kinaesthetic resistances as expressed through the way the campervan then reacted. This leads to a suggestion that enjoyment and smooth pleasure is about body and machine reconciling their terms of interaction.

In summary, this part of the chapter has introduced a range of overt and subliminal velocities identified as inherent within VW campervan mobility. A discussion about the features of these affects as embodied in VW campervan movement is only however one aspect of the architecture of the temporal. As the participants in question are subjected to velocity, they also occupy segments of time as they travel through it at 'slow' speeds. This led to the question of how participants' perception of motion was influenced by their awareness or the 'feeling' of time. In the following section the discussion aims to reconcile issues between the two interconnecting ideas with a view to understanding how as a further debate, time perceptions relative to speed affected how tourists experience travel. Just to point out that whilst time will be discussed in a separate section, it is not that it can be understood as separate from the mobile assemblage and is indeed intrinsic to the human experience of temporality. However in abstracting it, it can be looked at in more detail albeit how time is perceived by the travel is contingent on how the sensory and cognitive biases affect the perception of the travel experience holistically.

5.10 The Affects of Time

This discussion accounts for the property of 'time' as a critical factor to the way in which VW campervan movement is understood by tourists. It would also be an oversight not to consider more how time affects travel, because human experience of movement cannot be understood without considering the effectuality of the temporal. Particular to this case, as mentioned, 'slow' velocity is a feature of this transport so the notion of speed is especially significant to how VW campervans move around. In light of this, it can be said that as tourists travel through space on public highways, their negotiations are subject to their own personal notions of time. To try and understand how this works is complex, yet according to Cottle (1976, p.6) to tackle the question of time is as difficult as it is conceptual and to some extent it is a socially constructed occurrence. He also maintains that whilst time can be rendered objective and calculable, it is also subject to people's perceptions of past, present future durations. Also, people conceive the linear and spatial attributes of their 'time realities' in relation to their cultural values, personality, social roles and so on.

To simplify time theory for the sake of this study however, the focus is less on the phenomena of time itself, but more on how it is significant within a particular period experienced; VW campervan movement from A-to-B. So, whilst some owners may connect with earthly biospheric rhythms as they explore the 'freedom' of the road, the default measure of their journey is couched within the Western concept of time. Regardless of the regularity of clock-time taken into account in this instance which of course is influential, there is also another issue, namely how 'slow' travel affects tourists' understandings of time. Deceleration can affect a holiday time frame by making its duration 'feel' longer, thus velocity impacts are conducive with how time is acknowledged. To evidence this, one owner described her VW campervan holiday in terms of how time was spent:

I think the pace of life slows down, because you're not in a rush, and I think that makes you more considered and reasoned, I think your social metabolism slows down, and you aren't in a hurry to get places because you know it'll take you that long and you can't rush, and most of the time you realize you're rushing for the sake of it. I

compared it with a friend, I used to live in London, and when people used to visit they would say that everyone was in a rush. And now when I go back, as soon as I get off at Kings Cross, I think everyone's flying about, and the pace of things is much faster. I think there's a different social set of rules there about the way you condense everything in shorter time spans. So getting into an older VW, when you're limited by how fast you can go, you can take a breath and relax. (Bridget, VW Campervan Owner, 2011)

For those used to a faster-paced lifestyle it took some acclimatizing to slow down. A number of participants agreed that they were also still adjusting to it halfway through their trip. Whilst for many participants as they were usually rushing around in the 'rat race', they thought relaxing was perhaps a skill to be learned. It was also found that although most participants enjoyed the slow approach, it was also possible on occasion for tourists to have the opposite impression:

Every inch of the journey in my case felt it occupied a large chunk of time as I did not associate the trip with something leisured but more as a means to an end. I know this is the exception rather than the rule. And whilst I just wanted to quickly arrive at the destination, the tempo of the van was frustrating as you couldn't do it in something that just plodded along. (VW campervan researcher, 2012)

In both cases participants acknowledged the notion of time quite strongly. Whitehead in Harvey (1996, pp. 256-61) echoes this by pointing out that ignoring the idea of time is difficult for humans and that interpretations of it are subjective. According to Levine (2006, p.29) time perception does vary from human to human, where he claims experiments have shown that people have 'experienced duration' and 'remembered duration'. Arguably different recollections of timescales can lead to motion being understood as variable 'lived' velocities., Temporal algorithms were

developed from the days when academics separated the world into split temporal modes: 'cyclical' peasant and seasonal pulses and with modern societies 'linear' systems relative to the cadence of the clock. For this reason, tourists comprehend different notions of time either by compliance to this universal computation or by not abiding to it at all. As Urry (2000) puts it, time is a 'social institution'. Whilst Hawking (1988) adds that individuals have their own measure of time and so there is no absolute. So, whilst set time has a deterministic quality, it is also open to interpretation by people in situations where adherence is not essential.

In relation to this study, it was found that most owners were traditionally time bound due to them heading to a camping festival that had a set start and finish. The majority were keen however to relax along the way regardless of this fact and often appeared to forget time or not be totally ruled by it. So, whilst a destination with a schedule was their target, it didn't have to be adhered to. Wild rambling was rare however so if drivers set off to attend an event they usually arrived unless they had a mechanical breakdown. Owners also appeared to like the idea that if they wanted to, they could drive to a place where the notion of time mattered less.

Hammond's (2013) on time perception also points to the idea that moving slowly can also give the impression that time has slowed down making the journey appear longer. A feeling that time is then stretched may lead to an interpretation that an expanse of time is available to be experienced and contemplated for a greater duration. 'Slowness' arguably can also be felt as pressure of resistance against moving forward at a greater rate. To explain this whilst also considering the affects of vectors 1-5 in this study, drivers in fast cars experience the weight of G-force pushing their body back into the seat as the vehicle propels forward. It was discovered that the slow lilt of a campervan (owner-researcher) was inculcated into a space of neither push nor pull:

It was weird because my usual car made me feel weightless, yet driving the van made my whole body tense up. I felt obliged to lean forward in the driver's seat and grip the steering wheel hard as if I was pushing it along with my body. I only knew how engaged I was

with the thing when I got out of the vehicle at the garage and found I was aching all over. (VW Researcher, 2011)

Yet other participants reported the opposite effect in relation to how visuals impacted upon their experience. By looking out of the window objects can be seen to 'flash by' giving the impression that time will run out more quickly. For some participants this made their physical bodies feel less heavy and almost weightless as if 'floating' through space. This effect provides an evocative insight into how humans relate to perceptions of the gravity vector in relation to the visual, regarded by many owners as a relaxing experience of the road, a lightning of the load of aggravations normally present in the hectic grind of the working week. In other words, a lot of participants felt that despite initial trepidation they could let go of inner anxieties and give themselves up to the motion ride. Dave, one of the owners said whilst he was getting to know the van he was counting the seconds, but once he got used to driving it he 'lost track of time'. It was also notable that the noisy affects so significant to his being 'ill at ease' in the first instance, appeared to recede into the background over time. It was then that he could relax despite the existence of the disruptions some of which were created by vector (1), gravitational impacts of engine and body of the machine and (2) such emergencies as the weather that were still present but chosen to be ignored:

Having only had the bus on the road a few months now I am still getting used to the what's right and oh sh(*)t what is that sound!! I have now relaxed a little and have found the bus great fun and dare I say relaxing to drive!! I honestly had a head ache for the first few weeks driving the bus and found it was because I was clenching my jaw (probs with worry about what might happen) (Kevin, VW Campervan owner, 2011)

Some participants conveyed the sentiment that sometimes it was like they were inside a relaxing bubble travelling in a VW campervan; almost 'womb' like. Due to the vehicle's movement they described enjoying the rocking lilt of the van, the fleeting landscapes outside and the ticking over of the engine all contributors of the sensation. Virilio (2005) in his discussion around 'speed-space' perhaps goes

some way in supporting this idea by arguing that velocity determines the way motion phenomena appears to us. Using an example of objects perceived through the windscreen of a moving vehicle, he talks about the transitory nature of objects that hurl themselves against the windscreen; they are quickly forgotten, stored as a prop and disappear in the rear window. He also suggests as the body is propelled forward, objects would seem stationary if the body was still. Virilio's point here is that velocity plays a constitutional part in how the visual field is organized. Furthermore, he states that these flashing forms can even appear as unreal or as simulations which may lead the driver to feel they are in a dreamlike state. Lefebvre (2004) also indicates that all rhythms show the relation of a time to a space, thus in this instance the motion of the van is party to the construction of the traveller's sense of 'being' in a particular time continuum, as seen below in Figure (5.2) front and rear vantage points from film the researcher made on route. This is followed up with a comment from the field notes:

The hypnotic rhythm of the window wipers, the relentless nature of the roads, and the fact I felt removed from everything, felt timeless. It was as if I was in a remote place with endless trajectories that led me into a mode of abstraction. In other words being somewhere, but losing myself in time. (VW Researcher, 2012)

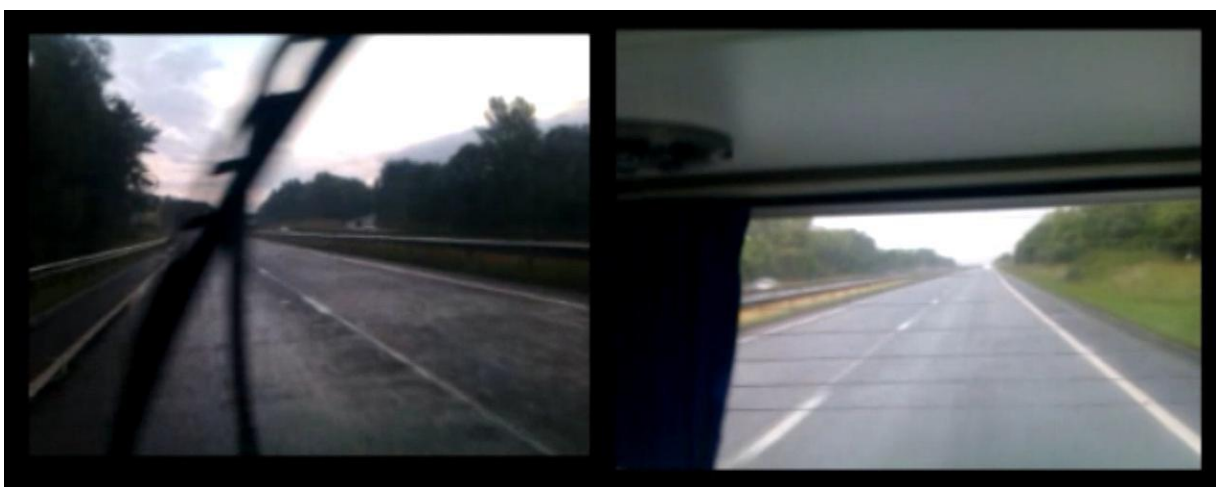


Figure 5.2 Film still, A69 dual carriageway, Southbound. Late afternoon, 2011. Also see video clip (2.55 minutes)

This feeling of obscurity and timelessness however was short lived. The sociality of the road soon transformed a positive space into a negative one. Characteristics from vectors (2) and (3) such as dull light, unfavourable weather conditions, wet surfaces and so on also added to the trepidation and isolation felt by the driver. Conversely on a sunny day heat and light also appeared to bring the motorway to life, (See figure 9).

This impression of the driving experience changed quite quickly the moment that other drivers reacted to the van. It was then a whole social world woke up and made me feel emotional warmth and connectedness. My own velocity could also be understood in relation to the other moving objects on the road. (VW Researcher, 2011)



Figure 5.3 Film still, A69 dual carriageway, Southbound, Midday, 2011. Also see video clip (15 seconds)

Time perception is also dependent on a whole range of other variables in which social, cultural and physical differentials potentially have an influence. Therefore, despite the complexities of the possible reactions, the most typical velocity that defines time in VW campervan travel is clock speed in relation to distance travelled. Another point to make about the particularities of the VW campervan is that even though technically slower overall when driving it, the vehicle

seemed faster than a modern vehicle moving at the same speed. As research has shown reactions to panic also resulted in the impression that time slows down (Hammond, 2013) whilst according to the findings, the speed of the vehicle appears faster due to the lack in some instances of driver control:

I was on high alert and unable to do anything other than focus on not crashing. Subsequently the world beyond the vehicle shell was visually intense and a seemingly more dangerous place than when driving an ordinary car. Roads used daily were no longer certain and predictable. I was not moving smoothly and in synchronization with the motion, but instead I felt like an abrasion against my surroundings. (VW Researcher, 2012)

Edensor (2003) added that driving in a new country on the 'wrong' side of the road following unfamiliar signs could be worrisome and lead to 'improper' driving. This would have implications for vector (4) where other obstacles such as vehicles on the road would affect driver orientations more significantly in unfamiliar terrain. Ironically despite acquaintance with the routes, navigating them in an unwieldy vehicle was disorientating even on familiar roads and had a worsening effect in this instance on the owner-researcher's driving skills. So, navigation of the same places in a car did not impair technique, yet in the van it did. As Vesterlind (2004) pointed out, a driver in control could also engage in other activities such as laptop-use, food snacking, using mobile phones, listening to the radio etc, tasks achievable because of the driver having road skills. So, simply put, by knowing their vehicle more intimately, many owners purported to be able to relax as one might at home. Many participants also described their travels as calming and pleasurable.

Others likened it to being on a train where they could 'take in' the whole adventure. For some participants time appeared to slow down as they did not need to be on high alert. Yet whilst this may contradict a previous suggestion that fear can also lead to the slow motioning of movement making time feel longer, here relaxed participants reported no need to think about time at all during the trip. Edensor (2003) also added that the motorway could be a place where relaxed

drivers could drift into picnolepsy and arrive on auto-pilot. A further point to consider here however is how possible it would be for VW campervan drivers to be relaxed enough to sleep in a vehicle that lacks comfort. Without soft upholstery, warmth from heaters, the consolatory sounds of music from a smooth stereo system, gentle mechanics and being cushioned from loud sounds etc, arguably impacts on the driving body, were more encompassing. These types of discomforts common in most VW campervans appeared to also make habitation seem longer in duration for many owners as it was not designed to cushion the blows of velocity. Yet despite this, research showed also an anomaly for it turned out that the majority of owners reported to being 'at one with the world' whilst pottering down the M1 (Motorway) showing little concern for the lack of luxury that entailed.

As noted earlier, the stretching of time meant travel speed seemed slower. This worked well for many of the participants who wanted their journeys to take as long as possible however. That was the case with a couple who had owned their van for some time who were found to have reflected upon a trip they made to visit their mother-in-law in Liverpool. Here Brigid and Charles pointed out that travel occupied half their trip as it took two days to get there, stating that that was the whole point. It appeared that they wanted to be absorbed in the repetition and rhythm associated with extended periods of time spent on roads. The duration for them had the affect of stretching time, making the holiday appear longer than in previous vacations that were fast paced. One middleclass family of VW enthusiasts added that the pace of modern life was hectic and thought that people were in a desperate hurry to get everywhere. They said as an antidote to this they enjoyed taking their time, getting less stressed and still arriving but a little later as they 'enjoyed the scenic completion the trip'. A further comment was made by another owner, a young mechanic called Kenny from Houghton le Spring in County Durham. He talked about his engine capacity stating that Volkswagens were notorious for beingslow:

I don't wanna go fast anyway, just get up hills quicker. When I got my early bay it was terrifying travelling back from Stockport to Sunderland. At one point on the M62 on a hill I was doing 15mph! Even when you hold folks up most of them smile as they eventually

get past, one kid took my photo as he passed. I'm more concerned it doesn't stop due to the engine failure. (Kenny, VW Campervan Owner, 2010)

Only a small percentage of the participants admitted that managing their vehicles was something they found difficult. Most responses to the question that they might be challenging leaned towards positive narratives about it. So positive in fact that it was difficult to determine whether this was denial of the hardships by the owners or that they were genuinely enthusiastic. I questioned their honesty only because I found driving to festivals disquieting and sometimes even traumatic despite the relaxed pace. The following quote by a female participant with two small children did however refer to driving to the festival as a 'pain in the arse' and added:

The trip makes me anxious and tired. I'm always tired on a Friday night when I get to the site and I just want to put the awning up and get on with it. (Amanda, VW Campervan passenger, 2011)

Driving on urban roads was met with trepidation by only a few owners. Most participants appeared to embrace the 'up and downs' with deference. Yet as Highmore (2005, p.141) suggests, the city is a 'complex exemplar of the dynamic interplay of frictions' in what Virilio (1997) calls a dromosphere. Described as temporal regimes at play inside cities both managerial and technological, Virilio argues also that such disparate temporalities have created discontinuities with 'psychological time' (Virilio 1997, p.23). In other words the urban landscape could be construed as a confusing and vaporous chronology of different rhythms, that due to the idiosyncrasies of people's reactions to spatial incongruence clash against standardized notions of time. As a conflict between imagined space and its lived reality, in conversation with affects of vector (5) pertaining to a driver, the owner-researcher reported that simple tasks normally second nature in a car, such as the reading of signage, circumnavigating congestion or bypassing hazards, seemed unusually laden with risk:

This is a terrible road, there are traffic lights everywhere and I am feeling everything, absolutely everything, this is awful. It feels like chaos surrounding the vehicle, sort of visual 'noise' where my concentration and the ability to focus on what is going on is almost impossible. I was so anxious when driving that the affect of slow motion kicked in to allow me more time to think about how I was driving. It was odd, I found myself capable of counting lamp posts whilst moving, things had slowed down that much. Whereas in my run around car there was no resistance to the rush of speed, so clock time slowed down as I put my foot on the gas to allow more distance to be travelled in less time. (VW Researcher, 2012)

Perceptions of tempo were also informed by vectors (1), (2) and (3) in terms of the metre of the repetition of road textures, uneven surfaces, the visuality of motorway signage, sequences of bollards the calculus of cars or deceleration and so on. Admittedly driving in less congested rural settings meant a less haphazard experience, but the imperilments of obstructive farm animals, blind spots, tight roads and being lost did replace the cacophonous nature of the urban. How the presence of nature can influence tourist experience will be discussed later, however glancing at stretches of green foliage did appear to pacify some drivers as being around nature did reduce stress. Whilst grey industrial landscapes at times did lead to feelings of social disconnection; anonymous facades failed to speak about place for those just passing through (VW researcher, 2011). Also, the transitions between fast and slower roads were marked by other vehicles revving up and slowing down. That said the 'slow' VW campervan made no attempt to hit the official speed limits and thus was not part of the mainstream traffic hurrying to keep up.

There was a general opinion that VW campervan owners sought pleasure by being inside their vehicle for longer, hence taking their time. Furthermore, most VW campervan owners said they enjoyed the limitations of speed, seeing it as a way of forcing them to 'chill-out'. One couple in their thirties from the local area of Heaton in Newcastle upon Tyne had been to Asia for a year and said that the easy-going nature of the van reminded them of travelling in their twenties when they had no responsibilities; a period in time they thought could be returned to by owning a

Volkswagen. Others felt their slow mobility was inadvertently going against the usual flow and something they enjoyed for that reason.

One couple heading towards the Druridge Bay Festival (2012) pointed out that the van kept them from getting stressed as they could just sit behind cars and not be anxious about overtaking or getting points on their license. As an owner –researcher coming from a comparatively fast lifestyle, it was found trying to relax in a campervan was challenging and arguably a skill that had to be adjusted to. This sentiment was also echoed by a number of teenage children who complained to their parents for purposely choosing a longer scenic tour of the side roads instead of sticking to the direct route. Each mile ‘felt like an absolute eternity’ and ‘was so boring with nothing to do’ said Emily aged 13 and Josh aged 15. That said the stretch of elongated time was interspersed with



Figure 5.4 Film Still, A19, Redcar (2012)

distractions such as drivers waving, a changing display of passing sights interspersed with happy, sad, indifferent and nostalgic thoughts. Perhaps how speed is felt is also relative to the way objects move in and out of view at close, middle and long range. For example, electric pylons appeared and disappeared at equal intervals as did regimented white lines in the centre of the road as visual markers for which time in relation to speed could be mapped. See (Fig 9.) Film Still. Also, because main roads were densely populated with traffic, it was imperative to avoid other road users, adhere to road regulations, stop at filling stations and pull over into a lay-by to read maps and so on which all added up to an assault on the tranquillity and freedoms many VW campervan tourists

searched for.

A further suggestion is that the tourist experience is subject to the mood of the driver. Also see (figure 11) that demonstrates a dark atmosphere that the researcher interpreted as isolating and depressing.

Travelling slowly led to feelings of boredom, disappointment, anticipation and solitude. Whilst at other times I was drawn into a co-presence by the convivial gestures of road users. The journey undertaken was both physical and emotional and affected by both internal and external forces. When I felt distant or removed from the external world, I imagined despite the innumerable permutations that motorway drivers were inhuman entities encased in metal shells. (VW researcher, 2012)



Figure 5.5 Film Still, A19, Redcar (2012)

This idea of detachment was echoed by Cubitt (2001, p. 153 in Edensor, 2003) who summarized that Virilio's notion of the isolated driver with 'bodies transformed into pure trajectory'. Another aspect of feeling loneliness was that the remoteness and isolation as valid experience which did not seem time bound:

It was interesting because when I felt detached from people I felt immersed in being on the road, as though in non time-based

silence. Yet when another VW driver acknowledged me in transit, this broke the isolating effect and brought all the sounds, colour and the feelings of being part of a collective of other owners into focus returning me to the acknowledgement that it was about midday. (VW Researcher, 2012)

As owners were subjected to the 'ups' and 'downs' of mechanical troubles, poor visibility, congestion and emotional reactions to internal and external happenstance with some regularity, the emotional high points of communing with others, enjoying scenery and feeling 'free' were still reported to counterbalance these dystopias. As mentioned before, the sporadic feelings of dislocation were often followed by immediate reconnections with people and place. These affects were reflected by VW campervan owner Jake who said his trip to the festival was brilliant, relaxing and took no time at all to get there. Yet he described his return journey as simply 'crap' and endless. Yet despite moving in a similar timescale and weather conditions the satisfaction of the experience was subject to the impressions of volatile human reactions which did not always comply with logic. In other words, whilst Jake chose not to explain these dramatic shifts in opinion, it could be surmised from what he was saying that as the roads were not radically different in one direction or another, so the shift towards his negative response to the journey, once viewed positively was not to do with road experience per se but a cognitive readdress.

To summarise, the tourist journey is not only affected by environmental conditions, but also by the driver's state of mind. This could explain why a similar terrain can be viewed very differently as different durations. Admittedly different impressions are also subject to external affects on the road that drivers are exposed to on a minute-to-minute basis. This means that for example in bad weather for example driving on a slippery road may make time feel slowed down as the driver struggles with the elements, or at night time has shown to feel endless. Or should the driver be desperate to get home time seemed to drag compared to others who wished their holiday would go on forever. When human subjectivities of all kinds are considered as part of the experience, a variety of interpretations appeared to manifest. As Edensor (2003, p. 153) points out beyond the visual aspect, drivers comprehend the world as unfolding elsewhere, in the past, the future and inside

interruptions of fantasy and reverie. Such features it is suggested here, all have their own relationship with temporality. Admittedly there are real cultural boundaries and consequences in the common sense use of time, i.e. driving too fast, disconnecting from the 'official' idea of it, being late for appointments and so on, however interpretations of speed and duration can arguably be produced as a consequence of the individual authorship of the tourist in their own schism, rhythm and sensitivities of place.

5.11 Chapter Summary

By drawing upon the substantive work of Latour (2007) *Actor Network Theory* (ANT) and Virilio (1986) on *Speed and Politics* amongst others; this discussion has deliberated upon the assertion that VW campervan travel is transmitted not as a linear trajectory of a fixed velocity, but as a cosmology of variable speed affects. So, whilst the vehicle in question can be observed moving from A-to-B at a particular rate of miles per hour, it is arguably foreshadowed by a complex arrangement of unstable frictions that battle to sustain the equilibrium of movement; in this case within the modus operandi of the 'slow'. Research showed that unlike users of conventional transport, de-acceleration was critical to how the participants perceived time; contingent on their motion experience of the highway. This predication led to the contestation that one cannot then consider velocity without understanding how it aggregates into the tourist's comprehension of lived time. This led to a discussion about the ways drivers interacted with their transport device and how it in turn modified them.

To add further complication however, because owners have strong attachments to their vehicles for reasons that they induced feelings of homeliness, nostalgia, and anthropomorphic persuasions and so on, their emotional leanings toward their vehicles tended to contextualise reactions to travel as mediated by sentimentality, loyalty or compassion for the van. Yet despite human sensitivities playing a role in the discernment of this tourist experience, participant subjectivities none-the-less did offer multiple insights that were reducible to a select number of themes. So, whilst these findings precede a fixed definition, it concurred that five vectors identified were used to substantiate an overall description of the phenomena. These vectors are *Forces*, *Elements*, *Frictions*, *Other Vehicles* and *Driver*. These themes were dissected into prevalent nodes then analysed.

As per the discussion, the summary findings concluded that: In the *Frictions* section a number of natural elements played an integral role in how mobility was shaped, a) because the vehicle was less resistant to external elements than a modern vehicle, b) because owner interactions were based on the human condition as an embodied response to those affects. In the *Elements* section velocities of light and weather conditions not only influenced driving speeds, but also impressed

upon the human imagination to reconfigure their view in relation to them. In other words, velocity affects on atmosphere, environment, vision and so on had a direct impact on the tourism experience extending beyond the metaphysical towards phantasmagoria. In *Frictions* the issue of earthly textural affects as ascribed by variable surfaces rough or smooth, wet or dry, hilly or flat and so on, proved to be deterministic in terms of how velocity was handled by the van and its driver. In conclusion, this ethnographic study of VW campervan tourism mobilities and experiences has resulted in a contribution of knowledge about how tourists embody velocity and time as motion affects. Here it is argued that VW campervan travel is a performance of the relational ties between bodies, machines and spaces not as linear trajectories, but as networks of both visible and invisible velocities mediated by humans through their travelling machines.

Having endeavoured to unpack the experience of road travel as a social and mobile phenomena, the next chapter seeks to share empirical knowledge in order to expand on how VW campervan tourists connect with their experiences through the senses. The following discussion therefore draws attention to a number of theories which pertain to the sensual experiences of travel in this particular transport mode.

6. CHAPTER SIX - SENSING THE AUTOMOBILE

6.1 Introduction

To explore the emotional geographies of VW campervan travel, this chapter is concerned with the interrelationships between vision, sound and feelings. In order to comprehend how these tourists experience the highway, this study is concerned with five areas to emerge from fieldwork. These include the *Tourist Gaze*, *Travel Glance*, *Noise*, *Emotional Gaze* and *Anthropomorphic Vision*. By developing theories complicit with the mobility turn (Sheller & Urry, 2006) and the *New Mobilities Paradigm*, this chapter will consider how VW campervan travel is not only about transportation but is also an emotionally driven pursuit that connects sightseers with the landscape. This proposition initially surfaced from fieldwork as it was discovered that whilst owners used the VW campervan for tourism purposes, they also identified with it as a family member, friend or companion. This inspired the question as to whether emotions towards the VW campervan as significant other, would impact on how journeys with it are experienced. So, by owners *feeling the van*, this raised questions about whether seeing the landscape through a windscreen would enable it to be re-imagined as an embodied affect.

To interrogate this proposition further, the theory of the tourist gaze is used in the first instance to contextualize how sight plays a part in the interpretation of place. To develop this for the sake of the study, the idea of the *travel glance* is that it encapsulates the idea that an owner's attachment to their vehicle could arguably lead to emotional connectivity to banal places. In other words whilst there may be some consensual understanding of highways as being mundane, questionably how tourists *feel* en route can affect how they understand the experience to be the opposite of dull; instead sublime, euphoric, and spectacular. That is, the viscosity of movement in the form of fleeting landscapes through a window in this case, are perhaps articulated through the mobilized body. Merriman (2004) also notes that whilst much has been written about the motorist's vision, motorways on the other hand imagined as boring, ubiquitous and dystopian have been less addressed by theorists who assume such spaces are not sociable.

Marc Auge (1995, p.110) in particular entered this debate in his 'cultural critique of placelessness' to suggest that motorways, airports and interchanges were mundane passing places, rather than interesting spaces for leisure. The enquiry looks empirically at how these fleeting landscapes are seen through a mobilised body to explore the sensual relationships between the body and the machine. The second part of the discussion considers how noise produced by the VW campervan influences the tourist experience of road travel. The sound of the vehicle's combustion engine and bodywork are features that can be overbearing in timbre. Yet these sonic ambiences are however not avoided but instead intrinsic to the accompaniment of the cinematic nature of movement. To theorise this, Lofgren's (1999) exploration on the cinematic gaze is drawn upon to introduce the idea that sightseers may experience the landscape as though viewing it as a motion picture. As Virilio (1991, pp. 67-8) in his fascination with the geographies of the screen points out, the 'voyeur-voyager in his car' is analogous to 'the moviegoer'. Yet here tourists are not in a cinema, but gaze at the external world through the windscreen. The noise element means that they do not partake in watching a silent film, but one with a loud mechanical soundtrack. Moreover, because VW campervan tourists do not recoil at the background din and often applaud it, it is argued to be a musical composition that is essential to the experience.

Finally, the third section proposes that emotion is central to how tourists understand VW campervan travel as an embodied practice. This critical analysis unfolds in two parts. The first expands on the notion of the 'travel glance', by proposing that tourists cast an 'emotive glance' on the *mise en scene* because of the feelings of attachment towards their van. Due to this emotionality, the idea that landscapes seen on route are romanticized similar to how owners romanticize their vehicles is explored. This is a challenge to the neutrality of disembodied architecture of tourism knowledge (Veijola and Jokinen, 1994; Coleman and Crang, 2002; Aitchison, 2003) as it is suggested that the VW campervan owner understands movement through emotions and as a result this shapes the experience of space and place. The second proposition is drawn from the idea that as owners humanize their vehicle, they experience an anthropomorphic vision as a result. Perceptions of travel in this account, it is proposed, are affected by owners anthropomorphizing their vans, which could temper the perception of travel. The

idea that participants expressed romantic pleasure towards their vehicle, albeit not as mechanophilic behaviour but in sentimentalizing them as if human, because of the profound connections between flesh and object therefore leads this critical discussion to capture some of the "tourist gazes" made possible through the scopic of the vehicle. Through this, the debate aims to establish a theory that in humanizing a VW Campervan, tourists are able to re-imagine the landscape through its embodied affects.

6.2 The Tourist Gaze

In this section how landscapes are conceived by VW campervan tourists as they construct their *views* are debated. As reiterated by Urry's seminal text first published in 1990, then reviewed in collaboration with Larsen in 2011, the tourism experience is usually understood through the priority sense of the ocular. Yet because the VW campervan journey is negotiated through the act of seeing, the 'tourist gaze' (Urry, 1990) is used as a critical text. It is also important to draw upon Larsen (2001) in his discussion about the travel glance to comprehend the practices of viewing as a cinematic gaze. This enabled the discussion to reach beyond the convention of static photographic framing usually associated with tourism. Lofgren (1999) also adds to this commentary that scenes looked upon are not always stilled just because tourists are corporally immobile when travelling. Thus, it is imperative for this chapter to consider how this theoretically complex tourism mobility is comprehended by tourists during the act of motion.

In this case the views are mediated by the VW campervan device. This means that scenes gazed upon from the window of a moving vehicle are subject to the opportunities and limitations of it as a viewing chamber. This led to the proposition that the metaphor of the motion picture could be used to describe the tourist spaces in question as participants are engaged in road travel. As tourist encounters can be fleeting, it is also asserted that participants tended to edit visuals as seen in real time, as though directors of their own movie. The rolling scenes they were exposed to however are not just flat representations of landscapes to be read one way, but instead arguably subject to personal interpretations of owners as they buy into the culture of the brand. In addition, perspectives of social class, taste, affordances,

knowledge, desire etc. also account for how visuals are experienced by individual tourists in their own way. In respect of this assertion, it is argued the synergy between what is viewed *en route* combined with what the tourist then adds cognitively, means landscapes are not always regarded at "face" value but have proven to be re-imagined through the medium of the VW campervan. As already highlighted it would be an oversight not to consider the *felt* and thought experiences of participants to frame the view. Yet beyond images received by the retina, intangibles are also likely to influence how the journey is experienced. So, in unpacking how tourists focus on particular scenes, it was important to take a step back to consider the genealogy of the seeing practices of the tourist as a theory of looking.

As Urry (2006,p.18) suggests due to the organizing power of vision, 'sight' has been privileged within the history of Western society despite it being thought of as the most superficial of the senses. Or as Jay (1989) citing Ellul (1985) *in the Crisis of Ocularcentrism* suggests, we live in an epoch of a 'debauchery of images'. In other words, Ellul's rails against the reproduction and distribution of images as prioritized over the written word. Yet an emphasis on the visual has not always been a priority in the culture of the sensory. Febvre (1982) for example recounts that acute hearing and a developed sense of smell in sixteenth century Europe overshadowed a necessity for the sharpness of sight. Then, later in the 1800's, a shift in travel agendas occurred whereby motivation needed not to be justified through science, but instead as a connoisseurship of "the well trained eye" (Adler, 1989, p.22) This is also echoed in Linnerhielm's travel in the 1700's where he purported to collect views and moods, "I travel to see, not to study" (Lofgren, 1999, p.17). Other developments of the visual in tourism practices include at the end of the eighteenth century re-branding of the natural world. The French Alps for example, once seen as inhospitable and "uncivilized", became denoted as picturesque. In other words, despite the physical danger of the natural phenomena, they have been re-envisioned as accessible places by the romantics who took the liberty to idealize them (Lofgren, 1999, p.17).

Now as a modernist social discourse, conceptions of place have been expanded beyond depictions of the landscape represented by the painterly tradition.

The stillness of the pastoral view has been transgressed by the moving images of cinema, television media and more recently web 2.0 which have all played their part in reproducing a bricolage of images that challenge linear narrations of culture and society. Audiences are accustomed to an edited framing of the world that blurs the distinctions between fiction and non-fiction, past, present and future. Yet whilst the tourist gaze may be nuanced over time by this plurality of contemporary aberrations that accelerate the pace of life, it was found in many voices that the VW campervan owner's desire to encounter visual experiences by moving slowly through them is unwavering. This exemplified by the quote below:

Distressing after a week of work and inwardly laughing at the big cars flying past trying to get where they want to be because they get less time to spend in their car- we are the opposite, ours is a pleasure to be in so we take our time. (Peter, VW Campervan owner, 2012)

In considering another affect of the sight sense, Larsen (2001, p.89) proposes that as a consequence of automobility, the 'automization of sight', and the domestication of nature, also results. So, not only is movement domesticated, so is the environment through which the tourist passes. To explain this within the context of VW campervan travel, sight is mobilized to produce space that embodies material and immaterial signifiers as motion affects. Whilst nature can be glanced upon, it is done so behind the safety of a screen that arguably *others* the gazed upon marker. Participants are therefore at liberty to pass through the highway and thwart potential danger by residing in a tourist bubble (Judd, 1999). The result of this amelioration is that the expanse of the macro visual is prioritized over the micro environment of surfaces, paths and nature rendering them untouchable. So, despite the VW campervan moving slowly when compared to fast cars, it still, due to being mobile, produces a cinematic landscape. The driver who is in close proximity to the vehicle, experiences blurred scenery, whilst at the same time distant views unfold outwards at progressively slower speeds towards the horizon. As the quote below suggests, the researcher experienced views at different vantages as the relationship between velocity and space shifted across the same gaze:

Looking out from the van window, the close views were fleeting past and barely recognizable as objects, whilst the middle and distant scenes because they look like they are rotating at different speeds make you feel like you're at the centre of a merry go round with the landscapes spinning around things in variable velocities. (VW Researcher, 2012)

There is also a further challenge. Although owners are seated like conventional travellers riding in a VW campervan, they have to engage in the kinaesthetic experience of driving as owners tend to drive their own vans. This means they employ a range of coordination skills usually not required of tourists on a seated tour. Thus, the predicament of van ownership makes travellers responsible for self -navigation in what is often a high maintenance vehicle. In other words, since vehicles may be up to 45 years old, they are often mechanically fragile resulting in breakdowns in which tourists can be left stranded in the environment. This forces them to connect directly with the outdoor world as they spend time in and around the arrested stationary van. So unlike reliable modern transport, the sanitized show reel of images is halted, leaving tourists to contemplate the landscape as a stilled and somewhat benign reality. Mechanical failure is however expected by owners and seen as a matter of course. Many purported to experience breakdowns on motorways seeing them as part of the holiday expectation. As one participant commented, "Cos it's always at the back of your mind, are you gunna get there, are you gunna break down. Always at the back of your mind" (Joe, VW Campervan Owner, 2012).

Unlike travelling in the sealed cocoon of a modern car, the VW campervan owner is also exposed to natural elements (rain, snow, smells, cold, noise etc) that leak in through the bodywork. Interestingly, harking back to the critics of the train and Thomas Cook's organization of it, "the lost art of travel" as argued by Boorstin, (1985), Cook's social organization of train excursions highlights how individual skills and endurance are less of a requirement in modern transport. VW campervan travel with its mechanic faults conversely produces its owner as a participating agency, thus

'self-parcelization' i.e. a disembodied traveller detached from the landscape, is replaced by an actively engaged body. So, the connection to the social world can be more *felt* because the VW campervan is a hands-on travel experience. Conversely, although the VW campervan travels more slowly than most forms of modern transport, because they have ownership the traveller's views may be slowed down and speeded up at will.

The VW campervan also provides the tourist with an opportunity for autonomous gazing as an arguably cyborgian articulation of an auto-mobilized view. In other words, the way tourists embody their vehicles has arguably led to ways of seeing through these body machine relations. Conversely whilst corporally immobile passengers on air flights, buses, trains etc. may listen to music, watch films on in-flight systems and sleep in anticipation of a swift arrival, VW campervan owners by choice are physically engaged in the process of travel. Furthermore, for many owners although getting to the festival was the end result, the journey for many was the most important part:

Yes, I enjoyed travelling anywhere, and still do. I just like being on the road and I like sitting high up with all-round visibility. Also, the experience of driving the van is important whether driving to the local shop for fags and booze or off to a long distance VW show.

(Jake, VW campervan owner, 2012)

Furthermore, unlike tourists chaperoned from place to place, VW campervan owners are obliged to change gears, use indicators, decide routes and socialize in transit. Drivers were also noted to eat on the move, daydream and talk on mobile phones whilst keeping their eyes on the road for navigational purposes. So, whilst their gaze is not guided by a specific agenda set by a tour operator, their self-imposed itineraries required a personal commitment to manoeuvre, circumnavigate road obstacles, fuel and maintain the machine and plan the route. Compared to the 'passive' consumption of tourists bound by a fixed itinerary of a guided tour for example, embodied owners whilst reproducing the everyday inside the van, also expressed a strong need to have the freedom to roam. Due to the van affectively

being a viewing chamber, the visual appeared to be a priority commodity for tourists. Also as owners had an opportunity to devise self-styled travel maps, they could also immersed themselves in a range of other distractions that both complimented and compromised the spectral aspect. The same idea could be applied to car travel, the VW campervan did lend itself to home-making on the move and so passengers used the space as a living room and the outside world could also be seen from a number of vantages, thus lending itself to the idea it was a lens through which to contemplate the landscape. The resultant fleeting natural and urban scenery therefore assimilated by the viewer as a three dimensional world according to a (Schivelbusch 1986 in Urry, 2002) is regarded as “panoramic perception”. As Wilson (1992, p.33) also adds, the view through a car windscreen means the faster we drive, the flatter the earth looks” . This implies that velocity can re-constitute views as less dynamic because of the dynamism of speed. That said, VW campervans are comparatively sluggish compared to modern cars, so visual experience incrementally is impacted marginally less.



Figure 6.1 VW Campervan parked in an ASDA car park, stop off en route. (2012)

In terms of the architecture of the van, in fig (12) the wall to wall windows are arranged ergonomically for the consumption of views. As they are designed to reduce obstructions to the field of vision, highways for example are mediated through this technological apparatus to facilitate travel 'glancing' at a 360 degree angle. As an observatory therefore it offers a 'fishbowl' effect so tourists can contemplate surroundings in omni-directional space. Secondly, the windows frame these views whilst particular directions curate them. In other words speed acts as an editor of imagery because different velocities determine how things are seen. Visual perspectives are also distorted at different speeds as things at close proximity race by, whilst things far away slowly rotate around the curvature of the earth as a spinning affect. In support of this idea Schivelbusch (1979) indicates that trains and automobiles are vision machines or mobile viewing chambers, where the perception of materiality in the form of rhythm, shape, colour also differ from photographic stills.

A further point by Andrews (1999, p.5) is that he suggests because things are framed by a car window, notions of landscape are linked to circumscription of photographic or painterly tradition. Adopting this idea however can lead to contention about which 'world views' are represented through the historical delineations of what is and what is not deemed as 'picturesque'. Arguably how the journey is interpreted is based upon taste distinctions, social-cultural status, privilege and so on which inform how space is understood as a set of aesthetic values. Andrews also adds to this debate by suggesting that the scene 'Wouldn't be a landscape without a frame' therefore suggesting that it is the way the visual is presented which defines how it is understood.

The landscapes in question of course are not static images, but instead disappear into the distance until the vehicle stops. Hence unlike fixed scenes they cannot be captured easily as snapshots using a photographic medium without blurring. The researcher made a film during fieldwork to try to comprehend this experience of driving however it is not the usual practice of VW campervan tourists. In fact as a contest to Urry's (1990) suggestion that tourism encounters are often strategies for the accumulation of photographs, owners were too pre-occupied with driving to do photography, preferring to enjoy the filmic nature of travel as a transient experience.

Whilst the cinematic gaze can lead to interesting interpretations of the experience of travel, Larsen (2001) also argues that the liquid travel glance, i.e. rapid images flowing past the eye, can potentially undermine the penetrative glance of static viewing. Furthermore, he suggests that the strolling eye may lead to a shallow appreciation of nature and argues that contemplating static events enable a deeper visual experience. That said, skimming over scenes was not problematic for VW campervan owners, with none of the participants feeling compelled to stop often to look at static sights during the trip. That said, when tourists did stop, mostly to fill their tanks with petrol, they did enjoy the sociality of the petrol station but more perhaps in the same way as they enjoy human interactions whilst on the move:

Well we are both in our 50's and enjoy each other's company in our van. We can go wherever and whenever we want to enjoy scenic drives as a way to relax. We prefer to keep going until we get there though. (Iris, VW Campervan passenger, 2012)

This quote suggests that the road journey offered a social and visual pleasure where rolling scenery implied a freedom in movement. So, despite Auge's (1995) commentary that motorways are non-places, owners found sociality and pleasure in the landscape as they moved through it. Evidence showed also that many participants remembered the entire journey as a positive experience seeing enjoyment in the mundane: "We enjoy driving to wherever we are going as it's an adventure, the whole experience of driving is important to make an enjoyable trip." (P. Bee, VW Campervan owner, 2012.)

It was found that despite most of the routes to festivals being described as utilitarian, participants enjoyed the scenery as the main aspect of their journey. Here in figure (13) for example, the researcher stopped briefly for a rest next to a motorway

café. It was remarkable how urban the landscape appeared in this context, yet talking to owners about the views that they experienced on their trips they never described them as banal.



Figure 6.2 Typical scene photographic still taken by researcher, stop off 'American Diner' car park early evening A19, 2012

Research showed that most participants did not discriminate between industrial settings, congested motorways and traditionally picturesque mountain ranges, lakes and seafronts. Whilst they did not have the opportunity to spend time contemplating the sublimity of the landscape due to its fleeting nature, tourists still passed through it expressing a general appreciation. Arguably this transitory gaze led participants to emphasize the practicality of moving through scenes due to the driving challenge. This explains why not many detailed accounts of the aesthetics of the landscape were relayed overall. For example comments from (Amanda VW, Campervan owner, 2012) such as “I like the height of the driving position as you can see more of the countryside.” and it’s not as expensive as going on holiday abroad and there are some beautiful places I guess.” demonstrate how landscapes were recounted as minor not majorly expansive recollections of natural beauty.

Also, the banal imagery of industrial settings, car parks, and utilitarian transport routes were understood not as disharmonious features of the landscape, (See figure 14) but as an accepted yet side lined consequence of travelling in the said vehicle. Conversely whilst the poetics of the landscape were somewhat muted it is suggested due to the lack of time to contemplate them in a 'meaningful' way, VW campervan tourists still acknowledged scenery as important. They appeared to resolve the hypocrisy by ignoring disdainful content such as mundane motorway architecture, oil spills, car crashes and featureless liminality as they did not fit a romantic notion of the picturesque.



Figure 6.3 Photographic still. A19 motorway, early evening, Middlesborough city centre, VW Researcher, 2012

To give context to the phenomena that the mundane landscape is rarely seen as appealing when compared with its pastoral counterpart, VW campervan owners by greater or lesser degree did subscribe to the idea that looking at nature was a valid pursuit. This made sense because VW campervan ownership was based on a consideration of aesthetics because the brand itself has artistic appeal. In support of this as Urry (1995, p.196) points out in reference to Wordsworth's *Guide to the Lakes* (1822) finding pleasure in 'dead' scenery involves the acquisition of a fair degree of cultural capital. Yet whilst tourists were cultivated enough to find general value in

looking at the pastoral views albeit peppered by urban signs, they never celebrated such banal aspects despite their prevalence. The boundaries between one place and another thus were blurred into an expression of movement. In other words, in becoming part of the flow, VW campervan owners had no time deconstruct the meanings of the passing images but instead felt them through motion. Put differently participants recounted the total experience as something aesthetic, rather than commenting on specific landmarks that could be construed as idyllic over others that were not.

That said Hewison (1993) suggests that the English landscape is a 'deep-seated' signifier of national identity and virtues. Not to mention castles, stately homes and so on that allude to similar conceptions. So, whilst VW campervan owners did not articulate their interest in looking at landscapes as part of their personal identity consciously, there was a consensus that the vintage van harked back to the past which when coupled with its ability to mobilize the countryside had been, despite its German origination re-imagined as something traditionally English. Also, the VW campervan in general terms is described not only as an object of heritage due to age, history, how it is marketed and so on, but because it facilitates access to landscapes, heritage sites, country houses etc. In fact, it was found that some owners thought the van complimented the ideal of these places as it was a classic vehicle that added to the cultural heritage of some locations. Indeed, many VW Campervan festivals are held next to National Trust and English Heritage buildings such as Gibside Hall in Derwentside and Harwood Hall in Leeds.

According to Sternberg (1997) because of the proximity to symbols and metaphors of national identity, ideas of nationhood can be embodied in the materiality of associated objects; or in this case the VW campervan. Rojek (1997) also adds that heritage has become a rock-steady icon of nationhood laying claim to sacredness and permanence. This is perhaps some explanation as to why these vehicles are conserved as heritage artefacts in their own right.

6.3 The Travel Glance

Whilst the cinematic gaze was touched upon previously, the as yet under-developed notion of the 'travel glance' as a mediator of a filmic vision of the landscape is taken further. Here a distinction is made between the 'tourist gaze' as previously denoted by Urry (1990;2001), as appealing the convention of looking from a static repose, for *glancing* where tourists adopt a driving position with the eye fixed on an image for no more than a few seconds., Larsen (2001, p.89) suggests that the driving position mimics the cinema spectator albeit moving in this case through a world that unfolds as a motion picture. To tackle the phenomena as a particular way of seeing, a brief return to the historical lineage of touring cultures is in order. Lofgren (1999, p,43) in the first instance is drawn upon to note that the art of 'scenicruising', or sightseeing on the move, was adopted by the tourist pioneers of the eighteenth century in the advent of car and rail travel. This led to the development of the panoramic gaze as a new technique of vision as travellers not used to speed were forced to acknowledge landscapes and movement in new ways due to time and space being re-organized. The rise of steamboat tours for example encouraged the staging of the sublime in the form of drive-bys.

Tourists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson quoted in Stilgoe, (1983, p.42) relayed in 1834: "*The very performance of matter seems compromised and trees, fields, hills, hitherto esteemed symbols of stability, do absolutely dance by you.*" Here the voyeur detached from the landscape gazed into the scene but was subjugated, unable to control the pace. Later with the invention of train travel, Lofgren (1999) in Larsen (2001, p.90) points out, high velocity had the affect of distancing and thus flattening the landscape into a two dimensional plateau and turning sedentary views into a "chaotic spectacle of moving images" (Larsen, 2001, p.90).

In other words, due to transport developments during the industrial revolution, the traveller's experience of speed and time re- organized through new mobilities determined how fleeting landscapes were read. In this case whilst the urban landscape, for many people in particular, offers something fundamentally quotidian, participants appeared to use their imagination to *other* this view. As Salazar (2011) points out, often the most spectacular fantasies and reverence of the banal are historically influenced and socially constructed. Thus, the way owners understood their surroundings was informed by learned notions of what road travel is supposed

to be. MacCannell (1999) simplifies this argument somewhat by adding that anything can be an attraction if people consider it worth seeing.

In terms of the production of the gaze, VW campervan owners however are both backstage producer and tourist subject, so the process of the gaze is directed by the tour operator i.e. the VW campervan owner. That means human subjectivities as a social and cultural inheritance guide the travel itinerary and steer the travel glance. This is supported by Gibson (2006) who suggests tourists can also deploy the 'cinematic-travel gaze' to construct other ways of seeing their experience. Eyerman & Orvar, (1995) reinforced this by adding that Hollywood road movies have mythologized the notion of travel as emancipation. It would seem that VW campervan owners define what is viewable because they engage in their own highly individuated travel package. Research showed that tourists deployed a range of conscious and subconscious imaginaries to create fictions of their routes. This was evident with a number of owners who mentioned a correlation between their interest in movies such as *The Love Bug* (1968), *Into The Wild* (2007), *Little Miss Sunshine* (2006), *Alice's Restaurant* (1969) and so on, in relation to their Volkswagen ownership. Here one participant referred to films that inspired their interest in Volkswagen subcultures, commenting in particular that the film featuring the anthropomorphized car Herbie was an initial impetus:

I think it's the shape, they have something about them, whereas modern things are just a lump of metal. Then you add in the Herbie thing which is my generation. (Nick, VW Campervan Mechanic, 2011)

Here Nick is attracted to the vehicles' shape and nostalgic associations due to its association with the popular film *Herbie*. Noting that it represented a point in time when he felt freer from social constraints, now in his mid-forties, Nick identified with the humour, personality and loose spirited nature of the humanized Volkswagen Beetle car, relating to the brand motif.

As already stated, whilst road trips to VW festivals included mainly industrial scenes, they were occasionally peppered by pastoral landscapes and as was found participants rarely discerned between the two. This was an interesting paradox in the context of the sentiments of the Romantic Movement in the 1800's with their proposal that emotional pleasure can be derived from the sublimity of untamed wilderness. Yet here the function of miles of tarmac is not to look beautiful, but to regulate and maintain traffic flows. So, whilst sites of mobility normally considered dull to the VW Campervan owner is more often not so dull, Urry (1990) adds that in the spirit of invention, tourists who gaze upon landscapes and townscapes separate them from the everyday because of a wish to consume things out of the ordinary. To counter this statement however, VW campervan owners appear to tirelessly reprocess the banal into something worth looking at, thus the ordinary is converted into extraordinary as tourists locate scenarios where their imaginations can flourish. This may be informed more crudely by apparitions from popular culture, road movies, advertising and so on that offer the human mind a template from which to blur the divisions between simulation and reality. There is also however an argument that riding along in a VW campervan can frame the contemplation of scenery in a way that ordinary vehicles do not. Interestingly this can only be achieved through the process of automobility which as Aronczyk, (2005, p.1) points out, nature arguably can include the fixtures and fittings of the urban landscape moulded by the social history of the car.

In summary, what has been established is that the highways are not always defined as picturesque in the traditional sense, but instead they are messy with appendages such as garages, motels, lay-by cafes, speed cameras, crash debris and so on. Yet, despite this, owners were still attracted to their aesthetic and material qualities albeit marred with urban clutter. Some owners said that they really loved experiencing Britain by road and were not disparaging about the carved up landscape they had witnessed:

Because I was forced to look at my surroundings a lot more when driving the van, I noticed all the different colour skies, the expanse of farmers' fields, the tree lined motorway. Even the pylons looked

interesting, sculptural even. At night was even better because I could see the stars in the sky and the lights on the road, it seemed quite magical. (VW researcher, 2012)

According to MacCannell (2011) gazing has a totalizing effect which involves the entire person, body and mind. In this case tourists said they enjoyed looking at the banal topography of the urban highway, which led to an assertion that to do this, travellers had to fictionalize their experiences. The following comment from field notes for example suggests driving spaces were backdrops for human imagination to flourish:

Sometimes I imagined I was in a road movie, other times I felt like I was on the run from ordinary life or on some crazy journey whereby as the distance between home and away lengthened, so did my feelings of expectations and possibility. (VW Researcher, 2012)

Yet the urban highway is not always described in such lucid terms, as Edensor (2003) points out, the motorway is a geometry of shifting rectangles, hexagons, vehicle and green embankments, verges and beshrubbed roundabouts. He also talks about some areas being maintained, with others left abandoned. Displays of broken glass, dead animals, random car parts and shards of glass that litter the road, all of which combine to create a composition that reflects human mobility as a modern social discourse. He goes further to suggest that landscapes seen from a car are 'smeared across the windscreen' and "devoid of detail." This argument is centred on the idea that looking at the world from the vantage point of a seated driver has a flattening effect on the landscape. This sentiment was echoed by younger participants who saw little difference between the images they consumed on their smartphone screens and the views outside, claiming to find staring at their digital devices more interesting on long journeys.

In other words, teenagers brought up with gaming and web 2.0 appeared to prefer the excitement of simulations rather than the comparatively real live events outside. In fact they preferred virtual imagery compared to what they concluded were "boring" scenes flashing by *en route*. One family man for example remarked that he

and his wife liked looking at landscapes but declared that the “kids” don’t as they are on their phones playing games”. He said that he would point out interesting things on the way and his teenagers were engrossed in their Nintendo DS screens. In this context two types of screens are being acknowledged. The young people sat in the back of the van looking at digital landscapes of Los Angeles, African jungles and snowy mountain peaks which they walked through as avatars, whilst the adults were drawn to the fairly sedate images seen at a distance outside the vehicle.

For many participants, unfolding views were deemed as more exciting than static images. Furthermore Edensor (2003) describes the two dimensional world as sensually ‘impoverished’, suggesting that the environment beyond the windscreen is an ‘alien other’ as a consequence. The physical relationship between voyeur and viewed in this context is worthy of note. By proxy the VW campervan driver is separated from the outside space by four metal walls. This casing whilst protecting the driver from imminent danger also restricts closeness to the external environment. Furthermore, because the fast paced carousel of blurred images are contemplated by the traveller without physical engagement, their experience is somewhat disembodied like a simulation of the real. Landscapes from this vantage point are arguably like pictures hanging on a gallery wall. Meanwhile, the driver inside the vehicle is locked in a capsule that is bound to the demands of navigation.

To explore these ideas further, extracts from the researcher’s travel diary are used to demonstrate a particular driving gaze captured by the video camera on a mobile phone.



Figure 6.4 Researcher driving to Leeds, sunny day. (2012). 0:05

Using the video capture from a hand held device allowed the topography of interior and exterior spaces to be surveyed in synchronization with driving flows. Because it was a handheld device, this could be easily moved around inside the van during the trip. Thus the physical position and flexibility of the driver does have a distinct bearing on how surroundings are viewed. See Fig (15), both the front and side view of the drivescape including the driver (i.e. the researcher) in front of the dashboard are represented. As shown in the film still, the driver's hand is manipulating the steering wheel and the general view of the dual carriageway ahead is also featured. This image revealed fast flowing traffic such as cars, articulated lorries and motorcycles. This vantage point also conjured up references to road movies in the mind's-eye as though the tourist researcher was a character in an unfolding plot. As reinforced earlier, the viewing chamber of the van with its eight windows invites the tourist to gaze on peripheral events. How these sights are consumed however is open to debate. For example Edensor (2003) draws the analogy that they are like a bank of computer screens, where the images are almost two dimensional in appearance. Also in (Fig 15) pastoral scenes are also not as immersive due to being marginalized to a side show status.

In contemplating the paradoxical pleasure of the sublime, Bell and Lyall, (2002) suggest that tourists seek an empty space in which to escape and find fulfilment in its vacuity. Here the landscape cannot be experienced as suggested because roads are overpopulated with bodies, machines and motorway

architecture. For example, a furrow i.e. the motorway, has been carved through the middle of the land to create networks of mobility which steer tourists on an authorized route. Any diversions from this would be potentially subversive and possibly illegal, therefore the tourist is encouraged to perform to a script in line with a modern plan. Instructions in the form of signs, advertisements on trucks and motorway furniture serve to choreograph the traveller. In other words, roads narrate the way tourists flow through them, and how views are framed or obscured by the vehicle may or may not be included by the editorial glance of the tourist.



Figure 6.5 Dull day on the A19. 4:38 minutes

That said, one respondent commented that:

The journey sort of opens up before you and you get a totally different experience of going somewhere. I've seen some of the most beautiful scenery in the UK out the window/cargo door of a VW bus. (James, VW campervan owner, 2012)

As discussed, much of the scenery captured on film is not aesthetically pleasing yet owners describe it that way. (See figure, 16). It is interesting to note that a van window would not normally be imagined as a picture border, yet it is accepted as a device for aesthetic framing. Many of the images captured by the video were grey and bleak, yet in the auto-ethnographic account of the researcher at the 'pit stop' on the way to Northallerton VW Festival (See also Fig, 17) was deemed an accent towards something sublime:

I parked at the OK American Diner next to a service station on the A194M. Normally during domestic travel, I would not have been attracted to stopping at this site except for an emergency toilet break or due to running out of petrol. Nor would I have asked a stranger to take a snapshot of myself standing next to my vehicle. I did not eat in the diner and only posed in front of it as a gesture of “been there, done that”. Yet the theatrical prop of the van allowed a release from the anonymity of the road by providing a reason to stop for reasons other than re-fuelling body or machine.



Figure 6.6 VW Researcher, photographic still, the OK Diner, 8pm, A194M

Not alone in this, Lægran and Stewart (2003) define the petrol station as a techno-social space extended by the car. Here the highway designed to speed its passengers on their way is used in Campervan travel as a functional tool not to arrive at a destination as quickly as possible, but to offer access to stopping points where the desire to simply look about was the reason to park up. Whilst there was no

practical reason to alight from the vehicle and wander alone around a desolate car park, spending time to absorb the atmosphere, watch people campervan spotting and to play at being an inquisitive tourist was articulated in my 15 minute detour. Gazing at mundane scenes was a distinct aspect of the motivation.

At other times during the journeys the researcher looked for other opportunities that involved the VW campervan, this also meant interrupting the journey to the festival by parking next to sites that had no practical purpose but looked interesting. The main point here is that places were only considered if they suited the van as an adjunct to their outlook, i.e. the classic Volkswagen conceived as an object of heritage with an image that lent itself to being positioned in particular cultural contexts. This enabled the driver to tune into frequencies of nostalgia, history and an “alternative” lifestyle as the Volkswagen was used by the countercultures of the 1960’s as a symbol of freedom and so on. In this case the American diner on the motorway, sites of historical merit, windmills, cliff top views, country fayres and VW events became significant to the tourist, as their meanings were elaborated upon through the van. Ubiquitous as they were, even service stations were potential social opportunities where the VW campervan could be meaningfully situated as they were accessible through travel and culturally rich or iconically significant, prompting a touristic gaze.

In terms of articulating atmospheres, the experience of driving at night had a different complexion to motorway travel by day. Due to how both natural and artificial light worked together to create a visual spectacle, they transformed the complexion of the highway in dramatic ways. After dark for example, shifts in colour and light significantly altered the visual aesthetic of cities and motorways. What could be to the motorist a bleak, isolating and seemingly hazardous terrain by day, albeit few VW campervan owners saw it that way, can also be described as a magical realism where roads are seen as mysterious, atmospheric and weirdly beautiful. Participants also created urban myths by using popular culture and fictional literature to infuse their practical stories about driving to shape tourist significations of night travel. In the way tourists construct particular ways of glancing through these allusions it is argued evokes glancing at scenes in which the desires and intentions of the participants overlay the experience of the landscape.

So beyond these fictional imaginaries, how space was illuminated also appeared to impact on other realities such as perceptions of speed, visibility and the feeling of being mobile. Leaving the local conurbations for the highway for example, cityscapes appeared bejewelled with the colourful illuminations of restaurant signs, clubs, traffic lights and a high concentration of inner city luminescence before heading towards expanses of motorway lit at intervals. This finally led to unmarked rural roads that were often only visible by the dim light of VW campervan headlights. (See fig.6.7)

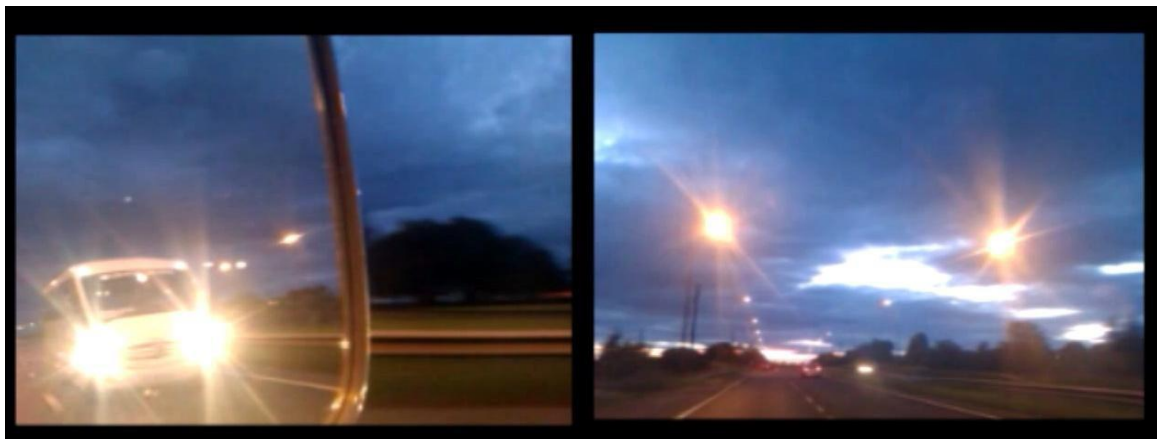


Figure 6.7 Travelling from Redcar VW Festival, 11pm on the A19.6:10 minutes

In considering the travel glance further, it was found that some owners confessed they preferred to travel in the middle of the night, remarking on how it contrasted positively as a diversion from the gridlocked traffic in rush hours. Comfortable navigation of empty roads during sleeping hours for most of the population became a practical solution for those preferring an alternative travel cycle. Participants stated that they had experienced a sense of freedom and anonymity due to nocturnal behaviour. From a researcher perspective, less traffic around at night meant less obstacles making it easier to control the van, leaving space and time for contemplation; the travel glance. As echoed by the quote, the researcher found the travel backdrop as a context to which horror films could find association. This was to do with the symbolism of a road movie in which tragic events on the road often followed the epic dramaturgy of the road. Here the researcher expresses a somewhat haunted feeling as narratives of popular culture were alluded to.

On the way back from a festival in Redcar on an under populated road I experienced travel as a space to think. I thought about the horror film *The Hitcher* 1986 by *Robert Harmon* whilst harbouring worrisome thoughts about breaking down in a remote place. That said it was possible to appreciate the painterly and picturesque quality of these roads, which in daylight appeared flat and grey. Because the areas to the left and right of the van were now cast into darkness, the world appeared like a 'void' in which a runway had been carved down the centre of an almost empty plain. (VW researcher,2012)

The quote also signalled the poetic quality of tranquility as participants experienced driving at night as something beyond the utility of getting from A to B. Due to a lack of congestion, imaginative narratives were more possible because less intense traffic left VW campervan owners with time to explore their thoughts during movement.

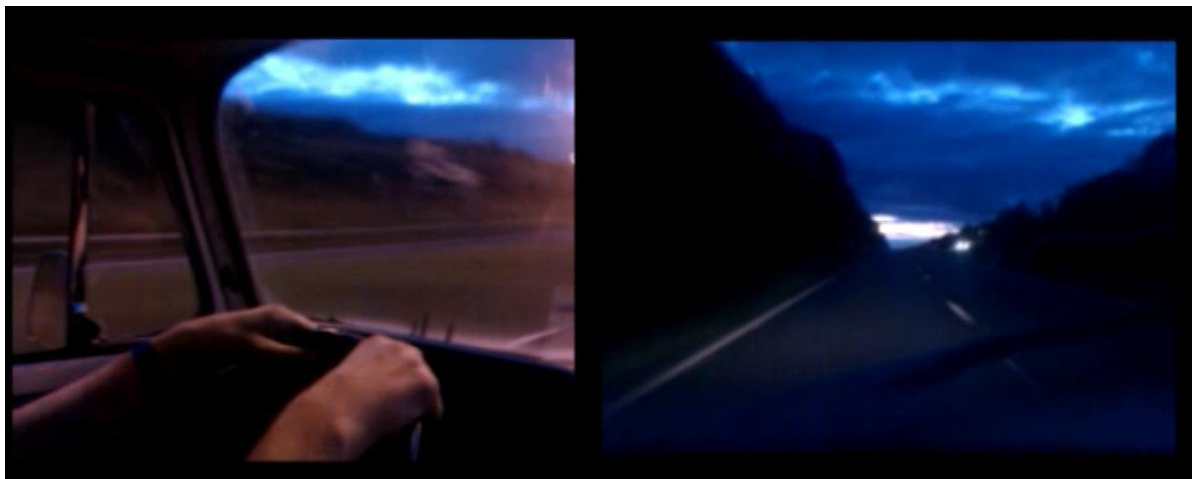


Figure 6.8 Travelling from Redcar VW Festival, 11pm on the A19, 2012. (See film 6:52 mins)

6.4 Noise

This section looks at how sound impacts on the tourist experience. Because of its prominence in this case, a study of the sonic phenomena of the VW campervan was imperative due to loud mechanical sound being an inadmissible part of the driving experience of the tourist. Unlike the cushioned practice of driving modern autos where exterior noise and inside vibrations are minimised for a smoother ride (Labelle, 2010), VW campervan owners chose to travel in transport that is inordinately noisy. Unlike conventional means of transport, whether by accident or design, the VW campervan offered a unique auditory experience as a soundtrack to the movement of its passengers. Despite this overarching affect, tourists still ironically used the vehicle for leisure and relaxation purposes. Furthermore, research showed that most owners found these sonic disturbances not an abhorrence, but as an expected part of their holiday ideal. Thus contrary to any assertion that most participants might understand “noise”, as something “out of place” Hendy (2013, p. viii) i.e. as an unwanted interference, owners instead held these sonic reveries of grinding, clanking, squeaking mechanics and engine roar in high regard.

To explore this significant behaviour, this section examines the sonority of the motoric expression of the VW campervan to gauge its cultural significance. This is achieved by interpreting participant responses to the omnipresence of sound during their journeys and to describe such interactions. Following on from Labelle (2010, p. xix) who explored the exchanges between environments and people through their relationships with sound, a commentary about the “acoustic politics of space” highlighted how the acousmatic determines how movement is lived. This prompted a debate about noise not as a neutral affect in this case, but as an energy that can lead to a complex topography of shifting perspectives (Labelle, 2010, p.133). Or, as Henri Lefebvre (2004) in his essays on *Rhythm Analysis* contends, musical time and bodily rhythms are required to engage the figural reciprocity with the self and the place of listening. This discussion is not about traditional forms of music, it accounts for VW campervan noise being naturally aestheticized by owners as they ‘hear their car speak’ Labelle,(2010, p.151).

This draws the discussion on to the last point. Because the human is central to the understanding of how sound is mediated through the vehicle, then a dialogue between human and machine although not through a formal language, arguably is a conversation between them as an embodied affect of travel. The following discussion hence draws upon both theory and empirical knowledge to argue that the intensities of urban and industrial noise, either as a dissonance or as vitality to the cultural awareness of the tourist, underscores the nature of road based tourism. Labelle (2010, p.xxv) also points out that sonic material as a micro-epistemology, e.g. as an audio vocabulary of travel that is then expressed through this mobile assemblage as owners, vehicles and the landscape are knotted together by these sonoric affects.

As suggested with car travel in comparison to old vehicles, contemporary transport is often sealed against engine vibrations and external disturbances that make listening to them no longer necessary or expected. So whilst a return to listening when driving may appear unusual today, in the 1920s as motor vehicles became more affordable for the masses, there was a wave in which service manuals were used to actively promote the idea that self driving required “monitory listening”. As Hacker (1932, p. 83) also points out, once the motorist noticed discord he was to drive carefully and “open up his ears”. The manual also highlighted categories of malfunctions which it suggested could be detected by “seeing, hearing, smelling and feeling.” Hessler (1926, p.216) in Bijsterveld et al (2014) also drew a comparison with physicians who listened to the patient’s body diagnostically, pointing out that “This is how you proceed with your engine as well”.

The nature of how drivers experience listening in their automobiles thus has a history where contemplation of engine sounds were promoted to ensure automotive knowledge, (Hessler,1926) in Bijsterveld et al. (2014). However, due to the vested interest in radio manufacturers encouraging the de-listening of car engines, much of this early behaviour has been demarcated to the naturalization process of broadcast and music listening. In the case of antiquated technology of a VW campervan, the emphasis on the engine sound is taking the driver back in time either by comparison to the quiescent nature of modern cars or their mechanical reliability. The disquietude

of most vans therefore makes the noise they produce envelop the contemplation of views alongside any social activities that take place whilst on the move.

As mentioned before, most retro VW campervans are notorious for breaking down. This prompted an inclination for drivers to monitor them more closely than they would conventional cars. However, in this study not all of the participants' reactions to their engine sound were to do with a sense of survival. Many owners though didn't detect faults, chose to travel at a decelerated pace, desirous to treat their gearing mechanisms gently whilst stopping frequently so the humanized VW campervan could take "a well earned rest". Some participants described their van as being an old lady they had to look after not "pushing her too hard". They also said not only did they listen to their engines from inside the cabin, but they also opened their windows to do so as part of the pleasure of the drive. In other words it was not enough for the vehicle to be acknowledged as working, but participants needed it to *sound right* before feeling content en route:

I ended up listening to the engine a lot. If it sounded like it was grinding I would back off from accelerating. Sometimes I imagined I heard faults when I concentrated on what the motor was doing. (VW Researcher, 2012)

As pointed out here, there was an awareness of the clanking and grinding of other onboard hardware such as suspension noise, window wiper motion, wheels turning and so on, where participants spoke fondly of it as a peculiarity. For example, when Alex, a VW campervan owner, was asked if he was aware of the noise his van made, in response he made the following comments:

I took my friend Karen for a drive along the beach when we first got her and she said I hope it sounds as great on the outside to passers-by as it does on the inside. I don't think it is an unpleasant sound, but a nice one. (Alex, VW Campervan Owner, 2014)

As participants had an acute awareness of a kinaesthetic relationship with the vehicle, it is argued that they were embodied in sound. Their connection with sounds whilst on the move also impacted on owners' states of mind as subject to how their van was sounding and thus functioning. Conversely, Sheller and Urry (2000) and Thrift (2004) suggested that the digitization of cars free people from the physical problems of driving, encasing them inside a protective bubble. Their claim being that if the travel space is womblike then drivers are perhaps more at liberty to access deeper social experiences when not embroiled in the manual handling of driving. Yet VW campervan owners remarked upon their travel experiences as emotional as much as anything else, so despite them being actively engaged in driving and maintenance, their feelings were not disengaged.

Interestingly, with modern vehicles the idea of owners collecting repair receipts would not be seen as a positive account of the current status of the vehicle. Yet with VW campervan owners they appreciated the mechanical histories of the vans as "proof of life" and as well as a record of its economic value. So, by storing MOT reports, documents showing investment in restoration and repair, customization enhancements, photographs of the van with owners and so on, these represented a valued currency. The documents were also treated as a sentimental biography of the journeys of past owners. Whilst participants had rejected the soft and silent trappings of twenty first century transportation, they demonstrated preferences toward using VW campervans despite a lack of sophistication or comfort inherent in the vehicle. It was also suggested that participants showed affection for near obsolete vehicles due to feelings of nostalgia, valuing authenticity and attachment to an object with a human character. Yet the noisy nature of the van considered endearing by some participants also distinguished it from ordinary cars. Thus, the significance of the noise generated, i.e. a functioning sounding engine, appeared to equal the personal wellbeing of the traveller. Paradoxically an unpredictable engine did not reduce the tourist propensity to travel, but seemed to elevate their sense of adventure and risktaking.

In terms of the sounds in question, a loud mechanical engine noise is heard from the back of the vehicle flowing as a sonic stream into the driver's cabin. Furthermore, these sonic expressions are not the same in every campervan, but are perceived as individual scores with unique tonalities, rhythmic patterns, temporality and volume. Interestingly some vehicles did have stereo systems on board but they were not often used. Bull (2004) with reference to Baudrillard (1989) in his description of car travel, noted however that many automobile drivers described time spent in their vehicles as uncomfortable without music playing as an accompaniment. Denora (2000) agreeing with Bull (2004) also adds that music has a prosthetic effect as people dance in the seat etc. She argues that the banality of modern travel can be transcended through existential moments of sublime events, daydreaming, fantasies, poetics, creativity and so on. Yet the empirical findings of VW campervan travel showed that participants were more discerning about the content of their engine sounds, "tuning in" to those instead. So, rather than choosing to be entertained by the "din and to-do" of entertainment music (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1973, p.56) as a false pretence of revelry as they put it, the majority of owners listened to their engines to monitor the health of their vans or to enjoy them as music in its own right. Some participants admittedly were also just being practical; Clive for example (VW owner, 2012) remarked that his engine was so noisy it was pointless turning the radio on. One or two owners who were interviewed said that they occasionally risked playing some music, but only tentatively so:

I eventually got round to putting a radio in (and speakers), but very rarely have it on cos I NEED to hear the engine. Stupid really because when the noises do change, I don't do anything except go " Hmmm, the engine noise has changed " and keep on going. If I'm on a long stretch of dual carriageway where I'm not expecting to slow down or speed up, I might risk a bit of the band Status Quo, but just quietly. Grant (VW Campervan owner, 2011)

Yet Bull (2004) also goes on to say that cars are perfect acoustic spaces for listening to music where the individual choices are curated. In this study this mattered

much less although some owners did intermittently play popular music from their sound system. It was found that most listened to the musicality of the VW campervan as the primary soundtrack, not the other way around. As Baudrillard (1989) in Bull, (2004, p. 248) describes movement through cities: “they float by as a filmic embodiment” where he argues simulation takes place in silence. Yet this potentially abstract silence to which he refers is challenged here by the sound of moving parts; a backdrop for which the other sensualities expressed in road use are felt. Sheller and Urry (2000, p.747) also argue that the senses are perhaps “impoverished” when trying to find expression on mundane roads. This thesis questions this on the basis that the sonic properties of acoustic elements are richly relevant to the tourist experience. Unlike music appreciation where the audio is consumed for pleasure, it is argued participants are sonically embodied as part of the travel process.

Whilst this mechanical phenomenon and its relationship to the travelling body is developed in the literature review as a cyborgian discourse, the sonic material in this discussion endeavours to exemplify the embodied connection of human to machine as both physical, interpretive and psychological. Arguably, as the engine releases rhythms and owners engage with these waves in particular ways, they function not as disembodied sounds in the background, but almost as an artificial “heartbeat” that can signify aliveness and pulse. Owners also listened for potential “accidents waiting to happen” (VW researcher) because the peculiarities of the sound helped owners with often low expectations of a consistent eurhythmy, to feel some security in completing their journeys without breaking down. Some owners listened to every sound the VW campervan made and joked that they could usually hear the recovery service coming in advance. Others claimed to listen to popular music whilst travelling, but not often for the entire trip. Some participants for example occasionally punctuated their listening itinerary by pausing their popular music to check their engine status. This behaviour was mimicked by many owners who preferred not to play additional music in the cab, just so they could anticipate any untoward consequences. As echoed in the following quote, owners were on high alert when it came to acknowledging the imagined and real physical frailties of their transport:

I prefer to hear what's going on in the engine bay and listen to the wheels etc. and of course you need to be constantly alert in case something drops off. (Michael, VW Campervan owner, 2012)

It was found that owners learned the character of their own engine's timbre. Some participants however were cautious about levels of engagement because of the necessity to be aware of the engine's performance. In this quote, the participant expressed an embodied engagement with the sonic aspect of their vehicle:

I have a stereo of sorts in now but as the speakers are at the back of the bus and its only running from the head unit, it just sounds like I'm sitting next to some chav on the bus and getting their second hand earphone noise. (Kevin, VW campervan owner, 2011)

Jonny in the following quote also acknowledged in an emotional way the positive and negative sides to being aware of the sound:

Oh yes very aware, I think that's the difference between driving a modern car where you just get in and drive. I think the problem with the soundtrack for a VW is the first thing you begin to think is panic. Sadly, a lot of soundtrack brings with it a sense of dread because every sound you haven't heard before means there's something wrong, there's something rattling, something whistling, the engines not making the right sound. (Jonny, VW campervan owner, 2011)

Some owners such as Daisy in the quote below, perceived loudness as part of the vehicle's personality. They commented on its endearing nature rather than emphasizing its noise as an encumbrance:

Anyway for noises I know, all the noises our van makes they are part and parcel of the joy of ownership. Her indoors (Mrs BOO) doesn't notice them anyway. When a new one comes along its shruggy shoulders time. Our radio powers 6 massive speakers and the engine noise drowns these out as well. (Daisy, VW campervan owner, 2012)

As reflected in the quote, participants listened to the sound of their vans as though monitoring their own health, by listening to the van as if it was their own body:

I pretty much end up listening to the vehicle as a whole and get to know when someone doesn't sound right, I don't often have music on in the van except when camped up as I like the sound of the engine instead. The sound of the engine is an essential part of the character which is why I wind the window down through tunnels like a lot of folk I reckon. (Bob, VW campervan Owner, 2011)

Maddison, one of the Durham Dubbers owners said: "In the van is easy and peaceful isn't it. Aye, just like kipping." To liken the experience to sleeping against a backdrop of rattling and roaring was an interesting illusion. Extracts from the auto-ethnography found that the extraneous amounts of engine noise heard through single glazed windows could be considered disdainful. Whilst in modern cars computerization has an almost silenced mechanical aspect of them, Mom, (1997) and Sheller, (2004) also commented on the lack of tactility in driving compared to the encompassing experience of pre-technological advancement in cars. In this case though, the shock of entering a driving realm not buffered was more obvious compared to the slick modernity of new cars. In the following quote by the researcher it was demonstrated that, unlike modern cars, sound was a significant aspect of the travel experience:

To drive in these conditions was disturbing and unrelenting and not tranquil as many owners had described it. Also as the external sounds were not buffered by the modern soundproofed interior, they were heard loudly alongside the campervan engine noise when the windows were open. It was not only engine noise however that was part of the experience, there was also the rattle of metal parts such as loose rivets, creaking suspension, interiors unscrewing themselves due to the process of motion. Also the disingenuous movement up down, left to right as the van bounced along meant the archaic suspension of the van did not reduce the impact of the vehicle on the road. The consequence was that the ride was bumpy which resulted in shaky grinding motion. (VW Researcher, 2012)

Most other drivers such as owner Maddison loved the roar of their engines. Bijsterveld (2010) also noted that noise stood for power, to impress bystanders. (McShane 1999; Mom, 1997) "A stressful week can melt away once behind the wheel of any vintage V Dub, no other experience can match that," commented Maddison (VW Owner, 2012). He also felt that being in the van had the potential to alleviate stress. Very few participants thought that their vehicles added to stress levels. Daisy, a VW campervan passenger, thought that stress also had an educational value, pointing out that for her every journey was a stress but was also a lesson.

6.5 The Emotional Gaze

This section will develop a theory that in stimulating sensitivities in its owner, the VW campervan can transform how gazed at landscapes are seen through it, as an emotive lens. In the previous section the question of noise was looked at as an overarching affect on travel. Thus whilst other features of the VW campervan could be dwelt upon, the unique features of this vehicle that engender identification with it is argued to contribute to the emotional computation of the tourist experience overall. By considering the embodied practice of looking therefore, it is proposed that the VW campervan tourist, because of sentimental attachments to their vehicle, may perceive

the urban highway through a sentimental gaze, that adds affects to do with that emotion. As Sheller (2004) also asserts, in the process of humans making personal connections with automobiles, these can also be experienced through what she describes as automotive emotions. So, whilst these are not always positive, they are always felt about, through or because of the car. It is therefore suggested that whilst tourists choose to spend time with VW campervans due to their design features, transport convenience, accommodation potential and so on, most live through them as sensuous experiences which appear often to eclipse any practical logic.

In drawing upon the work of Franks & McCarthy (1989) in discussions about the sociology of emotions, it is suggested that tourists who choose a proactive approach to their leisure activity, inadvertently explore emotions acquiring social meaning previously absent in other less involved travel scenarios. In other words, a propensity to seek meaning through actively engaged travel could be applied to the typology of the tourists in question. As the research also suggests, owners' adoration of their VW campervan often led to most aspects of the trip being viewed through a 'soft focus' lens. As Fischer (2004) explains in her theory of the chemistry of love, an infatuated person aggrandizes tiny aspects of an adored one, which if that is the case then participants claiming that they love their vehicle could explain why the van and everything around it is shielded from criticism whilst they feel attached. Here in the following quote the owner demonstrates a strong elicitation of deep emotional bonds towards his vehicle.

That was my feeling all the way up to getting it, but then when I got it I did fall in love with it. Very much fell in love with it. It only took sitting in it, driving in it and having a glass of wine in it to think this is brilliant, this is cool you know it belonged to us and I had never owned anything quite like it that, that was worth that much. I don't own a house I just have a mortgage. Yeah it was mine and I fell in love with it. We would obsess about buying things for it. It was like a person. Strange that. But it had its own character which is probably why people name them. (Michael, VW campervan owner, 2012.)

In response to Michael's comments about the owner's rationale for naming their vehicle, it was found that some participants were comfortable to go a stage further in describing their vehicle having human attributes. To demonstrate this participant Ed was forthcoming in how he anthropomorphised his van:

Like humans they have their off days, can be frustrating sometimes, most of the time reliable will go anywhere with their curvy smiley looks, purring sound. When you've climbed a steep hill (fingers crossed) it's an achievement for both you and van, you don't feel compared with an MOD vehicle, other road users smile or wave and don't usually cut you up (unless jealous wanting a van themselves) (Ed, 2012, VW Campervan Owner)

This narrative embodies a discourse in which mobility is performed through anthropomorphic relations between tourist, transport and space. It was found that participants confessed to speaking to an inanimate object, in an attempt to reinvent the material reality of the challenging environment ahead:

Sometimes we sing when approaching a ridiculous hill. We (laughs) sing the Binky song with the children, this goes Binky! Binky! You can do it, you can do it! (Alex, VW campervan owner, 2014)

The question remained however as to whether such feelings of approbation contributed to the way landscapes were shaped in the mind's eye of the tourist. Clearly from this quote from Alex, the hilly landscape was seen as a challenge that could be flattened by the power of song. Yet human intervention would not elevate the vehicle's ability to transcend space, so even though passengers found joy in cheering on the vehicle, it was not because they believed it could hear them but because they enjoyed the process of anthropomorphising them.

This empirical data showed therefore that human feelings did play a central role in how trips were articulated. It was found that participants tended to describe their journeys in an emotional way, expressing the delight of travel even during poor weather conditions or un-engaging scenes. Owners often had a caring attitude towards the vehicle regardless of how it performed and celebrated everything experienced en route whether good, bad or indifferent. To give an example, owners stranded during a van breakdown or their struggles to drive up a steep hill were reflected upon with humour and sentimentality and rarely as something negative. Yet a propensity to enjoy all aspects of their trips regardless of the downsides could be attributed to the strong bonds they had with their vehicles as an “embodied disposition” (Thrift, 2004a, p.46).

The question remained whether the emotional connections they had with their van determined the nature of visual perception. Whilst most transport is used for utilitarian reasons as a means of arrival as opposed to an end in itself, the VW campervan is used purposefully for joyriding and view finding., It is the van being used as an extension of its owner, inspiring an emotional intensity that can overlay the physical reality of tedious travel by enabling participants to re-imagine it.

As exemplified in the quote below it was possible for the participant to define the motorway as pleasant, a term best used to describe tranquillity whilst simultaneously considering it as tantamount to hell:

The M6 was quite nice, terrifying though as you could feel the drag of the HGV’s pulling you on to the hard shoulder and it was noisy as hell. (Alex, VW Campervan owner,2014)

The participant’s ability to shift between enjoyment and fear in the same instance is somewhat dichotomous. The terror experienced during road travel is partly softened by the pleasure associated with simply being with their adored van. Arguably the volatility of these feelings expressed the contrast between attachment to the VW campervan and the reality of the surrounding environment. The owner’s

emotionally fuelled perspective however, it is argued, forms the landscape in a particular way. Another demonstration of this is echoed by the quote as follows by the researcher in which the transience of imagination can elicit a tourist experience which starts as sublime, then vaporizes into the mundane. In other words, the driver travels along the same road, but it is articulated differently through contrasting feelings:

I can actually say that when I reached the widening road coming into Middleborough, [I had the feeling] despite it being a smoggy industrial place, the expansive view of pylons, chemical plants and fleeting traffic that I was cruising on Route 66. The feeling only lasted a few minutes and when the roads shrank from 3 lanes to 2 it seemed like I was back to travelling on a crappy road. (VW Researcher,2012)



Figure 6.9 A19, Southbound to Middlesborough, photographic still (VW Researcher, 2012.)

The finding suggests that travelling in a VW campervan gave the tourist an impression of being transported beyond the reality of the urban highway. (See figure 20) an example of a banal roadscape equally construed as a scene from a road movie. To echo

Whatmore (1999; 2002) and Cloke and Perkins (2005) suggest in that the collapsed binary divisions between human and non-human depends on the concept of hybridity. In other words as human and machine merge through travel, it is posited that disrupted perceptions of peripheral space can through various imaginaries transform a mundane road into a “filmic” highway. In other words, participants understood the prosaic thoroughfares as visual complements to their trip, regardless of inane visual surroundings, poor workability of van engine and so on, and could appreciate them as both aesthetic and pleasurable. The key to this appeared not that tourists had no choice but to spend their vacations in the aforementioned mobile home, but instead a commitment to the brand caused them to make loyal connections with it. This led to the question: why did the VW campervan owner, when passing through ordinary views, often re-imagine them as sites of sublimity?

In extending Larsen’s (2001) notion of the “travel glance”, it is thus proposed that an „emotive glance” is the medium of this mobile glimpse. The theory that travellers in feeling emotion when in motion, did so with a hurried look which had the potential to stimulate other “ways of seeing” (Berger,1972) the landscape, some of which are sensorial.

When speaking about the emotional affection participants confessed to have for their vehicles however, it was also important to draw upon Fischer (2004, p.6) who in claiming that when humans fall in love, the ‘love object’ takes on special meaning. So even though her thesis relates to people falling in love with each other, she argues that everyday objects can also acquire iconic power. Furthermore, her claim is that lovers dote on the positive qualities of their attached *other*, often disregarding reality with what psychologists call the ‘Pink-lens-effect’. Referring to this study, anthropomorphized relationships between VW campervan owner and vehicle are argued to incite tourists to produce a loving gaze. This it is suggested enables them to romanticize everything within its orbit. The quote below suggests that despite the practical realities of van ownership, the participant is gleefully prepared to overcome them for the sake of the driving experience:

Based on economics having one is a bit mad but we are humans and can be quite irrational. Speaking for myself of course (laughs) Mine does a few hundred miles a year these days and logic would say get rid of it, it makes no sense to pay for insurance etc. but I can't. It's a cranky lump of ancient technology and somehow not being there would leave a void. It's a physical link to all the others that inhabit these forums I suppose. Sad isn't it. (Laughs) Oh and when it does throw a wobbler it's a good excuse for a bit of spannering. (Sparkey Wig, VW Campervan Owner, 2011.)

To interpret this, most participants would not have chosen luxury travel given the opportunity, favouring the rougher ride of the VW campervan. In other words travellers did not want to be cushioned from reality but to feel it.

I have to admit in suffering a bit, you do feel the experience is a more authentic kind of feeling of being more at one with the road. If you don't want to experience travel in its raw form just take to the sky. (VW Researcher, 2013).

In choosing to drive the van, participant bodies were exposed to the rattling, grinding and noisy aspects of motion. Yet to understand tourist motivations for choosing this mobility form over a smoother, faster and safer transport, it is important to consider how emotions, imagination and desire also play a part in the production of the experience. Relative to cognitive and sensory factors although tourists mainly focused on seeking views, other cultural inferences did play a role in how their trips were understood. The most interesting finding was that the boundaries between the aesthetic and the banal in this case have been collapsed as distinctions of "taste" (Bourdieu, 1984) are contested. It appeared that the vehicle fostered in its owners, not only a specific cultural appreciation, but an ability to see sublimity in the ordinary aspects of the trip. So, although the lexicons of cultural production may manipulate brand desire to coerce tourists to buy into its ideal, how they experienced mobility was also about intimacy and personal subjectivity. As (Katz, 2000, p.33) points out, the embodied constitutions of the 'automobilized person', include visceral and other

feelings to do with car driving that are central to the understanding of a stubborn persistence of car-based cultures. Furthermore, emotional agency is a relational entity that promotes aesthetic and tactile ties with particular modes of transport.

Human feelings in this account have indeed proven to incite participants to engage in anthropomorphic narratives that lead them to treat the van as a significant other. In other words behave towards it with a dedication that gives it a strong foothold in wider family life.

It took about three weeks to get over selling Honey. My son and I cried. But now we have Boris, the love for her has gone. The mechanic that worked on Honey every night for three months nearly fell out with his wife. He worked as a mechanic in the daytime then got home and worked on Honey. I couldn't understand it, yet he said he just loved it. (Sara, VW campervanowner, 2012)

Participant Sara acknowledged a deep connection with her vehicle that was traumatic to unwind. Arguably the vehicle is a powerful tool for self-expression which in this case is articulated by the previous owner customizing and fixing it. Participants also confessed to being excited about going on holiday with their VW campervan companion and projected a happy atmosphere in anticipation of the journey. In this case as owners claimed to celebrate the prospect of travel on the highway, which led to the suggestion that their enthusiasm for their holiday is mediated through an 'emotive glance' allowing all landscapes to be read as idyllic regardless of the fact.

6.6 Anthropomorphic Vision

This final section looks at whether VW campervan owners, in attributing distinctively human characteristics to their transport, experience subversions and distortions of their senses because of this during travel. As most participants humanized their vehicles in one way or another, the phenomenon of human machine relations has been analysed for its ability to influence the tourist experience. So, whilst the previous discussion explored how sentimentalizing the van may contribute to how the journey is interpreted, it is argued also that the anthropomorphizing of transport is another way for owners to express emotion. From this general pretext, the idea proposed is that when tourists humanize their van, they experience the views of the road through 'anthropomorphic vision'. To give context to the particular ways of seeing proposed, a description of anthropomorphism as a behavioural trait that emotionally links humans to material objects is necessary. This is followed by a discussion that briefly centres on the idea that as humans and transport move together, tourist views are framed through a human need for social connection with things (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

To describe anthropomorphism in the first instance, it is a form of projection whereby humans apportion non-human agencies distinctively human characteristics. This does not preclude imagining inanimate objects to have the capacity for rational thought (agency) and conscious feeling (experience) (Gray et al., 2007). Anthropomorphizing a non-human does not simply involve attributing it superficial human characteristics (e.g., a humanlike face or body), but also to attribute human traits to the agent, a humanlike mind, capable of thinking and having emotions etc. Because most participants expressed anthropomorphic tendencies towards their vehicles whether in simply naming their vehicle, talking to it, affectionately handling it or investing in it both financially or emotionally as a family member, the relationship between humans and machines are argued to have some influence on how travel is experienced. In the first instance, here are two examples of VW campervan owners confessing to elicit anthropomorphic behaviours towards their vehicles:

Speaking for ourselves we would like to take care of him as best we can because it is the feeling that he won't let us down if we look after him. They do seem to have a mind of their own, whether they are going to come out to play today or not. (Billy, 2012, VW campervan owner)

This study aims not to explain why participant's anthropomorphise in the first place, but only to acknowledge that because they do so, this contributes to the experiential effect. The main observation in terms of the visual is that the highway is understood by participants as a journey through banal landscapes, but this does not detract from them experiencing the highway as a meaningful place to spend leisure time. In other words, owners attached significance to their road trips that whilst quotidian, by embodying the emotional and visual content of the trip could read being mobile in terms of escape, freedom, spirituality, adventure and pilgrimage. Arguably the ability for owners to romanticise banal settings and use them as a backdrop for holiday fantasies is partly to do with attachment to the van as a significant other. In this case it is about sharing experiences with the humanized object: the VW campervan. As anthropomorphic phenomena therefore, human feelings expressed towards their vehicle appeared to fuel the propensity for owners to use it as leisure transport. Not as a simple means to mobility, but as a companion in travel. Here the following quote demonstrate the fact that many owners treat their vans as though another human being in their tourism stories. This led to the assertion that as tourists travel with a positive outlook because they are on holiday, then it is reasonable to suggest that the consequent attachments to the transport "other" may also result in sensations of belonging, romanticism, wellbeing or indeed any other feelings associated with travelling with another human:

Bertha, our van, has her own personality. The front of her looks just like a face, she is human in terms of being temperamental: sometimes she won't start in the morning. When she breaks down we accept it as we

think of it as her having a bad day. (Ameila, 2011, VW Campervan Owner.)

Because VW campervan owners are embodied by their vehicle, it is also complicit with the *affective turn* in social science to acknowledge the potential psycho- biological and socio-cultural affects as an embodiment narrative (Greco & Stenner, 2008). This bodes well due to the nature of the phenomena, as the humanness of this travel form is embraced because owners were found to engage in various imaginative and emotional discourses. As Hemmings (2005, p. 550) contends as further justification, by not 'writing the body out of theory' the *views* of the motorway in this case can arguably be shaped by the psychic shifts of individual tourists as their emotional worlds influenced their perceptions of space and place. Morris (2012, p.19) on Merleau-Ponty also adds that phenomenology can only describe 'the subjective character of experience' but not explain it. In this case the act of travel is understood as something inscribed by the body as participants have strong emotional connections with the VW Campervan. This means that their travel experiences are characterized by how they engage with the van and by proxy all the natural and wo/manmade elements involved in the travel network. The anthropomorphized vehicle for example is only one aspect of a possible explanation of how the tourist gaze is constructed through these embodied connections, but important nonetheless.

As a philosophical point, Jensen (2009) in his elaboration of Merleau-Ponty's thesis, also credits the idea that in being-in-the-world there is no 'inner man', but that man is in the world, thus *oneself* is a 'subject destined to the world' or becomes the world (cited also in Morris, 2012, p. 16). In other words, by considering that experience is created in this case through the VW campervan tourist, then banal landscapes can be appreciated because of emotional connections with the vehicle coupled with the associated views whether aesthetic or not, appear to be re-staged as positive projections of the self. As this is a study of leisure time, tourists tend to embark upon it with enthusiasm using their free-time to be themselves or free themselves from perceived constraint. Without getting involved in deep debates about definitions of selfhood *per se*, the point is that the VW campervan is often used by owners to express themselves by using it as a tool to explore the world autonomously, brand

themselves through it, or customize it to represent values and sense of style. In other words the Volkswagen brand as narrated through popular culture, romanticism, nostalgia, homeliness on the move, and so on, are all desirous reasons for participants to identify strongly with it.

In addition to conceptual representations of owners being part of a VW campervan assemblage, it is suggested that this is expressed through emotions as travelling bodies experience velocity, environmental conditions, impressions of time, adding artefacts to the prevailing travel narrative. Admittedly this part of the discussion is focused less on abstract propositions and more its humanity, however it is important to mention factors that may contribute to the overall *feel* of travel. Based on a proposition therefore that tourists are embodied in an all-encompassing physical and emotional space, their ways of seeing the world through the van could scaffold the meanings tourists attribute to it.

It is also worth noting that most VW campervan owners confess to being euphoric when driving their beloved vehicle. This draws towards the debate that if owners find themselves enjoying banal landscapes as though picturesque, then arguably perceptions of surroundings are expressions of their positive moods. Furthermore, because VW campervan owners conceive their vehicle as more than just a transport device, the differences between them and standard cars are important to the enquiry as they are experienced in a more intimate way. That is not to suggest that car drivers cannot be attached to utilitarian vehicles, but more that VW campervan owners have a heightened sense of belonging, identity and homeliness associated with travelling in their van.

From a theoretical standpoint Sheller (2004) also adds that car owners have kinesthetic relations with their transport devices through cultural, technological and bodily practices. Again, this suggests that the traveller experiences are bound up in complex narratives to do with body, machine and place relations. With VW campervans in particular, the emotional bonds owners have with their vehicles arguably transcend materiality, i.e. 'humanized car' meets 'automobilised person' (Miller, 2001, p. 24) or more precisely VW campervan owners treat their vehicles as friends, family members and adopted others. Whilst participants differed slightly in

terms of what motivated them to use a VW campervan, the adoration most owners felt for them as a humanized object was central to the logic of an affectionate engagement with it.

Cloke and Perkins (2005, p. 903) contend in their study of the non-human agency of nature implicated in the construction of place that tourists experienced in this instance swimming with dolphins, 'intense experiences of immanence and un-reflexive glee'. Reactions that led to the evocation of sublime, emotional and aesthetic relations with other non-humans resulting in locations defined as embodied. Some of these intensities are consolidated by the affect of noise as an embodied feature as one of many, co-constitution of places as meaningful mobility (Cresswell, 2006). Similarly, in this case tourists moving around with their beloved artefact induced intense feelings not only as a place in itself, but also the surroundings in which it moves.

6.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has looked critically at how views and sounds have influenced the VW campervan travel experience. By underpinning the discussion with critical theories around the seeing practices of tourism, three themes to include vision, sound and feelings drawn from fieldwork have been debated. The first consideration was that views en route were contingent on a number of tourist gazes. In this case mobile participants looked at landscapes differently from those engaged in tourist sites from a position of stasis. As the VW campervan is a mobile panoramic viewing chamber where drivers are exposed to scenes as though playing a computer game or being part of an interactive movie. Thus, it is posited that participants embody reactions to velocity, time, aesthetics and emotional triggers as they travel. Furthermore, it was discovered that tourists engage not only in static views captured photographically, but filmic images that flash past the windscreen as a motion ride. Research also suggested that a 'cinematic glance' leaves owners with limited time for contemplation; their eyes only skimming across the surface of scenery. Whilst motorway travel is linear, the driver tended to edit sites into a montage as a fleeting glance replacing what is often in tourism, fixed observation of sites. Participants were also less discerning about aesthetic values associated with picturesque over the mundane.

Indeed, evidence showed that owners had a limited regard for the hierarchical positioning of the scenery, emphasizing less its content, showing a greater interest in exercising freedom to roam through it. In other words, in experiencing velocity, tourists experiencing speed seemed to reduce external views to a transient backdrop. This is not to suggest that the landscape was not significant, but only to point out that whilst participants deemed views a necessary compliment to their driving experience, they were less concerned about the specificities of visual content. It appeared that looking through glass onto objects did have the affect of detaching drivers from reality. This arguably transformed travel spaces into potential sites of fantasy where unfolding scenes could be watched as if on a television screen.

Paradoxically the vehicle's inability to cushion participants from driving a cumbersome vehicle in often difficult conditions did not prompt a critique of the mundane. Instead, participants took the challenge of enduring the discomforts of an old van, often sentimentalizing its deficits as quaint attributes rather than as practical encumbrances. They also confessed to enjoy the feeling of slow travel as a tranquilizing affect, so despite the often rocky ride it was more often than not described by participants as a place to relax. This is arguably due to the love and or commitment owners have, making them determined to enjoy their vehicles regardless of circumstances. This led to a conclusion that the banal reality of motorway travel is thus made more tenable by owners fictionalizing their journeys through mediations of the VW campervan.

In asserting that most owners are affectionately disposed towards their VW campervan, a second discussion emerged. In this study, human emotion is acknowledged as an agency through which physical space can be re-imagined. Because of the adulation most owners have for their vehicles, or as Sheller (2004) puts it 'automotive emotions', they revealed heightened sensitivities toward their van leading them to anthropomorphize it. In terms of the anthropomorphic aspect of the gaze in this study, it evidence does suggest that in treating the van as a human, inspires in owners feelings towards it that can be likened to responses often awarded to a person to which the owner is often fond. If a van is given a human name and is experienced as if with someone, a similarly positive outlook to the surroundings and situations can be informed by this. Whilst more work could be done on this, it is contended that owners naturally knit these associations

together due to the bonds they have with their vehicles and explore them through movement. It was found that participants combined symbolic, emotive and aesthetic inferences to do with VW campervan subcultures to enrich their travel experience. This arguably leads to social behaviours normally associated with humans spending leisure time at home, caring for significant others or travelling for the sake of pleasure. Due to this, participants lived in illusions beyond simple mobility that were to do with 'feeling the van'. This in turn is some contestation to Auge's (1995) proposition that motorways are 'non places', as participants re-imagined public highways not as liminal spaces but as places amidst the disruption of mobile things, alive with communality and belonging. As a development of the idea that embodied human-machine relations are responsible for the unusual behaviour of VW campervan tourists toward their vehicle, the significance of the sonic on the travel experience as part of the embodiment story has been considered. It is concluded therefore that if similar noise levels were emitted from conventional touring transport, travellers would complain or even doubt arrival to destination was possible. In contrast, relentless engine noise here is considered as a complimentary feature of the leisure experience. This is one example of how the theory of embodiment is played out during travel. Not sensed as an annoyance, participants felt comfort and at times even joy in listening to the rhythmic heartbeat sound of their rattling engine. By monitoring the health of all things mechanical as an ongoing process, owners looked after the vehicle as though it were part of them.

Having discussed the sense, purpose and meaning of how VW Campervan tourists in 'feeling the van' experience the landscape in embodied ways of which the audio-visual have a significant part to play, this leads on to the next section which contemplates the nature of the vehicle as a home-on-the-move.

7. CHAPTER SEVEN - HOME AND AWAY

7.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the nature of VW campervan leisure as a form of tourism that takes home on the road. From this pretext two theoretical propositions emerged as holiday makers not only travelled, but were paradoxically found to dwell in motion. The first discussion begins by considering, since tourists produce homeliness in movement, how feelings of belonging may be contained in the act of mobility. Mindful that rootedness is associated with residing in a static abode, the contention that mobile habitation is possible through the itineraries of home-making is central to this debate. To progress the enquiry further therefore, this ontological debate endeavours to link notions of home with self, to argue that identification with the brand serves to deepen sensitivities towards it and to transform a functional transport device into a place of belonging. It is posited also as a further argument that since tourist's anthropomorphise their vehicles, journeys become more meaningful because the van is a familiar place and a significant other. As a contribution to wider critical tourism debate therefore, the VW campervan is used as a case study from which to explore the boundaries between where everyday life ends and the vacation begins (Hannam & Knox, 2010) as a dichotomy of home and away. In this case, whilst VW campervan travel is centred on tourists obtaining leisure experiences with enthusiasts at festivals, the need to connect with others, it is proposed, is motivated by the desire to be at home but in movement. So, whilst tourism is traditionally used to escape banality by disengaging from the domestic rituals of the everyday, it is asserted that VW campervan tourists instead of 'getting away from it all' (Larsen, 2008b p. 149) they do not travel, but stay at home.

To understand these two ideas further and to explore the overlaps, the first discussion argues that contrary to escaping from everyday routines, VW campervan tourists in practising home, dwell-in-motion. By analysing the behaviours of individual owners in how they reconstruct their homes in a VW campervan, the cultural phenomenon of home-making on the move is unpacked. It was discovered for example that despite being on holiday, participants were interested in van focussed activities such as cooking, cleaning, decorating and maintenance rather than engaging

in leisure based tourist pursuits. In addition, because owners customised their vehicles, many reported to feel at home on holiday due to being in a personalised space.

The second part of the chapter considers how, while VW campervan owners extend the experience of homeliness further by gathering at festivals, connections with kinship others plays out in the social realm. So, although tourists travelled for leisure purposes, the VW campervan was used as a conduit to bring communities together in a performance of home. It was found for example that whilst attendance of events was due to a common interest in Volkswagen, not all tourist encounters were congenial. Hence, whilst 'shared values, symbols and traditions' of 'communal heritage, cultural kinship, common identity and belonging' (Palmer, 1999, p.10) are assumptions made that the brand represents freedom and community spirit, this set of imagined ideals is contested because tourists interpret them as diverse sociality's.

7.2 Home and Tourism

To explore the dichotomy of home and away in VW campervan travel, a contemplation of the social and cultural fabric of home as a Western ideal is in order. Since home is generally considered as fixity, the classic Volkswagen mobile home in contrast offers the tourist a sense of 'homeliness' in fluidity. To contextualise this proposition further, it is useful to note that as a consequence of the shifting character of pastoralism in the developed world, the plausibility of itinerant lifestyles was somewhat stilled by modernised city and suburban occupancies. So, without dwelling onerously on the social history of urbanisation, before transport was available to the masses from the industrial revolution and beyond, labour forces were located near places of work as communities developed around factories, mines, shipbuilding and so on. Davidoff and Hall (1987) in considering the built structures of habitation, suggest the ideal home is a fixed abode as a nineteenth century middle-class house with its walls, hedges and gates that exemplify the stable divisions between work, community and the private life of the family. In this respect, the rootedness of home is a foundation for social ordering based on the hierarchies of dwelling spaces to do with affordances, cultural preferences and social boundaries.

As Morley (2000) also points out, homes in the Western consciousness are also vessels to contain childhood memories, identity, expressions of taste and so on. Home, it is posited, is not just a place to reside but also a material representation of its occupants' values and tastes. Whilst a consequence of urban dwelling is that home is anchored to place, this is somewhat contested by the birth of modern transport as it mobilises increasing numbers of people, goods and services across the globe. Another challenge to home as a fundamentally rooted concept does not preclude the destabilising affects of the expansion of international travel and the technological developments of web 2.0. Due to these network cultures, the territories of home have been eroded by fluid work patterns, social media and the expansion of globalised commerce within which the boundaries between geographical, cultural, and economic worlds are blurred.

As Blunt and Varly (2004) predicate, because techno-culture enables greater access to environments both imagined and real, home can be experienced in different places and in different ways. This argument, also introduced in the New Mobilities Paradigm (Sheller and Urry, 2006) posits that physical travel once combined with new forms of virtual and imaginative travel results in interactions and communications of tourists both present and absent (Brown, et al, 2002, Callon, et al 2004). Whilst home is a tangible place, it can also be a conceptual dwelling as multiple senses of home become multifaceted geographical ideas. Hebdige (1993) on the other hand observes that to be 'homeless' in a home-centred culture is traumatic as it is linked to citizenship and social inclusion. Without the material evidence of something that constitutes home within a set of normative ideals, the imagined spaces of home are questioned because itinerants have no fixed abode.

A VW campervan does represent home as a material representation of home like any other, despite it being a mobile space where home can be lived. Thus, it has an ambiguous relationship with the concept as well as the experience of home. As asserted by Morley (2000) feeling at home can transcend location because it is not necessarily a spatial concept but a phantasmagoria. In this case home is not only recreated due to the access to domestic facilities on the move, but the VW campervan also stimulates a social discourse where nostalgia, expressions of identity, memories of family holidays and so on can be recalled. Whilst the tourist can be at 'home' in the

van, recollections of family members past and present are revisited the moment the driver sits behind the wheel. This ability for the vehicle to represent humans means that families can be reunited through tourism. This supports the proposition that the vehicle enables access to places formally visited and people to which time has been spent both imagined and real. So as Obrador-Pons (2003) points out, tourism is a departure from the everyday, and tourists contestably dwell-in-tourism in reproducing family sociability on the move.

Hall and Holdsworth (2014, p.1) further contend that 'family holidays are used to not only maintain relations between family members, but they are also about easing out the tensions of domestic family life as a way of making the everyday more palatable'. In other words, whilst escape from the mundane is more possible due to greater access to travel, dispersal means conversely that the tensions and joys of home can be in various places simultaneously with family members and acquaintances, alongside less tangible sensory illusions such as memories of the deceased, nostalgia and so forth.

Blunt and Dowling (2006, p.2) also add that 'Home is a place, a site in which we live, but more than this home is also an imaginary suffused with feelings. These may be feelings of belonging, desire and intimacy as, for instance, feeling at home, but can also represent negative emotions such as fear'. This is also supported by Hall and Muller (2004) in their examination of tourists' use of second homes where they propose that home is understood as a spatial imaginary. Thus, the VW campervan as a tool for leisure and escape is a contested space if connotations of home extend to questions of belonging and dislocation. In agreeing with Blunt and Dowling (2006) therefore, definitions of home are diverse so as an experience of dwelling, home beyond its inherent structure can also embody dwellers emotions through expressions of it. Whilst home is a physical space, home can be imagined thus reflecting the emotionality of the occupier. As Williams and McIntyre (2001, p. 392) emphasise, 'the question of where one lives or dwells is not simply a matter of residential geography. It is also that of an emotional geography. Where does one's heart, one's identity, reside? Where is one's emotional home?'

To add to this debate, Miller (2008) in his anthropological study of living on a London street, concluded that in a modern household, commodities used in home-making can engender a deeper sense of place. This potentially leads to a sense of belonging for tourists who express themselves through the aesthetic arrangements of the everyday. Homeliness of course is also a somewhat contested ideal as it is not always a positive experience. Although tourism may traditionally promise physical and perhaps emotional freedoms, the VW campervan in symbolising home may not always produce satisfied tourists. As Bowlby (1995) suggests, feelings of home are not always harmonious and can be a seat of hauntings from other times and presences with sometimes disconcerting auras.

In response to the need to move around as a consequence of industrialisation, divisions between leisure, work and home life become intertwined. Due to the development of human mobility through transport systems and so on, significant time is spent travelling in mobile environments to the point where 'lifestyles' have been adopted in movement. This has arguably shaped how people commute and therefore how they commune. Tourism development has also led to increased social mobility making travel no longer just a process of distribution around commerce, but a social practice that expresses culture and society. Public transport, goods carriers and domestic utilitarian vehicles are however not spaces where people usually feel they belong. That said, as Adey (2010) points out, mobility does not always threaten attachment to place, explaining that a well-trodden route may also turn into a meaningful place. In other words, the more homelike the vehicle, the greater significance it could have in both a positive or negative way dependent upon the occupants' experience of home. Another point is that functional mobility, due to being more sophisticated over time, enables domestic and leisure transport to be closer to the homelike experience. This is certainly the case with the VW campervan which started as a utility vehicle and now occupies a tourism genre.

Technological advancements in the car manufacturing industry add to further productions of home by placating the human desire to move around in pain free, self-styled environments. Drivers now find themselves cocooned into soft interiors with on-board entertainment and satellite navigation systems, aimed to emancipate the traveller but arguably disengaging them from the natural environment. Whilst the car

industry seeks to enhance the consumer experience of mobility for commercial reasons, it does so by reducing the impacts of mobility. Furthermore, with futuristic plans to develop robotic cars that use radar, lidar and computer vision to navigate routes autonomously, for all the alleged freedoms the driver may not be empowered but instead subjugated by the technocratic systems that foreshadow them. That said, whilst enshrining the driver in 'home comforts' may render them carefree in movement, it also renders them in some senses inert. However, in the case of VW campervan travel due to its antiquated nature, it is less of a luxury convenience, alluding to a realistic domestic struggle. Whilst some cars have heated seats, massage chairs, air-conditioning, satellite navigation and so on, the older Volkswagen models are not like expensive hotel environments, but in comparison are utilitarian spaces of domestic toil.

7.3 Dwelling in 'Home on the Move'

Having considered the ways in which home may be socially constructed, the discussion unpacks how VW campervan tourism as home on the road is understood as a place to dwell. As Obrador-Pons (2012, p.403) ponders 'tourism does not always have to be about escaping home, it can also be about making home through different forms of displacement.' He suggests also that it is particularly the case in family holidays that simultaneously involve escaping from and being at home. Tourism itself is often understood as 'unhomely' and adventurous, thus this debate challenges Urry's (1990) assertion that tourism is about seeking extraordinariness on the basis that VW campervan owners find pleasure in the mundane.

In the case of this research, participants were not nomadic and so tended to conceptualise the notion of 'home' as a fixed abode. With access to a house on wheels they could not only vacate their premises, but converse with the domestic practices of the everyday as a version of home that travelled with them:

To know that I have everything with me, the clothes and stuff makes me feel like I am bringing my home. Me and my house, all that I need is moving with me. (Angie, 2011, VW Campervan Owner)

These sentiments were echoed by many owners including Angie who said she had everything she needed in terms of personal belongings with her, so being in a VW campervan was like having a holiday at home. By challenging the view that tourism is generally used as a means to escape, VW campervan tourists therefore contradict the idea that travel demarcates clear distinctions between home and away. To explore this further, it is noted that participants vacated cities and suburbs to congregate at festivals in the countryside. Yet due to the temporary nature of this pursuit fitting a standard tourism trope, tourists believing all the while that they were on holiday, it is suggested that their assertion is based on the idea that travel is deeply embedded in the tourism discourse of being-on-holiday. Their assertion does not account for whether this mobility form also accounts for a change of scene or alternative leisure activities. In other words much of their experience was like being at home apart from the fact they were inside a moving vehicle.

Many excursions rarely took participants more than a 100 mile radius from where they lived, and some even reported to relax in their VW campervan using it as second residence on the driveway of their house. It was also not uncommon for participants to eat, read and socialise inside the van as an alternative habitat. As participant Dennis explains, he used his VW Campervan as a living room:

Every summer, she goes to the shops and gets the camper and bus magazines, stuff like that, I won't sit in the house and read it, I go in the van and read it. (Dennis, 2011, VW Campervan Owner)

As holidays are conducted in a homely space, regardless of the location, feelings of belonging appeared to result. Based on the idea that people feel at home in their houses, tourists having similar feelings in their VW campervan is not therefore an unlikely scenario. Yet as the stasis of routine is replaced by the turbulence of motion, home is reconstituted on the dangerous highways and unfamiliar camp sites as Lippard (1999) puts it, 'off the beaten track'. So, whilst travellers are dislocated from their natural home they can still occupy a version of it but in a state of flux. Being mobile is thus not about doing something different, but an uninterrupted performance

of the entrapments and joys of the everyday on the challenging terrains of motorways, campsites and unfamiliar places.

Despite the potential of dislocation to occur in movement however, Edensor (2003) suggests to the contrary that solitary confinement in a car can also be conducive with homeliness. He points out for example that embarrassing and intimate activities such as singing, swearing, dreaming, planning and grieving and so on, are possible due to the safe seclusion of a familiar vehicle. The VW campervan on top of this is also a practical living space that constitutes the aesthetic and emotional dimensions of home. The ability for home to be simulated in movement in this sense eclipses the conventional automobile because 'doing' home is more possible. As with Gilly who normally worked from home, she purported to automatically continue in a work rhythm whilst supposedly being on holiday:

When I am a passenger, driving I just carry with my day often working on my laptop when I am supposed to be on holiday. I suppose the van lets you do that. (Gilly,2012, VW campervan passenger)

Gendered behaviour in VW campervan leisure is also worthy of note. Here Amanda was adamant not to drive, however she did use the van as a home office on the move. The North East Volkswagen scene in the UK however is a particularly male dominated subculture in which men in mainly heterosexual relationships tended to be the ones behind the steering wheel. In this case women did participate in the driving, albeit mainly single women and couples. That is not to suggest that females are subordinate in terms of their role in family life, only that it was mainly men that did the driving and mechanical work. Males however took on the traditional role of the female by leading in outdoor cooking and construction of the kitchen, which whilst women were happy to be involved and often tried to intervene, the majority of men were observed to 'takeover' the task. So, although there were exceptions to the rule, the trend was that women navigated routes, selected on-board activities for passengers and coordinated family members in task itineraries, whilst men engaged in the more physical activities.

It was not just the practicalities of having a living environment that allowed habitation. The way owners anthropomorphised or individualised their vehicles meant they were more inclined to view it as a place of comfort or home. This is evidenced in the following auto-ethnographic account where the VW researcher, having owned two types of (1972 Westfalia) campervans, felt differently about each due to their contrasting aesthetics. So, in this case one vehicle was humanised due to its particular look to result in greater affections bestowed upon it:

When I bought Maud she had an old fashioned interior which made me think of her as an old lady. Because of her style we wanted to add more things to it such as books, old board games, my daughter's toys and retro décor to make her feel more authentic. It even had rusty bits, stains on its seats and quirky things like one window wiper would stop working in heavy rain. It was like going back in time riding in her, making us nostalgic as though she had meaning and a real belonging to us. Selling Maud because she was a non- fixable rust box was deeply depressing and I felt heartbroken for a week afterwards. My second van had a modern interior which you felt you had to keep really clean. There was no identification with it other than a feeling that you had to be careful in it because it had to be in good condition if I sold it. When (Paris Hilton) was sold I could only think about the money and the relief of getting rid of it. (VW Researcher Diary, 2012)

Here the VW researcher's identification with the vehicle was influenced by the aesthetic disposition of the van. It concurred that the vintage looking vehicle (Maud) was treated with sensitivities usually only awarded to humans. Conversely the modern version (Paris Hilton) was acknowledged for its monetary value and humanised less. So, whilst both vehicles were used for holiday making, the VW researcher humanised the older looking version due to its shabby chic, frail and rustic appearance. The newer looking cleaner model despite having a human name inspired less affection towards it. That is not to say all owners responded similarly to how their vehicles looked, but most did fall in love with them based on features complicit with their sense of taste. Most owners re-painted and re-upholstered their vehicles to fit their preferences or purchased something they identified with in terms of design. It was observed that most

added stylish cushion covers, novelty air fresheners, dashboard paraphernalia, curtains, stickers and so on unique to them, whilst others more interested in the technicality of the vehicle, polished bodies, tinkered with engines and modernised interiors. Either way these personal interventions led to the fabrication of the vehicle as being something the owners had made their own, and the owners connected with it on personal and often emotional level.

Well at this time I'm getting ideas together for my own van... it's being restored and being that I fit out other peoples interiors every week I've got to make my van a little special for myself. The thing is we've got a 1974 Eriba caravan that we tow along with it so really it's like home from home and just as dear. (Ken, VW campervan owner, 2012)

That said some owners did report feelings of belonging towards their vans whether homely or not. In other words, owners more interested in the mechanical aspect of the vehicle, could still be personable towards it. Gary, owner of a split screen Volkswagen for example, did not see his van as homelike due it not being as comfortable as home. That said this did not compromise his affectionate feelings towards it.

Na mine's not homely, but I love it. Most mornings I wake up with a terrible pain in my buttock so it's not even particularly comfy without copious amounts of alcohol. And the last time my family tried to play travel scrabble game in the back, I nearly went over a roundabout as I was trying to get my son to win for me whilst I was driving. (Gary, 2011, VW campervan owner)

As the quote suggests whilst the VW campervan may not be perceived as home by every owner, the activities reproduced on the move were often identical to those in a domestic setting. Whilst Gary did not see his vehicle as having home comforts, he did have strong emotions towards it. Contestably despite his remark, his family used their van as a living room in which usual routines took place. That said whilst VW campervans may inspire feelings of home, equally some owners who were more interested in producing immaculate engines, perfecting bodywork and conserving its

originality, still fostered affectionate bonds. It is suggested that these home-building motivations correspond to the not dissimilar embodied practice of designing one's own living space, building homes and engaging in DIY repair. To evidence this, owner Jonny (Fig. 21) is pictured demonstrating the ownership of the VW campervan as a totem. Here in an expression of social posturing he uses his van as a means to connect with the surrounding VW 'tribe'. Affiliates of the Volkswagen campervan club however are not fixed entities, but membership of temporary and leisure based relationships. Therefore the 'community' in question consists mainly of strangers who use the brand to signify different meanings. As a tourist performance at the festival, Jonny demonstrates a sense of pride in showing off his engine. He also displays animal ownership and the hedonistic practice of drinking alcohol as one might relax in front of the fireplace at home.



Figure 7.1 Jonny, VW Campervan Owner, Volkspower Festival, 2011

It is suggested that other owners such as Jonny felt at home at festivals because although attendees were strangers they shared familiarity because of the van. This also meant because Volkswagen is a powerful icon, owners could organise themselves into a loose concept of a tribe around brand identity. Which in turn created an atmosphere of belonging due to van orientated gathering behaviour. Arguably, in reaching out, the experience of home is extended through relationships not signified through blood relations, but as brand motivated networks. As White and White (2007,

p.90) point out in support of this, 'home' connotes 'the process of dwelling' but is also the social and emotional relationships it entails as a metaphorical or actual place. McCabe (2014) also remarks that the concept of home figures in the social construction of what it means to be away as tourists reference key aspects of life back home. VW Campervan owners arguably never leave home, so their experience is constantly framed by it. They also attribute the van with human names, thus as a familiar other home which can be consolidated on the highway. By humanising the van it can evoke sentimental attachments that contribute to the experience of belonging. By travelling in the vehicle they are also reminded of time spent with significant others both alive or from the past:

The bus I have now has been in my family since 1973 owned and cared for by my grandfather who has long passed away. My mother used to drive it when she was a young lass, they used it on my family holidays and it was my grandfather's daily runner for there about 40 years. He was known all over South Shields for his bus. (Ken, VW campervan owner, 2012)

As with the quote, memories of family members on holiday appeared just as poignant as time spent with those in the present. It was also notable that the van was used as part of the owner's father's everyday life once again alluding to something 'magical' in the banal brought on by the van. Other illusions to past experiences included some owners likening their vans to a children's 'Wendy' play house. In recreating their own childhood through the van, participants included constructing makeshift play houses with affectations of home such as decorative floral windscreen curtains, 1970's style themed interiors, adding board games and ornaments as some of the tokens of personal heritage for owners born at the time their Volkswagen was made. Thus, the age of the vehicle alluded to a particular era when its owner was growing up, offering a nostalgic aura lived through the materiality of the vehicle. Many owners also collected family memoirs as snapshots inside or next to the van as a demonstration of homeliness. Here in (figure 22), VW campervan owner Marty and his two children are featured next to 'Binky' their van; this is one of their many holiday portraits in which the van is featured as an inadmissible significant other alongside the family dog.



Figure 7.2 Marty and family with Binky the van (2013)

Comprehending social behaviours around the van led to the hypothesis that if family members signified homely values, then the notion of family is arguably embedded into the more general concept of what it is to be at home. This led to the understanding that connections felt in the company of families are strongly connected to being at home, drawing little distinction between feeling at home and the homeliness associated with being with familiar others. That being the case, imaginaries of home associated with family or community were intrinsically spatial, thus spatial imaginaries can be contained in the VW campervan. Owner Maggie for example said that her van was an intrinsic part of the family and a home that was always with them. The van appeared not to be just a place to stay in the pragmatic sense, but the 'spirit' of family was made tangible through the homely environment of the vehicle. So, whilst Maggie recognised it was 'just' transport, she saw it as an important part of the family:

We've had so many family experiences in Honorste, she is a BIG part of everything we do, so it's not like a part of the family, it is part of the family, even though she is 'just a van'. (Maggie, VW campervan owner, 2012)

As further validation of the theory that 'family' could represent home, it is argued that homeliness can also be extended through to non-consanguineous relations. For example, participant Hilary celebrated her obsession with the personality of American female icon *Betty Boop* by using the character as a distinctive theme (see Fig.3). By adopting an alternative identity through visualisations of this icon, she said it enabled her to 'stand out from the crowd' but be accepted by the 'Volkswagen 'family'. Imagined as this community might be, it was a context from which different roles could be played and alternative identities assumed.



Figure 7.3 VW Campervans, Volksfest, 2012

The symbolic meaning of Betty Boop was both inscribed on the van and on the participant's skin as a motif that appeared to allow her to transcend her normative personality. It is suggested that these displays at the campsite allude to home-making practices that link family and community together, making some participants 'feel' more part of it. Owners also tended to feel more at home if they owned their Volkswagen than if they had just hired one, supporting the hypothesis that belonging and things that belong have connections, giving credence to the idea that ownership and belonging are linked. In this case home building is more tangible with something owned because the interior and exterior can be modified by its host. Although tourists

used it as a place to stay, the more self-styled the van was, the greater the affinity owners had with it.

7.4 Emotion in Motion

In the previous section 'home' is discussed as a socio-cultural practice. Whilst the emotionality of being in a homely place is alluded to through the practicalities of home making, this section looks beyond the owner's sense of taste and domestic ritual to consider how, although these influence the tourist experience, the deep sensitivities owners feel towards the VW campervan as a 'familiar other' can also play a part. As Derret (2003 p,50) suggests, a sense of place brings into play not only the commonly understood five senses of touch, taste, hearing, smell, and sight but also feelings. This he goes on to say could have a sixth dimension, "the gift of mind" and a seventh, the "interpreter of one's faculties" accommodated within a person's comprehension of place and community. Arp Fallov et al (2013) also purports that whilst belongingness is a product of relations between people and place it also embodies mobility. So, although participants make similar connections to their VW campervan as their houses, home is not only material but can also be ephemeral, articulated through feelings, memory, personal history and so forth.

Home by definition is usually understood as something rooted and not found in mobility; materialised in a VW campervan enables travellers to exist in a state of belonging due to its homely nature. As Nikos Papastergiadis (1996) points out, home not only provides shelter and a repository for material goods but is a place where personal and social meanings can take root. As critical geographers Blunt and Dowling (2006) contend, whilst home is usually understood as a physical structure, multiple senses of home are formed through various conceptions and imaginaries to do with gender, class, childhood recollections, dreams and so on. This also resonates with Bachelard's (1994) reflection of the intimate spaces of home where he proposes that it is not a physical entity but an orientation of values. Bunkse (2004, p.94) also writes that 'Home is sometimes a state of mind.' So, whilst home is traditionally a permanent structure, the VW campervan is experienced as a fluid intimate space. Yet whilst mobility is portrayed as the antithesis of belonging (Fallov et al, 2013) VW campervan tourism is not always conducive with dislocation due to the ways owners connect with

it, which as Giddens (1990), Castells (1996) and Bauman (2000) in their various commentaries on movement, they posit that access to mobility can have a detaching affect on social relations with place.

Yet in contrast with the argument that travel by nature disembodies the tourist, it is posited that VW tourists are not remote because they live at home on the move. In establishing that home does not have to be a static building, it is suggested that it can be composed of a range of interconnecting 'places' journeyed through as tangible and intangible inferences of body, mind, transport and landscape. So, whilst Simonsen (2003, p. 29) reminds us that, 'Everyday life is connected to places', the spaces to which this alludes can be imagined and real. In other words, whilst conventional home-making can be undertaken in the back of a VW campervan as with any mobile home, it is the personality of the brand that allows owners to go beyond its use as functional transport into an anthropomorphized being. The intimate involvement as body meets machine means tourists are not engaged in abstract travel, but experience it as an emotional geography. In sentimentalising their VW campervan therefore, they relocated it in a social, imaginative and emotional space which arguably roots it in the essence of family and home:

When I got it I did fall in love with it. Very much fell in love with it just like my pad (apartment). It only took sitting in it, driving in it and having a glass of wine in it to think this is brilliant. There is also a history with it which makes it very difficult to sell. (Michael, 2012, Owner of a Westfalia Bay)

Michael purported to fall in love with a mechanical object. Because as a transport device it enables homely interactions, the notion of 'belonging' may arguably be encrypted in movement because wherever the van goes, so follow the drivers' emotions. Some participants for example purported to feel at home in a VW campervan with intensities not usually experienced in conventional tourism transport, or at least not to the same extent. Owners who had owned RV's or Winnebagos for example, said that the character of classic Volkswagen had inspired emotional connections towards them in ways other mobile homes had not. As the quote from

Sharon suggests, the history and age of her van echoed not only the values they attributed to their house as something that has stood the test of time, but also that the classic VW campervan is old enough to have a genealogy that owners have preserved, arguably making a psychic link to a conceptual home:

She makes us smile. I think part of the emotional connection is the same one we have with our house, which is very old too. It has a history, it has been loved before, and now it's our turn to love it and take care of it. (Sharon B, VW campervan owner, 2012)

Derek, retired, also told the story of when he and son drove six hours on the motorway to collect their first van and said that they were 'Grinning all the way home':

If I could understand why we had an instant liking to it I would bottle it. It was strange, there's just something about them. (Derek, VW Campervan Owner, 2012)

There are many possible reasons why classic Volkswagens seduce tourists into ownership. Such identifications are derived from aesthetic, nostalgic, historic and home-making fascinations that define the van as more than just a place to stay, but as a place of belonging. As VW campervan tourists simulated home through domesticity however, such performances of dwelling appear in many cases to inspire a groundedness yet in mobility. Yet being sedentary in mobility decries Urry's (2006) theory that tourists travel in search of the exotic. As Foucault (1977) also points out, the daily schedules that demand the regular discipline of the body means corporeal regimes are transported back into leisure. So, by articulating home on the move, leisure as toil becomes work. Therefore, questionably, VW campervan tourism is less about a desire to travel and more about confirming social norms not only played out through home-making, but often mediated through family ties. In other words, tourism as an assumed practice of leisurely activities in this account celebrates the mundane.

Paradoxically from this so called banality, the emotive connectivities between family and home arguably transcend the counter affects of mobility as a potential force of dislocation. This is due to a fixing of the *feeling of belonging* in the transmission of movement. To add to this supposition, Todres and Galvin (2010) guided by Mugerauer's (2008) book *Heidegger and Homecoming* talk about the unity of dwelling and mobility to suggest that well-being, a feeling tourists are inclined toward when driving, is the intertwining of peace and movement at a metaphorical level. These affects once enmeshed consolidate 'home' and 'adventure' which he argues is critical to the elicitation of deep experiences of belonging and harmony on the move. This perhaps goes some way in explaining why many owners are sentimental to the point of being 'in love' with their van regardless of whether it moves from the forecourt outside their house or not.

Another consideration is the way memory as a catalyst for sometimes deep human emotions to be expressed is also involved in the story of travel. As the study showed, nostalgic moments can be evoked through a kind of homeliness unfolding on the trip. Participant Derek pointed out for example that it was a rare occurrence to see his teenage sons sitting facing each other chattering and playing table top games whilst journeying on the M1. He pointed out that seeing the boys socialise as they might not at home evoked memories of them as youngsters. Here the mobile space was used to reunite family life as participants only elected to re-engage with these practices on the move. Another VW campervan owner Darren interviewed in 2012 was also drawn into reminiscence through travel. He described having fond memories of driving up to Marsden Rock (a landmark in North East England) along the coast road and stopping to make a cup of tea in the back of his van. In other words, the on-board home conveniences meant that he could set up house anywhere. So not only could he drink a 'cuppa in a lay-by', normally a home convenience, dwelling in travel also triggered happy recollections of the past as if almost being with his father in the van.

In the following case the VW researcher found that the VW campervan did evoke a sense of belonging but to a particular period of time that she did not want to live through as a leisure experience. Thus, in some ways nostalgia evoked a sense of un-belonging:

The van had a 1970's caravan interior, a style that reminded me of my childhood. My father also used to own old vans which I used to play in as a kid. When I bought (Maud) and sat in the back however I felt a strange aura. Despite having a difficult and impoverished upbringing, I seemed to be trying to recreate the past by owning an old fashioned van and the familiarity that brought. This uncanny feeling of nostalgia, however, I learnt was something I didn't want to live through on holiday. (VW researcher, 2012)

It concurred that I as the researcher, the van could be used it for travel purposes, the feelings of belonging associated with it as a mobile home induced negative connotations from the past. That meant that travelling 'in feelings' of nostalgia was not a relaxing proposition, but one of realisation and trauma. In other words if such memories informed by nostalgia can evoke a sense of homeliness, then arguably home can be anywhere the participant resides. It is also worthy to point out that the old fashioned design of the Volkswagens in question refer to nostalgia, vintage style and brand with an ever evolving history of its own. Arguably owners could confuse nostalgia about a past holiday with the nostalgic nature of the van to strengthen the bond. This sentiment is also echoed by Darren whose vehicle appears to materialise the loss of his grandfather:

When my grandfather passed away I took the bus to his funeral, everyone was happy to see it, I'm sure if he had his way his coffin would have been in the back. And I'm sure he would be so happy we have kept her. So when I look at the bus I don't see a vehicle, I see my grandfather and all the happy memories of his life, I'm actually filling up as I'm writing this... big girl's blouse. This bus to me and my family is worth more than gold. I hope to keep her on the road as long as he did and add many more stories to her heritage. So when you ask if the bus is considered a part of the family? The answer would be a definite yes. (Darren, VW campervan owner, 2012)

The VW campervan triggered a reminiscence of a family member which arguably by proxy becomes a family member due to the memories it evokes. In other words, these intimacies contained in the van make it an inadmissible part of the fabric of the homely experience. Participant Jeanne for example noted that her van was a reminder of her deceased mother and said that she also experienced closeness with her mum because it was like travelling with her. Jeanne felt she could still go on holiday with her mother because the vehicle evoked nostalgic feelings:

Mine is named after my mum... who sadly passed away last year... she left me money so I bought the van... and thought it fitting to name her after mum... so "Jeanne" and I go everywhere together. (Sleepy Jeanne, VW campervan owner, 2012)

As also mentioned in the quote by Ken is the idea that the vehicle had been and would continue to be a container of memories inter-generationally. In keeping the van as a museum of memories through artefacts that would potentially be preserved, living longer than many family members, it is suggested that the VW campervan can also be considered as a form of reincarnation depending on how each owner interprets its meaning:

The first one I bought (Sunshine) will be handed down to my daughter shortly after it takes me to the crematorium. Selling one would be like losing a family member. She has taken us on many adventures, my daughters have grown up with her and hopefully she will take my grandchildren to the seaside and festivals etc. (Ken, VW campervan owner, 2012)

In this case the owner had future hopes that his children would adopt the van in the same way as he did. This arguably alludes to the idea that his memory could also be taken with his offspring when they also used it for holidays with their children. By passing on the idea of the van as a family heirloom the legacy can live on mediated by the van.

7.5 Being Together Apart

In this final section, the social dimensions of festival occupancy are explored for their contradictions. To do this, the enquiry critiques the VW campervan 'promise' of a collective spiritedness associated with the brand to analyse whether tourist expectations measure up to the experience. According to the official brochure (Das Auto, 2015), the VW campervan is currently marketed as a 'True home from home' and that 'The California gives us freedom' to roam. Yet whilst the main focus of the study is about tourism mobility in the retro model, what is unwavering is the way the Volkswagen, regardless of which era, resonates as a symbol of liberty and community since its adoption by the hippie counter-cultures in the 1960's. Even the current marketing pitch for the modern high tech equivalent offers owners the lifestyle 'myth' that escape from routine is possible when homeliness is replicated on the move. By unpacking the legacy that travelling in a Volkswagen offers autonomy and an absence of disabling conditions, it is noted that owners once taking their home with them are empowered to not only choose their neighbours, but to spend leisure time with 'like-minded' others as a modern tribe centred on the VW totem.

As Savage et al (2006) contends due to fluid lifestyles of contemporary mobility, the idea of living near 'someone like me', can now be extended to being with people who like 'the same things as me'. From the context of people having greater access to travel, the discussion therefore considers how the familiarity of home is embedded not so much in geography, but in the individualistic imaginaries of travellers as they exercise choice. Despite expectations of camaraderie and solidarity at festivals based on their history, competitive behaviour, snobbery and blatant commercialisation were not always muted by the unifying force of brand loyalty. So, although Teodori and Luloff (1998) propose that collective support for festivals is important in predicting strength of attachment to community or place, the joys of being together, utopian as they might be, are not without social tensions.

To explore these dichotomies further, the discussion looks at the collective experience of VW campervan tourists taking weekend breaks. The participants in

question were mainly working class leisure seekers who shared a propensity to be together at festivals. Whilst middle class owners on the other hand, tended to be lone travellers embarking on self styled trips with a sightseeing focus. According to VWshows.com (accessed January 2016) there are over 100 Volkswagen festivals in the UK, although the study concentrates on 6 festivals in the North East of England to include Harwood Hall (Leeds), Volkspower (Redcar), The Mighty Dubfest (Alnwick Garden but formerly Druridge Bay), Durham Dubbers, (Gibside Hall, Gateshead) , Volksfling Festival (Biggar, Scotland) and the VW Rally (Tynemouth). Most of the gatherings occurred in rural locations such as green fields next to heritage sites, places of natural beauty or remote agricultural land. They also often included entertainments such as live music, 'show and shine' competitions, children's art activities, discos and mobile bars as part of its cultural fabric. The festivals were also a trading places for marketers with bric-a-brac stalls, spare van parts, souvenirs, vintage clothes, as well as food outlets, gourmet burger vans, ice-cream parlours and fast food ateliers. Pointedly although these services may appear as standard festival fayre, at a VW campervan event the distinct difference is that owners, whilst tourists, are also hosts due to their vehicles being the focal point.

To begin an empirical discussion that explores the idea often sold by marketers that Volkswagen gatherings are about harmonious collaboration and being together with a shared interest in the brand, it is useful to note that even on arrival at the campsite the imagined freedoms associated with Volkswagen ownership are paradoxically set against a backdrop of rules and regulations. From the outset, social formations are framed by an organisational structure of compliance (see Fig. 4). So, whilst there was no offence intended, none-the-less mechanisms of social control driven by policies aimed to naturalise health and safety considerations and moderate behaviour in public places. Mindful of this, tourists in search of liberty, community and friendships are not entirely emancipated as they were corralled into plots designed to be three metres apart from their neighbours, tagged with wristbands and advised to adhere to rules. Arguably the combination of law enforcement, adjudication of temperance, restrictions on dog handling, noise abating and so on has induced an environment not separate from the restrictedness of social norms, but rather deeply embedded in them. Despite owners envisioning VW travel as an antithesis to the

entrapments of the everyday, their journeys unfolded into managed experiences to echo suburban living.



Figure 7.4 Rules and Regulations, Harwood Hall, Leeds

With restrictions coupled with the rise in popularity of Volkswagen festivals, greater numbers of visitors led to a more diverse range of people in attendance. Of course, the more successful the events, the need for greater controls which, according to longer standing attendees, resulted in less of a sense of community. Some of the members of the Durham Dubber's Volkswagen club for example remarked that some people bought vans and turned up but didn't really understand the ethos of them. This quote from two Durham Dubber's club members reflected some discord:

I come to the festival to meet other people with a like-minded interest but if the organisers made it difficult to bring our dogs I wouldn't bother. It is incidents like today with somebody's bull mastiff flinging around a little terrier that could spoil things. I mean I had to go over and punch it. So it would let go. Then when we went to Druridge Bay festival – Gary was furious, the place was too over packed and we just wanted to chill. Vanfest is like that, they have commercialized that and people are deciding not to go. That's not what the thing's about.' (Sharon and Gary, VW campervan owners 2012).

As the quote suggests, some participants from the Durham Dubber's campervan club had fixed ideas about how the festival should function. Owners with subscriptions to clubs tended to organise themselves in distinct social groups which despite brand affiliation did not have the same values. In short; some considering themselves as more dedicated to the cause than those with no allegiance to a collective. Club membership also fostered a sense of pride and at times even a quiet one-upmanship, with some owners displaying through a sense of pride, a particular social position. Older members who had been on the scene for a while tended to seize ownership of the 'original' meaning of Volkswagen, seeing people with alternative values not complying with what could be construed as an unwritten common-sense law in allegiance with values associated with the van. Admittedly these values were difficult to define although it was generally around good housekeeping, friendliness, family values and sensitivities around other owners' vehicles. With diverse audiences convening in the same place however, they had no choice but to organise themselves harmoniously in relation to each other despite any personality differences.

To counteract this, some owners would set up home in isolation or in small friendship groups or with club members Sharon and Gary in a geographically located crowd. Interestingly, whilst these mobile housing estates are an ideal context for humans to socialise, many groups created distinct islands away from others. This led to the assertion that instead of the festival being a utopian space which represented all things to all people around the brand, it was instead a forum for social norms, hierarchies and cliques to be replicated. In other words, the entirety of the social formation at the festival was not seen as a larger community, but a collection of distinct groups within which some tourists were open to extending relationships

Club associates arranged themselves in exclusive enclaves that mimicked living room environments. They often had communal seating areas surrounded by the vehicles that acted as a metal shield to the space in question. Owners were involved in activities such as sitting and relaxing, drinking and engaging general chit chat as one would do at home (see Fig. 5). The themes of conversation were often about what was happening at the time 'in the moment'. This included constant narratives about the behaviour of children, teenagers, other owners and how pet dogs were managed.

Teenagers were observed playing with water pistols, phone apps and generally engaging in tomfoolery. Whilst being together is sometimes a disharmonious affair, it is important to note that the researcher's experience as a member of the Durham Dubber's VW campervan club, despite being with strangers, shared a homely and convivial atmosphere overall. That said there was a lot of disparaging yet humorous banter about how other festival goers behaved and how they treated their vans. This was infused by personal observations about other dogs fighting, the quality of bands, the prices of engine parts compared to other shows and 'mickey taking' of each as part of the sociality.



Figure 7.5 Club members from Durham Dubbers Campervan club (2012)

Other ways owners drew distinctions between each other was to do with engine sizes. Participant Peter for example, highlighted two divergences when asked to describe what he considered to be Volkswagen community:

No I don't think I could describe a community to be honest, it is made up of lots of different types of people. What I will say is that there is a big difference between people who drive air-cooled and those who drive water-cooled vans. There's two different scenes really although they do cross over sometimes, but there's a whole scene that is just water-cooled which is totally, totally different from the air-cooled one.

They people are very different. The water-cooled are more extreme with their cars, more extreme with their attitudes and their alcohol intake. The air-cooled scene is a bit more laid back, the air-cooled scene is a bit more in your face, more about tunings and how it looks. How loud it is, how fast it goes, sound system, 20k on a sound system. If you had a full on water-cooled and a full on air-cooled there would be a clash in the middle because the people are totally different. (Peter, VW Campervan owner , 2012)

Arguably on this pretext participants gathered on the same campsite but not necessarily to engage directly with each other. As Peter suggested, there were two attitudes to lifestyles expressed through engine types and conflicting perspectives prevailed. Other prejudices emerged as some owners had critical views about hirers, seeing them as not part of the community because they had not assumed ownership. As a reaction to this, hirers felt a greater detachment and claimed to feel judged and thus not part of VW society due to not being fully affiliated members. In other words, 'homeliness' felt less achievable if others refused to let them belong. Some comments were also made about the families in hired vans being less sociable. This may of course have been a consequence of attitudes towards them due to a perceived lack of commitment. These findings clarified that although tourists were driving a VW campervan, it was not a prerequisite for automatic acceptance into the so called clan. Participants also clearly had multifaceted logics about why they attended festivals. Some campsite users even chose to barricade themselves off from others to maintain privacy, despite being in close proximity to between 300 and 3000 other Volkswagen enthusiasts depending on the event.



Figure 7.6 VW campervan camping area, Volksfest, Redcar (2012)

Others were much more sociable in the sense that it was an opportunity to display one's imagined worth through the van. Alan for example was asked what he liked about being at a VW festival, and he acknowledged it in terms of gratification, community and status acquisition only achievable by owning the van:

The feeling of pride and happiness when a family asks if they can take a picture of their kids inside your bus. Also a feeling of contentment when you park next to a load of fellow dubbers at meetings and rallies and then the feeling of relief when you see a bus that's worse than yours. (Alan, VW campervan Owner, 2012)

The quote suggests that being able to share his vehicle with others and be admired meant van ownership led to self-respect through it. It was also a nod to the idea that owners saw value in community connections with a genuine desire to gather, but also used the van as a status symbol where favourable judgements were made of its owner. In other words, expressions of competitive individualism whether to do with art or mechanics seemed not always motivated by a need to make friendships, but were motivated by a desire to own the best vehicle in order to boost personal status. In short, whilst classic VW campervan owners are not overtly competitive and often

found imparting a brand knowledge in a willingness to share, arguably such camaraderie is also about exclusivity and competition with those 'in the know' and those not. Also, a range of subtle and overt judgements were observed between types of Volkswagens from different eras, owners compared to non-owners, engine snobbery and mechanical expertise and aesthetic taste. All of this exemplified that these festivals are not neutral spaces, and that there are some discordances in those respects. The VW campervan was also thought by some owners to enrich their social status when around other types of mobile homes:

I enjoy turning up on a campsite and seeing the new motorhomes and caravans full of plastic people - that makes me smile, smug I guess (Tony, 2011)

Whilst parking at a general campsite that was not Volkswagen specific, participant Tony felt that owning one represented 'good taste' and implied that it gave him a certain *cache* that other tourists owning a standard motor home did not have. Also contradictory to the ideal that owning a Volkswagen would commonly lead to social harmony with 'like-minded' others, it was found that although festivals are places where participants made 'homes' in public view, many considered these as personal spaces and often made them inaccessible to others. These behaviours are arguably paradoxical because although the Volkswagen event offers an opportunity to camp, non-Volkswagen owners also attend to gaze at VW campervans because they are novel, nostalgic, and homely and so on. So, although owners appreciate the physical attributes of the vehicles, they are also on holiday in their house on wheels and unwittingly become the content of the event for most visitors. For example, Angela (Fig. 7) whilst expressing her style by setting up a living room outside her van to make a home for herself, is also a performer by default. Although being at home is usually an intimate process of maintaining family life, once it is replicated outdoors it is an invitation for voyeurism. In other words, making her personal space public meant Angela felt the need to cordon it off to avoid personal attention from strangers.



Figure 7.7 Mighty Dubfest, Druridge Bay (2012) Angela drinking beer, VW Campervan Owner

In the picture Angela is featured relaxing as though in an armchair at home. When interviewed she said she enjoyed doing sewing and eating outdoors but didn't like uninvited guests entering her space. Whilst happy to be in view when engaging in the normal practices of home, she said that she did not appreciate feeling like a zoo animal. That said personal boundaries were transgressed as VW campervan tourists visited each other's spaces and acknowledged the vehicle's humanism, offered mechanical knowledge or help if fellow owners needed it. Mindful of this, it is suggested that the collective agency that produces a 'mobile city' is less about tourists wishing to be with others, than a drive to organise a set of values into a material structure of which they feel part. Whilst on the face of it VW Campervan owners appear to interact as a community with undivided values and networks, owning a van did not necessarily convert to club membership without judgement of cultural or social status.

Interestingly, participants tended to appreciate all Volkswagens to a greater or lesser degree, but it was observed that beyond this potentially democratic influence the van had on improving social relations, boundaries still existed. Often these differences were maintained via the attitudes of owners to each other's choices of Volkswagen as per type, era, style, interiors and engine. Even the consequence of technological advancements in the motor industry meant that old vehicles were seen as more credible due to their design, history and owner commitment. To conserve

them meant that people buying new ones were seen by some as lacking in cultural, identity and so forth. This standpoint was echoed in the quote by Dave who was unashamedly discerning of owners and prepared to disengage with people who had chosen a modern Volkswagen:

Them new VW vans I wouldn't wave at them, I guess I felt the new ones were much more like a traditional looking box shaped van and they were very expensive so it attracted a different kind of owner. It was hard to imagine how people who owned them fit into the ethos of the retro VW. The new ones had all the modern conveniences including remote control flip-top roofs and their interiors were something like the neat and tidy looking mobile home interiors, kind of a luxury travel lodge aesthetic crammed into a tight space. This seemed very removed from the vans parked around the Durham Dubbers communal area. (Dave, VW Campervan Owner, 2012)

VW campervan owners who were part of the 'classic' Volkswagen scene made clear distinctions between themselves and those with newer models. Social judgements were made in respect to those who had opted for the more convenient option of the newer van and were socially excluded as a consequence.

7.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter two ideas have been critically considered. First, as VW campervan tourists reproduced homeliness in motion, the concept of home as fixity is challenged as connections between 'home and away' are not mutually exclusive. So, whilst tourism is used to seek experiences which transcend the everyday, it is proposed that 'homeliness' made on the move immobilises the traveller and reinforces stasis. Furthermore, whilst travel is commonly used as a method of 'escape' from the humdrum realities of daily life, comparatively in a VW campervan, banal tasks once set in motion are an accepted leisure itinerary that is not exceptional; but mundane. Further to this, due to owner's anthropomorphising their vans treating them as family members and so forth, such emotional ties appeared to be the natural consequences

of being in a familiar place with a significant other. Because of this, journeys were not only perceived as the necessitation of travel, but also as emotional geographies contingent upon social relations between bodies and machines. It can be concluded therefore that feeling at home occurs due to domestic rituals and personal expressions of homeliness whether static or moving, yet once combined with the humanised aspect of VW campervan ownership, spiritual and impassioned attachments can unfold to embody owners in travel where they affectionately belong.

Finally the second idea through the study of the socialities of VW campervan tourists meeting at festivals, it was found that although they occupied the same space most of their time was spent apart. It was discovered that VW campervan owners despite demonstrating the propensity to be with others, this did not always result in community spirited encounters. By beginning with the assertion that a common interest in Volkswagen would in itself be enough to ensure social harmony, it was found instead being together on a campsite most owners preferred to be alone or in family or club membership groups. So, whilst there was a strong desire to gather, tourists were divisive in how they distinguished between different levels of van ownership, social class, cultural taste and commitment to the brand. It is deduced therefore that although Volkswagen ownership inspired collective mobility, the resultant communities are fragmented and lack cohesion. Arguably this is because the experiences imagined by tourists as promoted by marketing imagery, along with social and cultural history of Volkswagen as a brand has led to idealisms often contested in the festival space. This is not to suggest that social cohesion at the campsite is not possible, in fact Volkswagen enthusiasts are keen to share an interest in each other's vans, but paradoxically the personal and cultural values observed did not align with equality and diversity in every case. Which returning Larson (2008) who suggested instead of escaping the everyday, prosaic realities can be reproduced in tourism, then an expectation that utopias might unfold from the mundane realities of setting up a temporary home on a campsite, in this case has proven not possible despite an optimism around the Volkswagen brand and .

Having discussed the issues inherent in how home is reproduced when away as a final empirical chapter, the next section will conclude the thesis with some final remarks.

8. CHAPTER 8 - CONCLUSION

Initially inspired by owning a VW Campervan, over the last 6 years my research has sought to understand this phenomenon of travel in terms of emotional behaviours, movements and socialities and to explore its contradictions. In order to bring this substantive work to a close therefore, the structure of the chapter starts with a revisiting of the research aims and objectives, follows with a contribution to knowledge, highlights its methodological contribution, considers personal reflections and finishes with future research directions. As a reminder, the thesis has examined the nature of VW campervan travel both on the highway and as a practice of dwelling at festivals in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, in taking an interdisciplinary approach as well as using experimental methods, this analysis has been underscored by a reflexive and inclusive episteme enabling not one, but many truths to unfold.

8.1 Revisiting the Objectives.

To sum up, this study has contributed to the field of tourism study in two ways. By attending to the research objectives, the phenomenon of VW campervan travel has been an instrument through which to advance mobility theory in which the broad conclusion is that owners and vehicles do not just facilitate each other's movement, but engage in very complex relational encounters during their trips. So, whilst commentaries on transport in human geography and mobility studies exist, it was found that the unique characteristics of the VW Campervan and its couplings with owners, led to social behaviours in tourism as yet, not fully explored. Furthermore, as VW Campervan owners related emotionally to their vehicles, particular attention was paid to it as an embodied practice. In other words, the nature of travel was relayed through the transmissions of sensitivities, interactions, imaginations and emotions rather than quantitative measurements of systems and transport infrastructures. The second contribution to knowledge is methodological. Through the interdisciplinary process of combining the arts and social sciences, new ways of looking at the ontology of tourism transport have been developed.

The main objectives of the study are revisited as follows. The empirical discussions are divided into three sections. Firstly the thesis endeavoured to develop an

understanding of how through the senses VW Campervan mobility is experienced by tourists engaged in slow travel. Secondly the study in examining the relationship between the owners and VW Campervans as a transhumanist practice, the inherent nature of body-machine relationships have been explored. Then finally attention was given to the dwelling practices of tourists at festivals as 'homeliness' is made on the move. By considering festival life therefore, how VW campervans are used for identity formation, leisure, home-making and communality have been considered in depth.

To recap in more detail, the first discussion looked at the nature of velocity and time in VW Campervan travel in terms of sight, sound, physicality and temporality. By engaging in the thought experiment of Actor Network Theory (Latour, 2007), the inherent factors of movement were also conceptualised not only as materialities, but as unseen affects operating in the mobile network. By unpacking the A-to-B of travel not only as a linear trajectory but as equal layering's of multi-scalar affects, VW Campervan travel has been examined as the embodied experience of the often incomprehensible combinations of the natural, artificial, human and non-human. The final part engaged in a critical dialogue with travel and 'time', a theory rarely considered in tourism studies. Whilst an empirical discussion of participant's experience of time only scratched the surface in terms of human interactions with the temporal, in this case motivated by an attachment to the van, owners experienced time not as fixed, but subject to personal feelings.

The second objective was to build upon understandings of embodied travel by considering how emotions impacted on experience. As the theories of mobile practices have been developed to understand how people know the world without knowing it, the multi-sensual practices and experiences of everyday life proposes a post-humanistic approach to understanding social life. Also relevant to this enquiry, Sheller (2004a, p.106) suggested drivers do not simply move around but are "produced by movement where both the senses and the body" become part of it. As discussed in 'Sensing the Automobile' therefore, owner attachments resulted in compassion and anthropomorphism towards the transport in question. It was found that the unique characterisation of the brand and the fact it could be customised inspired owners to humanise it. The transformation from simple transport to 'travel companion' therefore led to intimacies not usually expressed towards an automobile.

Finally, the third objective covered in the 'Home and Away' chapter, looked at the motivation to escape the everyday by using a VW Campervan to dwell on the move. As a further point, the question of whether participants unified by the brand, harmoniously fit into its associated membership, the research showed that gathering at festivals did not always produce social utopias. Yet whilst tourists were drawn together through identification with the vehicle, how different cultural values played out in those communal spaces were debated. Mindful of the aims of the thesis therefore, from this outline in the next section my contribution to knowledge will be summarised.

8.2 Contribution to Knowledge

To highlight the main contributions to knowledge, one must return to the beginning of the thesis in which the research sought to refute, challenge and be critical of the VW campervan experience in how it is imagined by tourists. To explore the paradoxes of it as a real leisure experience, as was critically considered in the first empirical chapter Velocity and Time, the important commentary by Auge's (1995) argument that the highway is a 'non place' devoid of life, I have contested that despite the idea that highways lack communality, in VW Campervan travel no less, social encounters on motorways were integral to the travel itinerary. As a second point, whilst modern vehicles are capable of high speeds, tourists in this case chose the modus of slow travel in this 'classic' vehicle that rarely exceeded 40 mph at peak acceleration. With a desire to decelerate in a fast paced world therefore, it was found that slowing down in order to relax was the main reason for buying into the brand. Interestingly although in my own auto-ethnographic study I experienced van ownership as less that relaxing, the majority of other owners despite the circumstances did find tranquillity and calm in this leisure opportunity. Thus the consequence of unhurried mobility on speedy motorways gave way to wider theoretical debates about the VW Campervan as representative of the 'slow travel movement', alluding to potential resistances that this epitomizes. So unlike a modern vehicle that cushions its passengers from external affects, VW Campervans were subject to the meteorological forces, driving surfaces and other vehicles in ways that modern vehicles are not. As a critique of modernity therefore, rather than protected from nature, tourists chose to be part of its abrasions.

As previously outlined, the forces at work i.e gradients, weather, surfaces and other vehicles were a welcome part of the trip. The desire to experience the often stressful reality of driving an old van therefore, was preferable to travelling in the safe and warm cocoon of a contemporary vehicle. Furthermore, as part of a 'Slow Travel' debate, this fragile vehicle due to age was particularly subject to the unstable meteorological affects that 'rub against' it. As Cresswell (2013, p.108) argued friction is embodied: "Friction ... is a social and cultural phenomenon that is lived and felt ... The significance of friction is in the way it draws our attention to the way in which people, things and ideas are slowed down or stopped." In this case how the mobile assemblage aligned and or retracted from surfaces, weather conditions, motorway architecture etc, prompted the question of how the 'driving body' (Sheller 2004b; Kent 2015) in controlling speed and direction embodied such resistances. In other words, whilst friction as a metaphor for the reduction of distance is well known in geographical and mobilities literature, I suggested there are not only physical affects, but by interfacing with humans also emotional ones.

Finally, as was debated through the data, how time plays a part in the production of a 'slow' experience was considered. Unlike users of conventional transport, de-acceleration was critical to how participants perceived time. For example, travellers used to a faster-paced lifestyle were physiologically resistant to de-acceleration and many had to acclimatize to the idea of slowing down. Another example was in feeling that time was stretched, some travellers were led to interpret it as an expanse of time to be contemplated for longer. It is reasoned therefore from these examples, that velocity affects cannot be fully understood without considering how they transform the tourist's experience of their 'free' time. To add a further insight, because owners had strong attachments to these vehicles, it was found that feelings such as sentimentality, loyalty and compassion meant enjoyable time seem to fly.

The second contribution is drawn from the account of VW Campervan mobility as a transhumanist practice. Due to the emotional bonds owners have with their vehicles, mobility was not expressed as disembodied act but one rich with sensitivities, belongings and desires. To contemplate the question of how travel was experienced by 'feeling the van' therefore, it is concluded that despite participants partaking in similar journeys down the M1, space, time and motion were interpreted differently. As

Sheller (2004a, p. 223) suggested, automobiles can be experienced through automotive emotions and as a consequence of owner sentimentalities they saw it as a 'family member' or companion. In short this connection appeared to add meaning to the wider experience of the trip. It was also found the embodiedness of ownership that led to humanising the van, was a common and shared social discourse. As a further insight, the places VW campervan owners travelled were often imagined in relation to how they felt.

As was explained, from the VW Campervan context ordinary family activities, banal landscapes and poor weather conditions tended to be appreciated as if extraordinary. Contributing to this impression, some owners by engaging in a 'cinematic gaze' referenced road movies and adopted the fictional scenarios from films as their own. Furthermore, the notoriously loud Volkswagen engine was celebrated by owners who listened to monitor its health; connecting it to their own wellbeing. Therefore, as personal mobility was tied to roadworthiness, travellers were not only physically reliant but also emotionally embodied. In other words, when asked, participants were usually familiar with the specific sound of their engine, affectionately describing its timbre and driving carefully not to 'stress' or 'upset' it. In other words, engines are not usually audible in modern cars, here were a valued part of the driving experience; as a highly regarded feature.

To conclude this section, the main findings were that the emotional intensities owners felt towards their vehicles overlaid the reality of tedious travel, enabling them to re-imagine it. This also meant they did not treat the vehicle in a perfunctory manner but with the sensitivities awarded to living things. To take this idea further, I introduced the 'travel glance' to conceptualise how emotional connections to banal places were reconfigured through the tourist gaze. So however mundane the travel experience was, in this instance owners changed their view to suit their own ideals and even celebrated the downsides of their trips. Their ability to find enjoyment in banality suggested that tourists embodied the external world by experiencing through the senses and in particular, prioritising the ocular. To conclude therefore, feeling for the van rather than just using it as transport, meant owners by engaging in a 'love affair' with it often romanticised places they travelled together.

The final contribution to knowledge stemmed from an analysis of the intersection between where everyday life ends and the vacation begins. It was concluded that by replicating home-on-the-move, the emancipatory nature of tourism was contested. It was also discovered that whilst tourism was used to escape everyday life, in a VW campervan 'homeliness' was ironically reproduced on holiday. As tourists vacated cities to escape western culture driven by speed, by using 'slow' travel tourists retreated towards nature in search of utopia. Previous research emphasised notions of freedom associated with campervan travel and how it has developed its own subculture (Caldicott et al, 2014; Kearns et al 2016), yet tourists did not always find 'paradise' at a Volkswagen festival. As a critique of temporary dwelling therefore, despite as (Berger, 1961) puts it suburbs can be identified as standardized, vulgar and conformist, tourists created mobile housing estates optimistically to discover liberty, community and belonging.

Yet as routines of domesticity were re-enacted, the socio-political realities of temporary living in a VW Campervan were equally dystopian. Here tourists occupied the same space, it was discovered hierarchies, cultural divides and social tensions echoed the normative behaviours of society at large. I had assumed Volkswagen ownership was direct entry into a social collective, the power of the brand meant to represent freedom and communality did not always absolve prejudice, difference or the demarcation of territory. As a meta-critique of the conformities and entrapments of the everyday therefore, empirical observations of how tourists interfaced with these commodified spaces of leisure, whilst could found belonging in home making, these sites were often contested.

8.3 Methodological Contribution

The second contribution to knowledge is methodological. By considering the theoretical approaches of the 'critical turn' in tourism studies and the new mobilities paradigm (Hannam et al 2006, Sheller and Urry, 2006) I adopted experimental approaches in response to the call that human movement could be investigated more imaginatively. In addressing criticisms that traditional research techniques are limited in reach therefore, the creative methods used here aimed to extend them. In terms of what is distinctive about my methodological design therefore, instead of

simply triangulating the data, through using crystallisation of visual and mobile methods to push beyond known techniques, new representations were made possible. By developing what Stoller (1997) and Paterson (2009) argue is a more sensuous ethnography, I responded by putting myself in the picture in buying, driving and camping out in a Volkswagen. Due to the immersive quality of conducting an auto-ethnography I have argued a unique richness of data was able to emerge.

Whilst a methodological contribution was not planned per se, in sharing these philosophies and practices some enlightenment of future epistemologies might take root. So, the decision to comprehend VW campervan travel not as transport geography but as a social practice lent itself to constructive application of my natural engagement of methods from different subject areas; in other words offering slightly different ways of doing things. In recognition that people are volatile and their ideas rarely fixed therefore, an eclectic approach was useful as it invited many interpretations. In working with mobile subjects for example, that gave rise not to static observation but for the researcher to move with the subjects. Through collaboration rather than looking at subjects from the outside, this body of knowledge was harnessed in ways outsiders may find difficult to capture. To garner an intimacy with the subjects, I even joined a local owners club to gain insights only close proximities could allow.

As Myers (2011) points out, using 'mobile methods' we follow-the-thing and be 'mobile-with' it (Bissell, 2009) as an 'authentic' way of telling stories. This approach I might add was only possible through strong identification with the subjects. The interdisciplinary aspect intended to cross the boundaries of archetypal schools of thought and I used my artist-researcher position to make other routes to knowledge accessible. This objective was achieved by combining traditional ethnographic methods with the arts to produce drawings, vox-pop videos, travel films and personal data to express alternative experiences. So, to use what Leavey (2009) describes as not reinventing the wheel, but carving up existing methods and sculpting with them, this approach mediated subject responses in ways that suited how participants best imparted knowledge.

To conclude; with an ambition to influence how tourism research can be conducted, by being responsive to participants allowed me to be reactive to the

research environment, rather than adopting a pre-prescribed method. By being a Volkswagen community member it was useful to not only map my own journey, but to collect data from participants who were encouraged to respond in their own way. By using this reflexive methodology I also aimed to be more ethical and inclusive to draw many voices into the frame. It also seemed good practice instead of risking 'going native' as with a traditional ethnography, a better approach would to 'be native' in the first place., Its experimental values have allowed this phenomenon to be discussed from different angles, enabling my researcher subjectivities to also shape the view.

8.4 Personal Reflections

As a reflection of this research journey I shall offer my final thoughts. By undertaking such a significant and lengthy project, the personal resources required to do this have made me a more organised and an academically more proficient researcher. Also the challenge of collaborating not only with my supervisory team with whom both my weaknesses and strengths have been laid bare, along with a huge variety of participants from the VW campervan community whose knowledge of their experiences was critical have all demanded new ways of being. Along the way leadership and social skills, writing and presentation, endurance and people skills were paramount personal developments and from where I have started, and I believe I have travelled far. By gaining a greater insight into this mobile world I have also learned never to take things at face value. In this sense I have also developed a greater self-awareness and become more mindful as a reflective practitioner. Also an important part of this process is to give something back to the communities who enabled this process. So when the PhD is ratified, I intend to share this work with participants who without their assistance this story could not be told. This will be done by uploading it on to online forum where some of the research was undertaken to make it accessible to the wider communities. Furthermore in addition, in collaboration with Professor Kevin Hannam from Edinburgh Napier University, an adaptation of some of the material in chapter 4 'Velocity and Time' entitled '*The Frictions of Slow Tourism Mobilities: Conceptualising campervan travel*' has been published in *Annals of Tourism Research*, 2017. See appendix (12). This has meant that this work is already shared more widely with the academic community and has peer reviewed on

an International level. I anticipate a further 2 papers from the remaining empirical chapters to be drawn out of this study.

As for the practicalities of the fieldwork, many challenges were faced along the way. These included living in and driving a VW campervan due to which I had to acquire new skills. For example I was a novice camper and my driving skills pushed to the limit in this case. I also had no mechanical skills either, which because I was using a vintage vehicle to travel in this often required maintenance. This left me reliant on other owners in the Volkswagen fraternity or a breakdown recovery service. In terms of methodological approaches, by committing to an inductive process also meant that I had to spend considerable time in the field in order to allow data to emerge. With an initial approach of not putting a formal structure in place, meant I had to experiment with ideas and create opportunities for knowledge about the people, vehicles and the place of study. Out in the field therefore, it was quite time consuming because I wanted to create an open forum for data to evolve and reveal themselves. By taking an interest in all aspects of the VW campervan festival initially to set what would emerge was hence laborious work. By drawing a lot of data initially however meant the potential for knowledge not yet anticipated was possible.

My own VW Campervan as a subject of enquiry also had to be comprehended as a new relationship, no longer a leisure vehicle but a place of work. This meant the knowledge produced from this duality had to be reflected upon as the journey from tourist to researcher transformed my ways of seeing and doing. To contextualise this, when I bought the vehicle I was initially attracted to the idea of travelling autonomously and camping at festivals and even temporarily felt affection for it. A change in perspective however soon after its purchase and especially during the project 6 months later, I began to dislike owning a Volkswagen due to its contested freedoms to do with discomforts, mechanical failings, drivability issues (mainly my own) and social fractions. Steadily I 'fell out of love' with my Volkswagen and no longer sentimentalized it as 'almost' human. This transition however did have its advantages for the study, as this allowed me to comprehend the subculture in terms of both love and hate. Prior ownership also offered scope for an auto-biographical project alongside a traditional ethnography.

As part of the demographic discussion I was also aware that as a white working class female in a male dominated context, that my gender might evoke some responses and not others. There was no sexism waged towards me at any time and even though I was in a place where many women took on traditionally gendered roles, and whilst I felt slightly vulnerable as a female, as in that was primarily a masculine environment, I worked to overcome it using my vehicle ownership as a way to connect with participants. Furthermore the majority of participants were of a similar background to me, so there was a level of tacit understanding built in. That said, my researcher position admittedly did reposition me into a different social field and whilst my project was usually met with a sense of humour and most played along, admittedly on one of the National campervan forums the idea of a PhD on VW Campervans engendered some members to take great offense at the idea of 'being researched' and they responded with bitter commentaries of what I was doing. In this light I learned a lot about having to deal with different personalities and that ownership did not enhance my status or any given rights to knowledge in wider society.

In terms of ethics I had also to consider how having an intimacy with some participants, potentially could objectify them. With a contention therefore that academics positioned with knowledge/power could lend themselves to unequal social relations, I adjusted my stance and made collaboration with participant's imperative. In terms of feeling comfortable in the fieldwork setting, I also acknowledged that some of this was due to time spent as a child in my father's mechanic garage hence 'auto culture' was not alien but known. Admittedly whilst I had no mechanical skills, I was still at ease talking to (mainly) men about engines and vehicle interiors, striking up a rapport that seemed to cross traditionally masculine domains. To finish this section, I would like to add that doing a project about mobility has also led to my own social mobility in many ways. In other words, obtaining a doctorate would ultimately stand me in good stead for academic future employment and to benefit from the cultural and economic capital that affords.

Going through this intensive educational process has transformed my ability to see things in a more critical way and to understand that reality is a social construct that is often ill informed. To conclude this section therefore as a sentiment for the future, completing this doctorate is not the end of the story, but I would hope only the

beginning of an academic life that will discover other aspects of the social world, a privileged position nonetheless in sharing such insights.

8.5 Future Research Directions

As I complete the final stage of my research, some issues that could be investigated further have emerged. As I conducted a personal auto-ethnography for this research the study could now be extended to participants more widely conducting auto-ethnographies. Also another issue is the idea of 'slow travel' in this account as a contested ethical practice. Finally, a more in-depth look at audiences at these festivals as non-owners but who have taken an interest in the brand, could be explored further. Whilst this research has contributed to knowledge of automobilities by demonstrating how VW Campervan owners used their vehicles, participant auto-ethnographies could be harnessed to explore more widely the embodied frictions of mobility, as they affect and are affected. So, whilst I looked at road travel through my own auto-ethnography, films made by owners would enhance descriptions of social and physical characteristics of highway travel. Additionally, perceptions of 'time' during the journey whilst these have been considered, are theories that could be further expanded using this investigative process. By returning to the road therefore, mobile and visual methods could be used to capture other driving narratives with a view to unravelling further tourist perceptions of velocity and time.

Another appealing topic would be to question 'slow travel' as an ethical practice as produced by this toxic mechanical oil-dependent vehicle. Whilst the values accorded to deceleration have been explored in the thesis, further work to consider where the VW Campervan sits between the binaries of ethical and immoral environmental practices, would benefit from debate. Historically from the birth of the car, akin to the pursuit of walking as a leisure practice, the concept of the 'open road' legitimised the slow meandering as a upper 'middle-class' pursuit (MacNaghten and Urry, 1981, p. 209), however in this case the routes are tread by mainly a working class audience who generally 'accidentally' engage in environmentalism through 'slow' travel as unbeknown eco-warriors. Where these contradictions could be contested however, is that they are also paradoxically the perpetrators of unsustainable motoring futures. To explore this dichotomy further, this form of serendipitous resistance (most

owners did not speak of slow travel as being linked to 'planet saving' activities) are socialites to arguably sit within the context of an environmental movement synonymous with elite technocratic liberalism (Loomis, 2016). Further work therefore could be done in the untangling of contemporary debates on the environmental consequences, to consider how the socialities of VW Campervanning produce, refute or nurture sustainable developments in the automobile world.

Finally, one possible direction worth pursuing in the future would be to conduct more research on the audiences who attend VW Campervan festivals, who are not owners. Whilst this study was concerned with ownership and embodiment, many people visit festivals to simply appreciate Volkswagen as a brand. Whilst anecdotally some visitors who were there either wanted a van or used to own one, day visitors with no previous connections also found reason to attend and therefore as a social phenomenon are as yet, fathomless. There was also another demographic that could be considered – those tourists who hire VW campervans rather than buy them. This is admittedly a small segment of the market and not fully addressed in this study thus more work could be done about the hybrid nature of spending leisure in a VW Campervan but not having ownership. Not to mention a substantial number of owners that do not and would not camp at a VW Campervan festival despite owning one. Whilst these tended to be middleclass owners in search of autonomous solitary excursions, more research could find out what values and behaviours distinguish between these class based pursuits within the context of a shared affection for the brand.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview Checklist

Themes	Example Question Areas
Objective (1) to understand road travel in a VW campervan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sight <i>Views, Weather, landscape.</i>• Sound <i>Engine noise.</i> <i>Other vehicles.</i> <i>Vehicle architecture.</i>• Temporality. <i>Feelings of time.</i> <i>Impressions of travel night to day.</i>• Velocity.• <i>Experience of slow travel.</i> <i>How Speed is perceived</i> <i>Driving in relation to other moving objects</i>
Objective (2) to understand how tourists use VW campervans at the campsite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identity formation. <i>How owners relate to their VW</i>

	<p><i>How owners customised their vehicle in relation to their own design ideas.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure making. <i>How the van is used to relax and allow for holiday experiences to occur.</i> • Home making. <i>How home is created on the move.</i> • Communality. <i>How being with others is made possible and what ways that these are performed.</i>
<p>Objective (3) to examine the relationship between the VW campervan and its owner as travel relationship.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embodiment <i>How owners relate on an emotional level with their vehicles in terms of sensitivities.</i> • Anthropomorphic <i>How owners relate human traits to a mechanical machine</i> <i>How owners create narratives behaviours around the vehicle understood as human.</i> • Kinaesthetic relations How affectionate behaviours may occur as a consequence of affectionate attachments to the vehicle.

APPENDIX 2

7 Video Tynemouth Festival Vox-pop Interviews (Refer to CD Submission)

- a) 8.57
- b) 6.52
- c) 21.19
- d) 18.52
- e) 24.32
- f) 16.26
- g) 15.47

APPENDIX 3

**Doctoral Research – University of Sunderland
(Interview conducted in the back of a campervan) July 2011. 8pm.**

Participant - Michael Archer- 45 minute Interview.

What attracted you to the idea of a VW Van?

Well for me it was more like a holiday home, a potable camp and chill with the family. And the VW aspect was more to pursued Amanda, my partner just for the record. Basically she thought it was cool and they are cool and all of those things, but it was more a vehicle to go on holiday in so like looking at caravans well didn't appeal, and I could see it as a second vehicle.

So what you're saying is you wouldn't have liked a Bongo or a different type of van?

No it would have to be something that could be used as a car as well.

So not the big American retirement van?

No well the VW's my mate had one and it's a car and a van and its cool and exciting isn't it. It's that whole thing, there's a buzz about it. People talk about it, so that would be the initial reason.

Does the idea come from research, or just off the top of your head to get it?

Well we went on a caravan holiday and we sat in this caravan and we thought this is cool; we will just have barbeques, just drink beer. Just chill out George (Their son) was only 7 weeks old and everything was dead easy going and slow the pace reminded us of when we went travelling to Asia and this was the life, but on the doorstep. Somewhere we could go on a weekend, every weekend just to get away from the city. Urm then Amanda wanted something mobile and then the VW was a compromise.

Did you give it a name?

It didn't have a name when we got it. Our initial idea in the July 2009 and we didn't get it for 10 months of waiting, painstaking waiting and it didn't have a name we thought Ulysses or, the registration was UCU34I. It was a TV program, Ulysses (Pronounced dramatically). Most of them are girls names so we decided in the end to call it Jenny because that's what Forrest Gump (the movie) calls his boat.

Does that represent travel or something?

Just liked the name.

Did giving it a name help with attachment to it?

Well they are mostly girls and it's like naming a ship. I thought there was a slight cultural difference of the people who got them; the Dubbers who had names were different from those who hadn't.

In what way?

I don't know.

You're allowed to say what you think?

It seems that if you really knew VW then you didn't name it. So at first we didn't name it, we haven't had anything and called it a name. Even George's teddies, his rabbit are rabbit.

Not a sentimental old fool then (laughs)?

So where you brought up with camping?

Yes well we had definitely camped, with cubs and stuff like that. And school camp at the lakes which was cool. Err then with the lads trying to get in campsites when we were 16, sleeping in fields. Walking through fields of bulls

and swampland and stuff and waking up in the morning with this guy on his quad going get the fuck off my field and we were like oh shit. We went camping then, we went walking then. We had a break then returned to it with mates and realised that you could just sit and eat and drink as much as you wanted and it was great, you could just get as wrecked as you wanted and that was fine. We didn't really go camping me and Amanda but then when we had a kid; it really seemed to make sense and still does. That is the lifestyle that I want my family to have.

Do you think that's more a boy thing or just general?

What with camping, I guess stereotypically yes. Like its roughing it and Amanda doesn't want to rough it, whereas maybe when she was younger she would of, but she's 30. I liked mucking in, getting wet, getting dirty whereas Amanda didn't like that about the camping. There will be girls that don't enjoy it and girls, but as a general rule boys like getting in a mess and most girls don't. The idea of getting wet and sitting in a leaky tent brings out survival instincts in me. My cousin and his wife goes camping, well glam ping actually they put a carpet in their tent. I suppose you're forced to make you own entertainment in a way. You're forced as a couple to be together, well not forced but you're on a campsite and it's a relaxed 'holiday' atmosphere.

So do you think it is relaxing?

Relaxing?

Well it's an idea that you go camping to relax and people do.

Yes but it's full of tasks to get to the relaxing bit. Like relaxing is over there but you have to do a lot to get to it. Like the whole alphabet. To get to the z. Then when you sit down its like right what do I do now. So everything's done, all you need to do is just do the dishes. But there's actually nothing to do. Not like at home.

Is it trying to get away from that?

Yes for me it is actually. That's still why I would like a static caravan as well. Somewhere to go. To chill out and get drunk (laughs)

In terms of feeling about the van, can you describe that?

Over the massive and ridiculous 10 months it took to procure the van and we even got a loan to get it. Then when it did arrive we were like this is a mistake because we had been so long waiting and we had to find extra money too. At

first I was a bit non plussed by it, although Manda was excited and I was oh I don't know what this is going to be like. That was my feeling all the way up to getting it, but then when I got it I did fall in love with it. Very much fell in love with it. It only took sitting in it, driving in it and having a glass of wine in it to think this is brilliant, this is cool you know it belonged to us and I had never owned anything quite like it that, that was worth that much. I o don't own a house I just have a mortgage. Yeah it was mine and I fell in love with it. We would obsess about buying things for it. It was like a person. Strange that. But it had its own character which is probably why people name them. If a name had come to us we probably would have named it but, err it was like what does it need. George our son had a lot of needs and so did it. Things you could get for it like accessories. We bought everything, the curtains, the pans and the electrics. I thought about it, went and looked at it on the street when I woke up in the morning. Go and just sit in it, it's yours you can be possessive over it.

Is ownership part of it or could you have just hired one?

No, when it's yours you look in other peoples vans and go how practical is it, where would you sleep all of these questions. But as soon as you had your own it was like this is brilliant, I don't care where I am going to sleep. It was more look at this I am in my van. There's an excitement and something I really enjoyed.

Did this feeling stay with you for the duration of having the van?

Yeah definitely, just very attached to it.

Do you think it's an aesthetic thing? I mean I know there's more to it than that but....

Yes it's the age of it, that its original, it's got a history and your, it looks nice but it's quite simple. It's got eyes on the front, a face. Whoever designed it thought I want to live in this Ill put a sink there, I will put the beds there etc, it's clever and a lot of thought has gone into it. It's like you feel like you have got something special and whether it's done through the perception of it. People say they fall in love with them and that's what happens. I suppose if I had a Ferrari I would fall in love with that. But not necessarily in the same way.

Are you in love with your car?

No. I don't really like it. When I first got it I thought oh its okay, I have a new car. Now I dislike it. I wouldn't be bothered if it was nicked, albeit for financial reasons. But the van (whoa) I left it somewhere and thought I hadn't locked

the door and just panicked about it and couldn't think about anything else until I got back to the van and the door was locked. Then I love my bike at the minute so maybe I am a bit like that. The campervan did stay with me.

When you say history, do you mean cultural history or its own history?

It hadn't any improvements really so, so it's original so you imagine what people were like who used to live in it and there is that whole community. You don't go anywhere without someone speaking about it. That makes the cycle of you enjoying it, being part of something the reason you think it is special is because you drive along the road and kids smile at it and people look at it and wave at you. You drive past everyone in their shitty normal cars and it doesn't matter that its costing a fortune to drive or goes really slow (Laughs) or really noisy or stinks of oil, when your sat at the lights and someone else in their car that's probably cost 20 grand and you just go HA!

Do you attribute the features of the van to yourself, your personality?

I think the van is the van itself and it's just that you, like I was the driver of that van. But you do personalise them over time. But we didn't have ours long enough. Eight ball gear stick or whatever. Got a little fire extinguisher. We didn't want to put flowers on it or change the look as it was a recent resprays so it looked lush. I felt like a bus driver. It is strange but you do feel on show when you drive them

Does it create an atmosphere for your life?

For the time you spend in them. I think that's the appeal of them that when you in them you relax, something changes like it's not the only thing that that happens with. Especially if it's yours. It's like you look at a fire and you think that's beautiful it gives you a certain feeling, or looking out into the ocean gives you a certain feeling. Like the campervan you just chill out it's your domain.

When you're driving do you feel relaxed?

Not always when I am driving. It can be a nightmare. You can't get it in gear or anything like that can you? You can't get stressed or loose you temper with it either or it won't let you drive it. But when you stop its relaxing. It depends where you are driving of course. I tried to use mine for work. It was to see if I could do it, use it for work but it was ridiculous in the winter in the campervan. So it was just a joke. Like I had a fleece blanket, jacket, hat and gloves. Start

the engine; clean all the snow off and the ice. Condensation breath, then when I get there, South Shields is a 40 minute drive and it's still fucking freezing.

So it didn't affect how you thought of the van?

No it was just my little relationship with the van. It was good having it working in a school. Some of the kids were is that a hippy van sir? Others were like why do you drive that piece of crap and couldn't understand it. Some who knew about them really like did. People like them that the thing.

I hear people say you either love them or hate them and it's just trying to put my finger on what that means?

It's basically the way that they look and it's what they offer. Freedom, comfort and style and there's an impression that other people want them as well. So if other people want it then you want it, then you have it so you have what other people don't have so you have something special. In theory you could have that with a bongo or whatever but with the VW it is the je nuis ET qua. But its they same reason why people like for example old houses. Certainly now it has gone into popular culture.

Yes now you can buy a campervan key ring even if you haven't got a van.

Like with a lot of popular programs like Lost, they are just in things that are cool. So that image is just instilled.

I am interested in how people overcome the problems to get to the freedom that it is allegedly going to offer.

Do you mean the fact of the way they are made and they breakdown a lot?

Maybe

Well its irrational isn't it? If you think about the way that they are made, the gears I mean your pulling these rods basically the whole distance of the car . Anything's simple and everything is fragile and brittle and could break at any point and you have oil spills. The more stuff you do with them, the more determined you are to do stuff, to solve problems. Like Macbeth you are in it so far, you have made a stupid decision from a practical point of view, financially it doesn't make sense, they are not economical, they cost a lot to repair but people get obsessed about them and want to fix them themselves. Not me though.

Was it a hard decision to sell it?

It wasn't that hard because I was working a lot and couldn't really afford it and not seeing any benefit. Because my original goal was to have this lifestyle. The payoff for me was that I would have a big car but it didn't work out that way. We thought if we sell it we could buy something else like a caravan but then we realised we couldn't get anything else as we didn't have the money. That thing is still hanging there that I am going to get a decent car and a caravan. And that we can tow it and go to Europe and go around the country.

So you haven't left the idea of that kind of camping and travelling lifestyle?

No it was just with all the rain last year and having a baby. It was stressful being in a small environment but in a caravan it would be a bit more luxury. warm and dry and one of my main things is that we go away so she relaxes as well. And perhaps we can go back to this life that we had on this beach in Thailand which will always be our little paradise. We can get a taste of that and that George could play with other children on the campsite and have a really nice time. I was sad to see the van go but because we had a bank loan and that it's not all mine it would have been unreasonable and selfish to go with what I would have wanted which is to have kept it. I would have kept it because it was my van, that's how I felt. We went away without George in the bus and it was just great. It was like why we didn't get one before we had George because it was great. No problem to set things up, took our time, did whatever, had nice food, it was our anniversary liked it.

So children are a huge factor in how you experience things?

Yes George was one. He needed a lot of attention; the van needed a lot of attention setting stuff up that was stressful. Sometimes we got to the campsite, hadn't eaten, eating 10 at night spaghetti Bolognese in the dark. I enjoyed all that, it had a little porch and stuff. Not catch 22, but I hadn't thought about getting a van before I had a child, but maybe would have enjoyed it more not having one around. I went in my friends van, all I thought was it would cost loads of petrol money yet he loved it. Then once he said he would use his van to help me pick up some stuff and then it broke down and ended up in a garage and two hours later I thought I am never getting a campervan. But then the person we got ours from he was local, he built it, we trusted the people and it was a reliable van.

So the engine wasn't pissing oil?

Well it was pissing oil (Laughs) it never conked out, it needed an oil seal.

You joked with me once and said you didn't want to end up in Silverlink (Shopping Village) every weekend and it sounds to me like for you it had been the antithesis. So in other words living differently from the nuclear family set-up.

The dream never came true as we were never away long enough in it because of Amanda's job, so we were away for three or four days at a time and by the time you have travelled there and back then you have one or two days in a place. Sometimes you would go to a campsite and think that it's not very good. Then I have gone to all the hassle of setting it up and can't be bothered to take it down and go somewhere else and set that up and it might not be good. It's very much trial and error with these things and the more experience you have, the more you know. We did go off in my mum's caravan during owning the van and the hassle is less, a lot less.

You mentioned going off to Thailand and how some of van ownership aimed to capture this idea?

Yes we woke up everyday cooked fish on the Barbie; go for runs in the morning. Amanda would find shells and make stuff; I would be building things in our hut.

So it was trying to recreate that in a modern context?

Yes and it is beautiful in the countryside and very different from the city and you just go there's nothing to do so you just stop.

Of course the VW rallies. People park up on concrete if they have to and so sometimes nature isn't the deal. What did you think?

We never did that van community thing, we never looked for that, for other VW people we just did our own thing.

Any reason why your we're not interested in VW meets?

Well like everyone my time is limited and yes I guess its snobbery. You can only go away 5 months in the year. My objective is to stay in the countryside, chill out and relax. I don't know enough about the vans so would be out of my depth in places like that. Like at other peoples van then what. I don't know these people and don't need to know new people. I suppose the festival ones rather than the shows are a bit more about relaxing, but generally I wasn't interested in that I just wanted to go camping and have a bit of car creed. That

shouldn't be important to me but it is. Sometimes you spend up to an hour and a half in a car per day so I would quite like a good car. So I thought a VW is a good car, eye catching what I didn't realise is that it was not comfortable and shit to drive,

Do you think you will get one again in the future?

No

So not when you're 55 and all parental duties done?

I think we would be prepared to lose the aesthetic qualities for the sake of a transit van with a house on the back for the sake of comfort. I don't really mind that a caravan looks crap. When I was on the campsite with the van it really did stand out.

APPENDIX 4

Example of 19 Postal interviews.

VW Campervan Research Project Postal Diary

What do you do for a living?

Retired

Age?

Over 44

Where did the idea to buy a VW van come from?

Having found an ad in a local paper late eighties for a V10 fastback we loved it, another ad local Karmann Ghia getting hooked then approached at a show had another Ghia for sale RHD loved that. Husband needed hip replacement bit low, thought camper van! Friend told us about a bay dream would be split, found split, gave daughter bay, split needed work so was able to finance over 2 years, ran a lovely American ball alongside useful for 5 grandchildren.

Some V-Dubbers treat their van as though it is human why do you think that this is the case?

Like humans they have their off days, can be frustrating sometimes, most of the time reliable will go anywhere with their curvy smiley looks, purring sound. When you've climbed a steep steep hill (fingers crossed) it's an achievement for both you and van, you don't feel compared with an MOD vehicle, other road users smile or wave and don't usually cut you up (unless jealous wanting a van themselves) (excuse spelling)

Do people when they think of your van, think of you? This question is about how much your van represents your personality?

In ways old 57 van looking good for years haha, homely friendly, like a comfortable pair of shoes, collectors of anything old and interesting. Halcyon days HCN 622 has her fair share of trinkets never liked stopping in, liked to see different places old plodders.

What attracts you to leisure in the 'slow lane'?

You can actually enjoy leisure in the slow lane enjoy the scenery, try it in an NOD vehicle probably V signs, not VW, hand signals horns blowing, no fun travelling

Is the experience of driving to the place you are going in the van important or not?

Yes half the pleasure, you can stop for a cuppa in a layby, enjoy the friendly politeness, ooh the road, the unique sound of the engine talking back to you, no stress at the end of the journey.

What is good about gathering with other V-Dubbers?

We've made many new friends this way, initially looking at the van from rat to concourse, finding we have such a lot in common, 1st with the van but also hikes and lifestyle if parts are wanted help each other finding them. Friends or dealers that live local are still there after meeting them 50+ years ago.

How does the idea of not having a VW feel?

We will never fall out with them, my husband's health is failing now and I will have to try to carry on driving HCN 622 (to pass my test 1st) she has given me the inspiration to do it and my husband to be able to have the fun he used to have.

Do you talk to, pat, kiss or kick your van?

Give her a pat now and then, loads of good memories

APPENDIX 5

Quest-9 Are you aware of the noises VW makes whilst driving?



www.durhamdubbers.co.uk Forum Index -> VW Campervan PHD Research Project

View previous topic :: View next topic	
Author	Message
maud Joined: 21 Aug 2008 Posts: 167 Location: newcastle upon tyne	<p>Posted: Tue Aug 02, 2011 2:05 pm Post subject: Quest-9 Are you aware of the noises VW makes whilst driving?</p> <p>As a VW owner I have become aware of the squeeks, engine rhythm and general mechanical soundtrack noise of the van as I am driving. Usually wondering when my van might implode;)</p> <p>Anyone else noticed these 'noisy' features which I imagine are different on every VW and if so does it (add) or (detract) from the enjoyment of driving?</p> <p> </p> <p>Back to top</p>
The Lockkeeper Joined: 15 Apr 2009 Posts: 1311 Location: Jarra	<p>Posted: Tue Aug 02, 2011 6:58 pm Post subject:</p> <p> OH YES !!</p> <p>I eventually got round to putting a radio in (and speakers), but i very rarely have it on cos I NEED to hear the engine. Stupid really because when the noises do change, I don't do anything except go " Hmmm, the engine noise has changed " and keep on going.</p> <p>If I'm on a long stretch of dual carriageway where I'm not expecting to slow down or speed up, I might risk a bit of Quo, but just quietly.. 😊</p> <hr/> <p>It's not a complete piece of junk...some bits are missing.</p>

APPENDIX 6

Screenshots NVIVO

WV Campervanstest3 (NVivo 11).nvp - NVivo Pro

FILE HOME CREATE DATA ANALYZE QUERY EXPLORE LAYOUT VIEW

Go Refresh Open Properties Edit Paste Copy Merge Clipboard Format Paragraph Styles Editing Proofing

Workspace Item Look for Search In Chapter 5 Me-it Find Now Clear Advanced Find

Nodes

- Chapter 5 Me-it
 - Attachment
 - Love
 - Just a vehicle
 - Stress
 - Tactile
 - Sonic
- Nostalgia
 - Family History
 - The Dream
- Van human
 - Anthropomorphic
 - Embodiment
 - Personality

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On
Attachment		5	19 13/05/2013 09:35	S	05/06/2013 10:45
Love		5	16 13/05/2013 09:44	S	05/06/2013 10:44
Just a vehicle		4	7 13/05/2013 09:45	S	05/06/2013 11:10
Stress		5	17 03/06/2013 13:04	S	05/06/2013 11:13
Tactile		2	2 03/06/2013 14:23	S	05/06/2013 10:30
Sonic		1	2 05/06/2013 09:59	S	05/06/2013 10:00
Nostalgia		7	15 13/05/2013 14:35	S	05/06/2013 10:04
Family History		4	8 13/05/2013 14:35	S	05/06/2013 10:04
The Dream		4	11 03/06/2013 13:27	S	05/06/2013 11:14
Van human		0	0 03/05/2013 12:49	MRP	03/05/2013 12:49
Anthropomorphic		5	15 13/05/2013 16:41	S	05/06/2013 10:41
Embodiment		3	9 13/05/2013 16:41	S	05/06/2013 11:01
Personality		7	14 03/05/2013 12:51	MRP	05/06/2013 10:35

WV Campervanstest3 (NVivo 11).nvp - NVivo Pro

FILE HOME CREATE DATA ANALYZE QUERY EXPLORE LAYOUT VIEW

Go Refresh Open Properties Edit Paste Copy Merge Clipboard Format Paragraph Styles Editing Proofing

Workspace Item Look for Search In Chapter 6 Toget Find Now Clear Advanced Find

Nodes

- Chapter 6 Together
 - Family affair
 - Mechanical Interest
 - test node
 - Hierachies
 - Affordances
 - Quality
 - Home from home
 - Away from Home
 - Identity
 - Individualism
 - Being together
 - Aesthetics
 - Simplicity
 - Nature

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On
Family affair		13	24 03/05/2013 12:45	MRP	07/06/2013 12:26
Mechanical Interest		12	29 03/06/2013 14:55	S	07/06/2013 12:29
test node		7	9 07/06/2013 12:20	S	07/06/2013 12:30
Hierachies		3	3 13/05/2013 09:39	S	05/06/2013 10:58
Affordances		5	13 13/05/2013 11:11	S	05/06/2013 11:11
Quality		3	4 03/06/2013 13:58	S	05/06/2013 10:43
Home from home		6	18 14/05/2013 10:46	S	05/06/2013 11:00
Away from Home		4	10 14/05/2013 12:43	S	05/06/2013 10:38
Identity		4	11 03/05/2013 12:45	MRP	05/06/2013 11:22
Individualism		7	14 13/05/2013 11:13	S	05/06/2013 11:32
Being together		8	31 13/05/2013 11:13	S	05/06/2013 10:38
Aesthetics		8	19 13/05/2013 11:14	S	05/06/2013 11:22
Simplicity		4	7 13/05/2013 16:16	S	05/06/2013 10:13
Nature		6	11 03/06/2013 13:21	S	05/06/2013 10:37

The screenshot shows the NVivo Pro interface with a node hierarchy on the left and a data table for 'Chapter 7 Out there' on the right. The table lists nodes with their respective source counts, reference counts, creation dates, and modification dates.

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On
Dwelling Motion	0	0	13/05/2013 10:33	S	03/06/2013 14:40
Domestic Activity	5	5	13/05/2013 11:06	S	05/06/2013 10:12
Social enjoyment	3	5	13/05/2013 11:06	S	03/06/2013 15:26
Joy of motion	6	6	13/05/2013 11:06	S	05/06/2013 10:18
Disenchantment	7	35	13/05/2013 11:09	S	05/06/2013 11:23
Slow Travel	4	8	13/05/2013 09:52	S	05/06/2013 10:27
Reactions from others	7	21	13/05/2013 10:24	S	05/06/2013 11:22
Romanticism	2	3	13/05/2013 10:25	S	03/06/2013 15:30
Sightseeing	3	6	13/05/2013 10:25	S	05/06/2013 10:18
Freedom	9	21	13/05/2013 16:07	S	05/06/2013 11:32
Journey not important	2	5	03/06/2013 12:59	S	03/06/2013 15:34
Pleasure seeking	4	15	05/06/2013 10:02	S	05/06/2013 10:42

APPENDIX 7

Video clips (See CD)

- a) 0.35
- b) 2.18
- c) 1.54
- d) 0.46

APPENDIX 8

Video Clips raw material.
Edited version. (See CD)

- a) **5.31**
- b) **29.35**
- c) **4.52**
- d) **3.07**
- e) **4.54**
- f) **1.35**
- g) **1.38**
- h) **1.28**
- i) **12.58**
- j) **5.53**
- k) **0.36**
- l) **2.55**
- m) **7.20 final edited version.**

APPENDIX 9

Example photographic stills imported into NVIVO.

The screenshot displays the NVivo Pro software interface. The top menu bar includes FILE, HOME, CREATE, DATA, ANALYZE, QUERY, EXPLORE, LAYOUT, and VIEW. The 'Picture Tools' ribbon is active, showing options like Rotate, Compress, Brightness & Contrast, Select Region from Log, Assign Region to Rows, and Log Rows Import. The left sidebar shows a tree view of sources, with 'Pictures 2' selected under the 'Internals' folder. The main window displays a table of imported photographs with columns for Name, Nodes, and References. The table lists various image files, including those with DSC and IMAG prefixes. A preview of a photograph is shown on the right, depicting the interior of a vehicle looking out onto a rural landscape.

Name	Nodes	References
245_2260	0	0
245_2262_2	0	0
245_2265_2	0	0
245_2268_2	0	0
245_2269_2	0	0
DSC09319	0	0
DSC09320	0	0
DSC09320 2	0	0
DSC09321	0	0
DSC09322	0	0
DSC09323	0	0
DSC09324	0	0
DSC09325	0	0
DSC09326	0	0
DSC09327	0	0
DSC09328	0	0
DSC09329	0	0
DSC09329 (2)	0	0
DSC09340	0	0
DSC09352	0	0
DSC09355	0	0
IMAG0360	0	0
IMAG0361	0	0
IMAG0361#1	0	0
IMAG0362	0	0
IMAG0363	0	0

APPENDIX 10

Adult Consent Form

University of Sunderland -VW Campervan Research Project (2011/12)

I (name) _____

Of (address) _____

I agree

that my photograph or audio voice recording material can be used for any academic publications relating to the VW Campervan Research Project. I agree that all subsequent material to which I made a contribution can be reproduced or used for academic purposes:

In print

On the web

Permission is given VW Campervan Project at The University of Sunderland to use my photograph or audio voice recording, on condition that it does not give anyone the personal details of the people in the photograph or use any material external to this research project unless I give my permission.

Signed

Date

APPENDIX 11

Table of Interviewees Demographics, Location and Date of Interview

Interviewee number / pseudonym	Age and Gender	Location of Interview	Date of Interview
1. Sonja	45, female	Druridge Bay	Month, 2012
2. Bob	57, male	Redcar	May, 2011
3. Craig	34, male	Alnwick	July, 2012
4. Jenny	50, female	Leeds	August, 2012
5. Amanda	30, female	Gateshead	June, 2012
6. Gilly	41, female	Leeds	August, 2012
7. Margaret	48, female	Redcar	May, 2012
8. Kenny	40, male	Alnwick	July, 2012
9. Stephen	36, male	Leeds	August, 2011
10. Angela	39, female	Leeds	August, 2012
11. Bridget	45, female	Leeds	August, 2011
12. Dave	33, male	Redcar	May, 2011
13. Peter	31, male	Redcar	May, 2011
14. Jane	37, male	Gateshead	June, 2012
15. Joe	29, male	Redcar	June, 2012
16. Bee	30, male	Online Forum	September, 2012
17. James	29, male	Redcar	June, 2011
18. Nick	45, male	Biggar	June, 2011
19. Alex	31, male	Alnwick	July, 2014
20. Grant	46, male	Biggar	June, 2012
21. Michael	28, male	Newcastle	June, 2012
22. Kevin	30, male	Biggar	June, 2012
23. Jonny	50, male	Biggar	June, 2011
24. Daisy	39, female	Biggar	June, 2012
25. Maddison	27, male	Online Forum	August, 2012
26. Ed	25, male	Leeds	August, 2012
27. Simon	29, male	Online Forum	September, 2011
28. Sara	42, female	Biggar	June, 2012
29. Amelia	30, female	Gateshead	May, 2011
30. Angie	36, female	Gateshead	May, 2011
31. Dennis	65, male	Biggar	June, 2011
32. Ken	67, male	Tynemouth	June, 2012
33. Gary	41, male	Alnwick	July, 2012
34. Maggie	35, female	Tynemouth	June, 2012
35. Sharon. B	36, female	Tynemouth	June, 2012
36. Darren	38, male	Tynemouth	June, 2012
37. Jeanne	29, female	Gateshead	May, 2012
38. Alan	30, male	Alnwick	July, 2012
39. Tony	38, male	Alnwick	July, 2011
40. Mick	27, male	Sunderland	March, 2012
41. Paxi	27, male	Leeds	August, 2012
42. Tom	68, male	Leeds	August, 2012
43. Lullabelle	28, female	Leeds	August, 2011
44. Nick	50, male	Alnwick	July, 2012

45. Debbie	43 ,female	Online Forum	April, 2012
46. Phil	28 ,male	Online Forum	May, 2011
47. Colin	43 ,male	Online Forum	April, 2013
48. Andy	50 ,male	Online Forum	June, 2012
49. Kemal	30 ,male	Online Forum	May, 2011
50. Scott	27 ,male	Online Forum	June, 2011
51. Luke	39 ,male	Online Forum	June, 2011
52. Baza	32 ,male	Online Forum	June, 2012
53. Will	26, male	Online Forum	May, 2011

APPENDIX 12

See Chapter (5) Velocity and Time for initial developments of the recent publication.

Wilson, S and Hannam, K (2017), 'The Frictions of Slow Tourism Mobilities: Conceptualising campervan travel' *Annals of Tourism Research*, pp. 25-36.

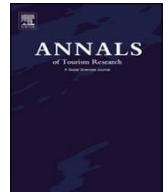
Annals of Tourism Research 67 (2017) 25–36



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The frictions of slow tourism mobilities: Conceptualising campervan travel



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abstract

This paper discusses the materialities of campervan travel as a relatively 'slow' form of tourism mobilities. The research is based upon qualitative research with campervan owners and users in the UK. Previous research has emphasised notions of freedom associated with campervan travel and how it has developed its own subculture. However, we seek to move beyond this to examine the frictions of socially and physically embodied practices of campervan travel in order to address the call for more multi-sensory understandings of tourism mobilities. In our discussion of campervan travel, mobility is understood as intensities of circulations, uncertainties and relational affects where different aspects of friction are central. We conclude by discussing the campervan in relation to wider aspects of slow travel.

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Introduction

In his reflections on the materialities of his own travel with a VW (Volkswagen) Campervan called ‘Rosie’, the cultural geographer Phil Crang (2013: 277) notes that “It’s an old van and it doesn’t go very fast,” but significantly it is a “fragment of material culture” (280) that plays a role in the construction of his own social identity. Although he is ambivalent about his ownership of this vehicle, he emphasises that his campervan is not just a symbolic appendage but somewhere and something that has relations with his family as users: “It does things, we do things with it, and it does things to us” (283). Indeed, Southerton, Shove, Warde, and Deem (2001, 5.4) have illustrated how the practices of caravanning involves in situ physical constraints that delimit social worlds but also that caravans are more than simply objects: “they may also set the stage, defining challenges and dilemmas as well as favouring or enforcing certain forms of action.” As Sherry Turkle (2007) has noted such objects or machines are things we think with and think in and which we grow to love as emotional and embodied appendages. In this paper we develop these insights by discussing the materialities of campervan travel as a relatively ‘slow’ form of tourism mobilities. In particular, we seek to analyse the sociotechnical frictions involved in campervan travel instead of the specific sites of caravanning (on the latter see Blichfeldt, 2009).

Sheller and Urry (2000, 747) have argued that the car may be restrictive in comparison to the environmental sensations other forms of mobility such as train travel may offer. They argued that as the car acts as a form of ‘dwelling at speed’ individuals may lose the opportunity to attain a variety of experiences which include the “the sights, sounds, tastes, temperatures and smells of the city” which are consequently transformed into a delimited experience due to the enclosed space they

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travel in. In contrast we argue that campervan travel and the frictions that this form of relatively restricted dwelling-in- motion entails affords more rather than less environmental experiences. The paper develops a novel theoretical point, namely the concept of friction which has hitherto been understood as primarily in terms of its symbolic or its material consequences. Hence our objective is to develop the concept of friction as a multi-sensory and embodied aspect of travel (using the context of the VW campervan).

Previous research has emphasised notions of freedom associated with campervan travel and how it has developed its own subculture (Caldicott, Scherrer, & Jenkins, 2014; Kearns, Collins, & Bates, 2016). In the Australian context, the proliferation of campervans has become a significant element of backpacker tourists, more elderly ‘grey nomads’ and also Chinese tourists renting campervans all of whom seek intimacy and sociality on the move (Jones & Selwood, 2012; Redshaw, 2017; Wu & Pearce, 2014). Indeed, a vehicle as a place to ‘dwell in’ is related to concepts of home and privacy (Urry, 2000). The related literature on caravanning holidays attests to the wider significance of having a home on the move (see Mikkelsen & Cohen, 2015). However, we seek to move beyond this to examine the frictions of the physical and socially embodied practices of campervan travel in order to address the call for more research into the multi-sensory practices of tourism mobilities (De Souza Bispo, 2016; Hannam, Butler, & Paris, 2014; Jensen, Scarles, & Cohen, 2015; Lamers, Van der Duim, & Spaargeren, 2017; Roy & Hannam, 2013).

Whilst modern vehicles are capable of moving at high speeds, the ‘classic’ VW campervan in contrast rarely exceeds 40 mph at peak acceleration. The relative ‘sluggishness’ of the vehicle has prompted discussion about the consequences of unhurried mobility on fast paced highways. As noted by Fullagar, Markwell, and Wilson (2012) ‘slow travellers’ in a ‘fast world’ have chosen to control the rhythm of their

lives and in doing so subvert the dominant ‘cult of speed’. Yet as tourists and leisure users attempt to use the campervan for autonomous pursuits as an expression of symbolic material freedom and identity, the challenges encountered by the campervan as ‘home’ as it takes to the road challenges such freedoms due to its unpredictability, discomfort and frictions.

Conceptualising mobile practices of friction

Theories of mobile practices have been developed in order to help us understand the ways in which people know the world without knowing it, the multi-sensual practices and experiences of everyday life as such proposes a post-humanistic approach to the understanding of social life (Hannam et al., 2006). As Peter Adey (2010, 149) notes: “[t]his is an approach which is not limited to representational thinking and feeling, but a different sort of thinking feeling altogether. It is a recognition that everyday mobilities such as walking or dancing involve various combinations of thought, action, feeling and articulation.” Mobilities research thus examines the embodied nature and experience of different modes of travel, seeing these modes in part as forms of material and sociable dwelling in motion, places of and for various activities including the various immobilities and moorings that ensue (Hannam et al., 2006) From a mobilities perspective, the concept of ‘friction’ can be seen not just as a metaphor but also as an integral concept for understanding the social and cultural relations in practices of mobility and immobility (Cresswell, 2013).

In her ethnographic work in Indonesia, Anna Tsing (2005, 6) has developed the concept of cultural friction which she argues informs “motion, offering it different meanings. Coercion and frustration join freedom as motion is socially informed”. She emphasises that various cultural frictions occur due to processes of globalization leading to immobilities even as people and things are set in motion (Salazar & Smart, 2011). She notes that “[a]s a metaphorical image, friction reminds us that heterogeneous and unequal encounters can lead to new arrangements of culture and power” (Tsing, 2006, 5). Tim Cresswell (2013, 108), meanwhile, has argued that friction is also embodied: “Friction ... is a social and cultural phenomenon that is lived and felt ... The significance of friction is in the way it draws our attention to the way in which people, things and ideas are slowed down or stopped.” He emphasises the way in which friction is felt in terms of slowing down the speed of mobilities which has consequences for those who have the power to do so. Such embodied frictions can also be related to the frictions involved in transport use.

In his conceptualisation of friction in terms of transport use, Thomas Birtchnell (2016, 88) has argued that:

The reduction in friction through motorized transport has implications for automobile adoptees in the form of more convenient and comfortable travel and consequently for societies too in the design of cities to accommodate road traffic, the support for commuting and suburban living and the establishment of automobile use as a social norm. Automobiles are ubiquitous because they reduce friction.

Birtchnell (2016) thus emphasises the material aspects of friction and the ways in which vehicles *may reduce friction* in so far as they enable various social freedoms (commuting and so on) to be practiced. But, as we shall see, in the example of the campervan, not all vehicles reduce friction. Frictions can be created and are felt through the relations involved in slowing down (Vannini, 2013). Friction should thus be conceptualised as simultaneously physical, cultural, discursive, material, embodied and suffused with dynamic power relations. In this paper we seek to demonstrate how the use of slow campervan travel emphasises these myriad frictions.

Unlike transport that cushions its passengers from the impacts of speed, weather, objects and so on, campervans (which are frequently 50 or more years old) are subject to physical geographies such as meteorological forces, driving surfaces as well as social geographies such as the influence of other vehicle users in ways that more modern vehicles are not. Hence,

in this paper we discuss the nature of such frictions from the experience of campervan users in terms of the embodied experiences and material practices of such users as they become immersed in the nexus of physical and social mobilities.

Whilst the campervan is technically a slow mode of transport, we argue that it produces multiple trajectories as it traverses through space and time. Whilst 40 mph may be shown on the vehicles speedometer, it is suggested that not all velocities are observable in their own right and may be understood as material impacts that reveal themselves as other velocities (speed of light, weather, blood circulation, terrain and so on) and so contribute equally to motion affects. In other words, the multiple velocities inherent in this particular mobility form are considered as substantive elements or vectors in the narrative of movement, so they have to be addressed not as singularities but as pluralities of dispositions or as an assemblage. In our discussion of campervan travel, mobility is understood not as a linear trajectory but as intensities of circulations, uncertainties and relational affects where friction is central: “an ambiguous, two-sided form of relative stillness that is both impeding mobility and enabling it” (Cresswell, 2013, 109).

Automobilities and slow travel

Automobility has been conceptualised as the simultaneous achievement of autonomy and mobility in contemporary society (Featherstone, 2004). Indeed social scientists have frequently portrayed the car as the “avatar of mobility” (Thrift, 1996: 272), or as a “universal” symbol of movement (Böhm, Jones, Land, & Paterson, 2006: 5). The historical benefits of automobility have been well documented in academic literature, particularly from a Western vantage point in terms of driving being a leisure pursuit (Law, 2014; Miller, 2001). A focus on automobility allows us to critique the often unproblematised discourses and practices of ‘freedom’ implied by driving for leisure (Freudendal-Pedersen, 2009; Hannam, 2016). As Sager (2006: 465) argues: “Freedom as mobility is composed both of opportunities to travel when and where one pleases and of the feasibility of the choice not to travel.” The car’s ability to provide both feelings of control and a sense of freedom have become dominant in most Western and Westernised societies (Freudendal-Pedersen, 2009). As Urry (2004: 28) has suggested, “cars extend where people can go to and hence what they are literally able to do.” Hannam (2016) has further examined the gendered dimensions of driving in the context of Saudi Arabia, noting the relative freedoms and unfreedoms associated with different driving practices.

Automobility offers a range of benefits for users. Cars are seen to be a more reliable alternative to other modes of travel and provides flexibility as well as 24-h availability (Urry, 2004). Collin-Lange and Benediktsson’s (2011) research on the automobilities of young Icelandic motorists noted that many chose to use cars due to the perception that public modes of transport were inefficient and unreliable. Thus there has developed a discourse of reliability associated with the power of the motor car against other modes of transport. Conversely, Larsen (2001) argues that although trains were responsible for the initial mobilisation of tourists in the 19th century, the car has now taken over as it provides a greater sensation of unpredictability via the experience of the open road: it allows users to change their routes at will. This is in contrast to the perceived relative rigid and freedom restricting sense of railway travel which may limit detours and ad hoc stops (although rail travel has its own rhythms – see Jensen et al., 2015; Roy & Hannam, 2013). In contrast to the car then, public transportation is predominantly deemed to be both “inflexible” and “fragmented” in terms of accessibility (Urry, 2004: 29). Moreover, Beckmann (2001: 598) has argued that cars can offer tourists access to ‘car only sights’ that exist in peripheral or rural locations inaccessible to public transport.

Beckmann (2001: 598) has further suggested that society’s increasing usage of motor vehicles has transformed roads to become “grounds of battle”, as space is increasingly contested. Thus automobility may not only instigate feelings of freedom and adventure but also promote a range of negative emotions such as fear, frustration, envy, anger, or distress (Sheller, 2004). Indeed, the car’s promise of freedom and adventure can be ironically hindered by other road users through the different and even dangerous driving techniques of other drivers (Butler & Hannam, 2013). Butler and Hannam (2013) also observed that although expatriate car users would often be referred to their motor vehicles as being ‘essential,’ ‘must-haves,’

or even ‘life savers’, many reported that their journeys frequently involved severe periods of immobility due to congestion.

The multi-sensory feelings that people can have towards their vehicles is captured by Mimi Sheller (2004) who writes about ‘automotive emotions’; or feelings towards cars. In a close examination of automobile cultures she proposes that car consumption is not only about rational and economic logic, but also aesthetic, sensory and kinesthetic responses to driving. She also points out that familial, regional and national patterns of mobility are driven by personal and ‘internal’ psycho-logical dispositions and preferences as emotional geographies of driving shaped by the character of transport choices. In addition as Sheller (2004: 106) also suggests drivers do not simply move around but are “produced by movement where both of the senses and the body” become part of it. So through immersion, the ‘autopoietic automobility’ of owners travelling at reduced speed on highways can lead to a particular mobile sense of place. Germann Molz (2009: 271) also adds that “Certain values come to be associated with stillness, slowness and speed.” Based on this premise, automobility is understood to be more than just about moving from point A to point B through various spaces, but is arguably also set of social practices, embodied dispositions and physical affordances. (Sheller, 2004).

The emotional approach to slow travel, meanwhile, has been exemplified in the work of the experience of ferries (Vannini, 2011), rickshaws (Wong, 2006) walking (Lorimer & Lund, 2003) and cycling (Spinney, 2009) and train travel (Roy & Hannam, 2013) amongst others. Bissell and Fuller (2011) remind us that space may be subject to turbulence such that anything that moves at a reduced pace gets ‘in the way’ of systems designed for speedy transitions. Taking inspiration from these authors who consider the emotional intensities of travel, we examine VW Campervan mobilities where both material and immaterial forces. i.e emotions and imaginaries as well as physical attributes such as weather conditions, other vehicles, road architecture impact on the experience of slow travel.

Methodology

To consider the relations of slowness in campervan travel, a range of qualitative methods were used to develop what Kincheloe (2001) describes as a bricolage of data that challenge the institutional principles of archetypal ‘fields’ of normal anthropological practice. Whilst traditional collection techniques were used, more imaginative practices of photography, drawing, filmmaking, vox-pop interviews and audio stories made significant contributions to the data collection developing a more sensuous ethnography (Paterson, 2009; Stoller, 1997). Indeed Stoller (1997: xvii) has argued that social science research needs to attend to sensuous descriptions to improve ethnographic narratives but to also examine power relations and rethink the previously held positions of the researchers:

Sensuous ethnography ... creates a set of instabilities for the ethnographer. To accept sensuousness in scholarship is to eject the conceit of control in which mind and body, self and other are considered separate.

Hence one of the authors of this paper engaged in such sensuous ethnographic practices by using a VW Campervan throughout the data collection period. As Pink (2007: 247) has argued, such an embodied sensuous approach to data collection can help us to understand how “people constitute both their self identities and place through their multisensory embodied experience.”

Data collection included making a digital film whilst driving to campervan festivals. This audio-visual work helped to capture the embodied experience of travel as an auto-ethnographic account and was subsequently interpreted along with a field diary of observations. This also involved interviews of 53 respondents in order to understand the narratives of VW campervan owners at festivals in the North of England and Scotland. The field visits were undertaken over a two year period from July 2011 to July 2013 with most events lasting three days visited consecutively.

A total of 53 campervan owners and two families who had hired a campervan participated in the research (for demographics see Table 1 below). Out of those involved, 35 were male whilst 18 were female. Whilst effort was made to attain an equal gender split, there was a masculine bias within the VW campervan community. In terms of the participant’s ages, 25% were aged 20–29, 40% 30–39, 20% 40–49 and the

remaining 15% over 50. This reflected the age range of the wider campervan community. Furthermore, the respondents were predominantly of a white working class background, although approximately 15% attendees could be described as middle class based upon their occupations. Only one British Afro-Caribbean was interviewed and generally VW Campervan festivals were not multicultural, albeit due to their family orientated atmosphere they were open to diverse audiences and thus appeared inclusive to those who owned a VW Campervan. Approximately two thirds of the respondents appeared as heterosexual family units often with children of various ages, albeit teenagers were less prevalent than toddlers and pre-teenage children. Children were not interviewed for ethical reasons but participants often mentioned them in recollections of their experiences. Out of the 53 participants 18 undertook indepth semi structured interviews as audio recordings or as video vox-pops, 11 filled in question booklets and posted them back to the researcher, other participants commented to questions on an online forum and further data was captured out in the field through a range of informal conversations (for further elaboration on the ethics of the research undertaken see Wilson 2014).

Discussion: Mapping the frictions of campervan mobilities

In the diagram Fig. 1 below the external vectors V1 Gradients, V2 Weather, V3 Surfaces and V4 Other Vehicles are represented. In the subsequent discussion these vectors are analysed in terms of how they affect campervan travel through different types of friction.

The diagram shows the external forces identified as instrumental in shaping VW campervan practices. The first frictions are *gradients* (V1) described as degrees of inclination relative to the horizontal plane. These ratios of decline and incline can be said to impact on vehicles passing through the contours of the landscape. *Weather* (V2) is also acknowledged as an important effect of interferences of high and low pressure, rain, snow, hail, high temperatures that take charge of mobility in different ways. The next friction is the affect *Surfaces* (V3) have on the vehicles ability to navigate traction, slippage and resistance and to adjust velocities accordingly. Finally *Other Vehicles* (V4) occupy the road and to some extent mediate movements when they obstruct, avoid, fall apart or react to the vehicle. In other words in accounting for the four frictions of travel mentioned above as the VW campervan travels on roads they are subjected to a number of influences seen and unseen, some of which have overt impacts on speed, whilst others are part of the atmosphere or invisible but potentially effectual. Although this diagram is by no means an exhaustive illustration of all the frictional forces that could potentially interface with the campervan vehicle as it moves, these vectors are drawn from the narratives of the research participants as a starting point for a discussion of the effects of friction on slow tourism.

Table 1
Table of interviewees demographics, location and date of interview.

Interviewee number/pseudonym	Age and Gender	Location of Interview	Date of Interview
1. Sonja	45, female	Druridge Bay	June 2012
2. Bob	57, male	Redcar	May 2011
3. Craig	34, male	Alnwick	July 2012
4. Jenny	50, female	Leeds	August 2012
5. Amanda	30, female	Gateshead	June 2012
6. Gilly	41, female	Leeds	August 2012
7. Margaret	48, female	Redcar	May 2012
8. Kenny	40, male	Alnwick	July 2012
9. Stephen	36, male	Leeds	August 2011
10. Angela	39, female	Leeds	August 2012
11. Bridget	45, female	Leeds	August 2011
12. Dave	33, male	Redcar	May 2011
13. Peter	31, male	Redcar	May 2011
14. Jane	37, male	Gateshead	June 2012
15. Joe	29, male	Redcar	June 2012
16. Bee	30, male	Online Forum	September 2012
17. James	29, male	Redcar	June 2011
18. Nick	45, male	Biggar	June 2011
19. Alex	31, male	Alnwick	July 2014
20. Grant	46, male	Biggar	June 2012
21. Michael	28, male	Newcastle	June 2012
22. Kevin	30, male	Biggar	June 2012

23. Jonny	50, male	Biggar	June 2011
24. Daisy	39, female	Biggar	June 2012
25. Maddison	27, male	Online Forum	August 2012
26. Ed	25, male	Leeds	August 2012
27. Simon	29, male	Online Forum	September 2011
28. Sara	42, female	Biggar	June 2012
29. Amelia	30, female	Gateshead	May 2011
30. Angie	36, female	Gateshead	May 2011
31. Dennis	65, male	Biggar	June 2011
32. Ken	67, male	Tynemouth	June 2012
33. Gary	41, male	Alnwick	July 2012
34. Maggie	35, female	Tynemouth	June 2012
35. Sharon, B	36, female	Tynemouth	June 2012
36. Darren	38, male	Tynemouth	June 2012
37. Jeanne	29, female	Gateshead	May 2012
38. Alan	30, male	Alnwick	July 2012
39. Tony	38, male	Alnwick	July 2011
40. Mick	27, male	Sunderland	March 2012
41. Paxi	27, male	Leeds	August 2012
42. Tom	68, male	Leeds	August 2012
43. Lullabelle	28, female	Leeds	August 2011
44. Nick	50, male	Alnwick	July 2012
45. Debbie	43, female	Online Forum	April 2012
46. Phil	28, male	Online Forum	May 2011
47. Colin	43, male	Online Forum	April 2013
48. Andy	50, male	Online Forum	June 2012
49. Kemal	30, male	Online Forum	May 2011
50. Scott	27, male	Online Forum	June 2011
51. Luke	39, male	Online Forum	June 2011
52. Baza	32, male	Online Forum	June 2012
53. Will	26, male	Online Forum	May 2011

Gradients

The first friction to be discussed is gravity's effect felt as the weight of a body, pulling down towards the centre of the earth. In this case the specific weight of the VW campervan affects how the vehicle moves. This is a relevant consideration because the VW campervan is cumbersome and it moves more slowly than modern cars due to its relatively heavy body weight in relation to its engine. Thus this mobile unit is not capable of fast acceleration. External drag factors have more impact, i.e the relations between motion and stop are materialised by the specificities of the moving van in terms of sluggishness and delay due to its relative weight. The vehicles torpidity also has other ramifications, as it is not just a physical expression of its battle against the natural elements; as the earth tries to draw the object back towards the soil, but it is also as a metaphor for the ideology of the 'slow'.

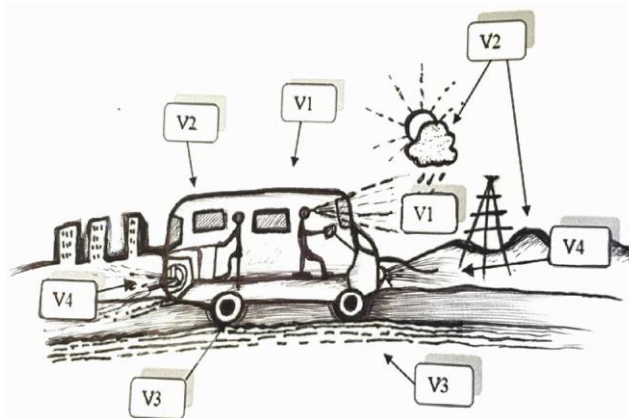


Fig. 1. Author research diagram.

One participant in this study for example was recorded to comically celebrate the difficulty their small engine had pulling a heavy load up a steep incline. In other words the fact it was this gradient affect that

was part of the appeal of being in a campervan and embodied a personalization of the vehicle itself: Fig. 2



Fig. 2. Betty Boop themed VW Campervan.

Yeah you start talking to it. Come on Betty you can do it! (Laughs) You either get to the top or I'm going to beat you with a piece of wood! (laughs). It's funny the way you talk to them, but I wouldn't want it any other way mind you. (Peter, Campervan owner, 2011).

The following quote also shows how the campervan communicated with its owner via heat emanating through the chassis. The owner commented on how they also found difficulty in finding the right gear in order to overcome the incline, this ongoing struggle with the apparatus of the van they pointed out, was rarely faced in modern cars that handled the weight felt due to gravitational force with higher velocities:

I used to go off in this big van we called Torty, and one of us used to sit in the middle on the engine where it would get really hot (laughs) and the same VW thing, you couldn't get the gear right and you could hardly get up a hill. (Laughs) (Sonja, Campervan Owner, 2012).

Sonja further talked about being subjected to intense heat, a difficulty in using the gearing system and a reduced velocity on steep inclines. These sensations clearly changed the travel experience with affects particular to the age and strength of the campervan. Ironically most owners described these interferences as 'quirky', describing them with a sense of humour that alluded to some enjoyment derived from this felt frictions.

Michael and Amanda travelled together in the same campervan but described their experiences differently. One of them disliked the van's 'stickiness' whilst the other loved it. The following quote from Amanda suggested that different satisfactions on the trip could also determine how velocity was felt in relation to time dragging or being speeded up:

The idea was more wonderful than the reality of it. Whereas Michael was keen on sticking at it and see through those bad things so that we could have family holidays, as we are happier when we are on holiday. He was more willing to ride through those problems than I was but they stressed me out and the holiday flew over for him, whereas for me it usually dragged. (Amanda, campervan passenger, 2012).

According to Amanda's interpretation she felt that notion of time was perceived very differently by Michael than her. Amanda's interpretation of the 40 miles per hour journey was felt to be slower than Michael's. In other words whilst the couple were travelling together their own personal perceptions of time were defined by different feelings towards the van. Sheller (2004) has pointed out that different emotional registers are produced through variations in the embodied driving experience and that whilst some may find excitement and anticipation other may be fearful and anxious. What we find here, though is a sense of time as friction, time *drags* for Amanda. It is not just the material frictions of the road but the ways in which these create relations of slowness.

Weather

Temperature and humidity also affects the ambience of the campervan impacting on both the driver and vehicle. Campervans like all automobiles are subject to weather conditions however more modern vehicles are arguably more equipped to resist inclement weather. Because of the material and mechanical limitations in an old campervan, users often responded to meteorological interferences in innovative ways. The 'elderly' nature of the vehicle meant that campervan owners drove with care and attention and did not push their machines to the limit. Because many users cared for their vehicles by not 'over doing it', this had a bearing on how they then engaged in their velocities during adverse weather. In other words campervans were not driven with only utility in mind and it was found that owners were purposeful in reducing speed due to sensitivities towards the vans' own emotional 'feelings':

To be honest it's a rusty old bucket and if I put my foot down the old girl might drop to bits. I have to be careful with her otherwise she might get upset. (Bob, Campervan Owner, 2011).

As Miller (2001: 24) suggests “it is this highly visceral relationship between bodies of people and bodies of cars that forces us to acknowledge the humanity of the car in the first place”. Bob drove slowly because he imagined that the van may react ‘emotionally’ to being driven unnecessarily fast. It also implied that whilst the driver thinks practically about not damaging their engine, such attitudes are underpinned by an anthropomorphic interpretation of the vehicle that was manifested through a reduction in speed based upon its so called ‘humanness’: “Sometimes she rattles like a bucket o’ spanners in the back. Like it’s going to explode so I have to go carefully” (Bob, Campervan Owner, 2012). Because campervans have old mechanical parts when they accelerate often a clanking and rattling can be heard due to vibrations. Such sonic mobilities also shaped how owners responded with their driving habits and sensibilities as they reacted to the auditory aspects of campervan driving: “I tended to drive carefully and cautiously because I feared that my rattling van might start to dismantle itself. It was like screws and bolts were unwinding themselves as we went.” (Research Diary, 2012; Fig. 3 below).

Indeed, David Bissell (2010) has explored the importance of vibrations as a way of thinking about the uncertain and provisional connections between bodies, their travelling environments and the experience of movement. He argues that the study of such vibrations helps us to understand “the shape of body–technology assemblages [and] challenge us to think about different assemblages in terms of their capacity for absorption, diffusion and transmission” (Bissell, 2010, 479). In particular, he highlights how the routine of vibration through travel can afford embodied satisfaction: “[t]hrough vibration, once absent objects [such as the engineering of the vehicle] are made present” (Bissell, 2010, 482).



Fig. 3. Film Still, VW Campervan Speed Clock, Research Diary, 2012.

The basic engineering of the campervan in relation to how it pulls its weight, determines its ability to affect propulsion. How its shell is preserved in terms of ‘wear and tear’ is also an issue due to its age. Conversely, modern cars with light frames and turbo engines are able to challenge forces with their ability to push through them in a more dynamic way. The ‘slow’ mobility of the van due to its encumbering frame compared to the engine size makes it hard to drive and less resistant forces in and around it. Also the degradation of parts and paintwork is accelerated as outdoor elements attack aged metal. Therefore the sensations of the campervan object surging against external meteorological forces has the potential to be more ‘felt’ by the driver who is not cocooned in a high-tech pod:

Compared to my run-around car with power steering, especially when I was tired, I felt the weight of the van almost dragging along the road. The combination of its sluggishness with accompanying rattles of the mechanical bits made me feel at times that I was physically carrying the load myself. (Research Diary, 2011).

Other owners also acknowledged that the engine limitations and weight of the van affected its speed but this was, on the whole, felt to be part of the satisfaction of driving the campervan.

Ingold (2000: 97) has pointed out in his discussion of visual perception and the weather, how landscapes have in the past rarely been considered in terms of the effects of light associated with different meteorological conditions. In his essay he talks about how a dramatic shift in climatic conditions made for a short period the world look and feel completely different, despite him gazing at the same view. In this case not only does weather affect the relations of the van with the environment as it travels, but it can also have an effect on the emotions of drivers. Jonny (Campervan Owner, 2012) for example said on grey days he tended to drive even more slowly as the road had a

depressing ‘vibe’. Interestingly the opposite effect was experienced in the auto-ethnography undertaken:

I wanted to drive quickly just to get out of madness of window wipers swishing, poor visibility and the van being attacked by water. All the windows steamed up as well and with no air con, I had to drive one handed and try and swab the mist off the windscreen with the other. Torrential rain also disturbed the views outside and I wanted to go fast but was concerned that the van would slide around. (Research Diary, 2012, Fig. 4 below).

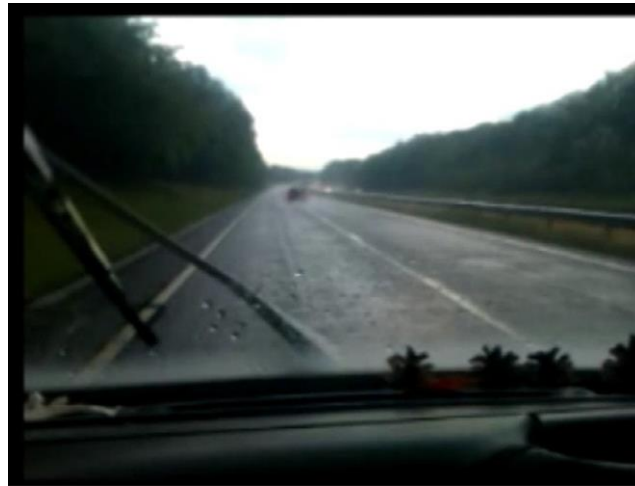


Fig. 4. Driving on the A69 in the rain, Research Diary, 2012.

However, VW campervan owner Amanda also commented that the weather affected their mobility as well as enjoyment of the trip as the vehicle leaked in water when it rained. She also said that she proceeded with caution because they felt quite vulnerable driving what seemed like a fragile vehicle. Yet whilst many of such challenges were potentially negative effects, many campervan users still convinced themselves that these downsides could be overcome, staying loyal to the brand.

Surfaces

Cresswell (2013: 109) argues that “forms of friction are defined by the relative mobilities of the surfaces and whether or not a conversion of energy happens, which typically results in heat, light or sound.” The vector ‘surfaces’ in our research diagram thus represents the tractions of surface textures encountered on roads by campervans as their technologies engage with the roads themselves. In mobilities research roads have been considered in terms of their production (Dalakoglou & Harvey, 2012) as well as the aesthetics of the relatively smooth surfaces of motorways (Merriman, 2009) yet little attention has been placed upon the embodied interactions between roads and different types of transport.

In terms of our research, observed conditions included smooth surfaces, tarmac, gravel tracks, muddy by-roads and park land which had been impacted by different weather conditions. Whilst these topographies usually only have minor consequences for the user in conventional modern transport, due to the old age and often fragile nature of the campervan in terms of how it moves across these different terrains is subject to adhesive frictions which contributed to its relative immobility compared with cars. Considerations included the physical weight of the vehicle pressing down on wheels and suspension and the relationship between vehicular speeds in relation to the abrasion of tyres rubbing against contrasting plains. The velocities produced were dependent on factors to do with how the campervan grips, holds and slides on the ground. The issue however was

not only the speed that owners were confident with when driving, but also how the changing textures of surfaces affected the experience of travel:

When I was at Druridge bay I parked by the lake on the grass. Unfortunately due to rain during the night, the next day the conditions were so wet, the van had to be towed away from the water's edge and back up the hill onto the farm track. (Research Diary, 2011).

Due to it being used as a holiday vehicle, campervans find themselves in challenging locations, muddy byroads, mountainous roads and busy motorways. This coupled with the volatility of weather meant that road surfaces would change dramatically in a short space of time. Due to these ongoing affects experienced as unknown probabilities both on and off the highway, they often resulted in campervan owners being anxious about their trips. Particularly in wet weather users worried if their campervans would manage to climb steep hills or if water might 'get into the engine'. Also as many Campervan festivals were outdoors, this meant that inclement weather would confine them to their vehicles on the campsite, so environmental conditions played a huge role in how users moved around. In the following quote the impacts of rain contributed to immobility and stillness:

It was cold and raining but it was fine. It just totally chucked it down with rain and it leaked everywhere and the awning leaked generally but, the bus leaked through the sunroof as well so the seals needed doing. There were things which caused problems and we could have had happy times but the stress it caused due to holes in it was just shit. ... If it was raining we would basically go out and find some indoor activity for the day like soft play which we could have done in Newcastle without the bloody bus anyway. (Amanda, VW Campervan – Owner-passenger, 2012).

Due to the age of their campervans, it was usual that they would have reoccurring faults allowing the inclement weather to seep into the vehicle. Water leaks, dangerous road surfaces and inconveniences caused by temperature complimented the holiday experience. In terms of navigation most campervan festivals were also held in fields, so rain also created difficulty in driving on and off site due to slippery and uneven coverings. Thus because more often than not the user was not as shielded from direct environmental conditions as with more modern forms of transport, participants became embedded within the environment by the ways in which they attempted to move with and through it. Thus surfaces of mobility and the tractions involved become significant both aesthetically and symbolically (mud on the campervan) as well as in terms of slowing down mobilities and enhancing the feel of the vehicle.

Other vehicles

The vector 'other vehicles' was concerned with analysing the relationship between the campervan and other vehicles. Vehicles moved in front and behind the VW campervan which caused it to be driven at a speed not always preferred by the driver. Thus how the road was populated with other vehicles was combined in an assemblage with the variable speed limits and the actual driving conditions, and determined a sense of pace. In simple terms; having other vehicles trailing behind or in front prompted an urgency to move faster, slower or to remain at a constant speed. Thus other drivers had a frictional effect on the speed and transmission of the VW campervan:

On my way I drove down a busy motorway. I had to dodge out of the way, try to keep up sometimes and other times pull in at a service station to have a rest from the hectic road. People seemed to hate me trundling along. I didn't mind the experience but it was at times quite stressful having to avoid what was a chaotic situation that wasn't relaxing. (Research Diary, 2011).

Yet whilst the effects of road occupation are not exclusive to VW campervans, they challenged conventional road behaviour in many respects due to their slowness, design and public reaction to them. Campervans also developed the sociality of the road in ways that conventional cars do not by virtue of the ways owners engaged with each other through their vehicles. Hence, it

was not only the speed of the vehicles on the road that set velocity, but interpretations of the spaces of other drivers. For example when campervan users acknowledged each other in waving, smiling or beeping their horns, startled reactions from other drivers led to changes in velocity.

Some campervan users also actively ‘chased’ other campervan drivers, hurrying to catch them up so they could connect:

I mean we get waved at by normal cars never mind other VW campervans, Scarlet (6 year old) loves that in the front. Simon (partner) keeps saying stop waving at people (laughs) (Gilly, VW Campervan Passenger, 2012).

Whilst some car drivers avoided this sociality of the road, most made a point of reciprocating reactions from other VW users, changing their driving tactics to suit:

People do beep at you and wave and it makes people smile. We sometimes get carried away and flash our lights at them as well (Margaret, VW campervan owner, 2010).

Usually road users only signaled in anticipation of perceived danger, the VW campervan promoted reactions that promoted alternative ways of ‘being’ with people on the move. On the other hand, some respondents highlighted some negative reactions from other vehicle users:

Well we have had the opposite as well. We have [people] going ‘Get out of the way you stupid hippies’. We did have extremes um, people beeping but ‘Get out the ... way, slow coaches you ... hippies’ (Amanda, VW campervan passenger, 2012).

Their response to negative public reaction was to actually speed up to avoid further social friction. On other occasions campervan users showed an indifference and ignored the gestures of others and continued at a ‘slow’ pace in order to ‘relax’ on the road:

De-stressing after a week of work and inwardly laughing at the big cars flying past trying to get where they want to be because they get less time to spend in their car we are the opposite, ours is a pleasure to be in so we take our time. (Kenny, VW campervan owner, 2012).

Kenny maintained that a ‘slow’ choice allowed for a more enjoyable road experience. He implied that the VW campervan unlike cars were designed to be ‘lived’ in whilst cars were not. He also expressed smugness about the value of travelling using more time in contrast to conventional road users that seek speed. Ultimately, the frictions of sociality of the road transform the way VW campervan users constructed their identities and their mobilities.

Conclusions

This paper has considered the embodiment of campervan travel through the frictions of various material mobilities. By considering this ‘slow’ vehicle not only moving on the linear trajectory of A-to B, but as part of a fragile and volatile assemblage ‘rubbing against’ various unstable vectors, it is argued that whilst observable at 40mph it contains, absorbs and produces multiple frictions. In other words as the driver- vehicle assemblage materialises velocity, the kinaesthetic and emotive ‘driving body’ aligns or retracts from adhesive surfaces, weather conditions, mechanical turbulence and other drivers to sense different aspects of mobilities.

According to Dickinson and Lumsdon (2010: 78) travelling at a slow pace and engaging with places along the way is by no means an innovation. Indeed prior to widespread car travel much of tourism was slow. Travel on foot, horse, stagecoach and ship led to limited speeds due to various frictions. The contemporary idea of ‘slowness’ though also embodies the importance of the travel experience to and within a destination, as patrimony and culture at a slower pace supports the environment (Dickinson, 2010). With the sociability of travel emerging as a critical context, Urry (2007) also adds that even something as simple as travelling to commune with others also engages in the slow travel itineraries as people stop, socialise and inhabit places. Nevertheless, as Vannini (2013) has argued: “A profitable way to understand slowing down as an effort, as an accomplishment, is not only by understanding it relationally, but also by understanding it contextually and phenomenologically. Moving slower or moving faster is something that must be apprehended as an

embodied sensation and performance.” In this paper we have sought to understand the frictions of campervan travel and its slowness as a multi-sensory and embodied aspect of contemporary mobilities.

Hajer (1999) has emphasised the importance a ‘zero-friction society discourse’ has had on urban planning and attributes this to the ubiquity of the automobile (Birtchnell, 2016). However our discussion of the campervan also points to a form of travel that highlights the ambivalence of the notion of freedom that is associated with automobilities (Freudendal-Pedersen, 2009). Whilst understandings of friction as a metaphor for the reduction of distance are well known in the geographical and mobilities literature, we have argued that friction needs to be conceptualised by both its social and physical characteristics in order for the materialities of tourism to be further understood.

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