‘Researching connectivity in everyday lives: networks, resources and methods’

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1. Connectivity of the physical movement and how we achieve connectivity
   • Weaving together
     – the provision – the collective resources provided by state and private agencies for public use and
     – the social practice of walking and managing relationships
     – Specifically in terms of resources want to look at the skills and competencies demonstrated by
       individuals when walking and
     – skills of managing social networks that inherent in that
     – and ask: does provision for walking impose burdens on some communities but not others?
     – Patterns of inequality in burden

2. but also internet connectivity
   • Weaving together walking provision, walking competencies, network competencies and mobile technology for internet access
     – ask questions of Web2.0 applications and social traffic
Argument/background and context

• Informed by premise that travel is an embodied social practice situated in time-spaces that are complex and inform, enable and constrain and that as one travels the structures of opportunity to meet others, access services, etc change and that patterns of opportunity cannot be presumed to be the same for every community.

• Informed by premise that (in)equity is both a social construct and a lived experience.

• A presumption that those participating in the study are skilled and knowledgeable both discursively and tacitly about their social activities.

• Informed by Willis’ (1977) Grieco (1996) focus on learning from others, skilling together, informal learning.

• Informed by Goffman’s studies of interaction and the importance of co-presence for communication.

• Foucault and Willis on forms of resistance: resistance through routine, subversion.

• Castells informs discussion arguing new forms of sociality built on networked practices that cannot presume equal access.
Argument/background and context

• Informed by theories of the construction of gender and the importance of ‘the public and the private’ and embodiment in understanding that construction. Gendered space involves processes of exclusion and studies have shown women to be extremely skilled in the negotiation of space and articulate in expressing those processes.

• Competencies are dynamic and situated and it can be argued that competencies for negotiating mobilities (Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2006) are developing and changing as mobility patterns, communication technologies and social organisation are changing.

• Walking is significant way of travel for many communities and often those without who are poor yet relatively underfunded in transport sector

• Enriching traditional concern of transport research of travel behaviour, by focus on social networks and patterns of encounters when walking. Problematising social networks in understanding travel; and within transport studies and policy-making, and reducing risks associated with an over-reliance on the monetisation of travel benefits and disbenefits and a concomitant lack of knowledge about the social resources involved in travel and the positive aspects of travel
• Encounters and routine in time and space
  – Routinised nature of everyday life
  – Synchronicity to perform integratively with others
  – Iterative nature of activities
  – Paths in time and space
• Encounters and interaction
  – Fleeting and protracted
  – Competencies to make paths
• The competencies of encounters
  – Repertoire of competencies
• Encounters and travel
  – Making and shaping paths – management of encounters
  – Inherent connection between travelling and encounters as everyday practice
Methodology

- Description of data layers
  - Using GoogleEarth map
  - Recorded routes used in walking interview survey of 19 People recorded over period of months for particular spatial area
  - What does this show?
    - Structures of encounters
    - Densities
    - Centrality of certain areas
    - Landmarks
    - Ranges and scales
    - Path densities
- Mixing qn and ql data to provide picture
- Crime data for the neighbourhood beat level for selected crimes
Map: base layer
• Memory and skill collectively held in social network
• Collective skill: process and product of memory, knowledge and performance interdependencies in a social group
• Collective skilling: requires synchronisation of practice frameworks – sharing a memory
• Experiencing together is skilling together: learning new skills, in similar conditions can swap roles, perform different actions and use different skills
• For example: group of parents teaching children to cross the road. The patient building of skills and sharing of knowledge and communicating how to negotiate traffic with youngsters and the exchange of skills and strategies among the adult carers provides a framework for the learning of travel competencies, creates a behavioural path enacted in a learnable environment and is an example of collective memory
• Rehearsal of practice requires synchronisation which is the outcome of iterative opportunity and proximity and duration
‘Vigilances’: reading structures of encounterability

• The skills of spotting others and reading environment to reduce danger
• Skills of choosing paths to avoid pursuit
• Travelling with others to provide better ‘scanning’; to share vigilance skills
  – Example: you’d turn and do another turn to get away
  – Example: places you wouldn’t go: the park because it is dark and stories circulate that crimes have been committed there
  – Example: Travelling together in stretch limousine for night out
Visual sociology: recording the visual signals in travel behaviour

- Landmarking
  - Visual and other cues
  - Spatial arrangement
    - Sequences or strings of buildings

- Coordinating
  - Using mobile telephony to refine and change location and to meet ‘on the move’ – in the bus or on the path

- Naming
  - Names, nicknames, disused and discontinued names
  - Transition of names across domain
  - Reducing strangeness and giving sense of familiarity

- Example: meeting in the park, it’s big and it’s a hub for people from a variety of communities within the city. So say which part of the park you are in and then use your mobiles
Landmarks: participants
• Skill of managing time and space

• Coordinating dependent’s schedules
  – Active pattern of juggling time and keeping appointments
  – Walking and childcare
  – Example of mother organising household maintenance tasks (shopping) and provision for pre-schooling and childcare (specifically nap-time) across two children, distances and time: I go shopping before collecting elder child from nursery to avoid the conversation in the supermarket about what that child can have or not have and to manage child’s levels of energy and tiredness
  – Example of mother arranging younger child’s nursery to suit elder child’s primary school and to avoid contact with certain other persons
Route recorded
Messages from the environment: barriers, boundaries and bereft spaces

• Read the environment: its form, fabric, history and the way it is being used by others
  – Traffic puts us off walking
  – Example: walk path chosen be with the traffic and not against
  – Example: walk path chosen to be away from traffic altogether
  – Darkness influences path chosen and constrains choice
  – Annual patterns of daylight hours affects paths chosen
  – Social isolation
    • Puts people off a space
    • Scarcity of others makes us scan for others who are ‘okay’
    • Example of little dark bit that is frequented by aggressively behaving others and thus avoided
Social expectations on the journey: the entitlement to communication

- Facework
- Social synchronicity of the body
- Negotiating entitlement to talk
  - Iterative opportunity to talk, Opening, closing, prolonging or sustaining of an encounter to become something more and to be acknowledged is important for changing strangers into familiar faces and yourself into a familiar face to others, and is important travel survival skills
  - Examples: negotiation of initiation to manage encounter and make less dangerous
  - Example: Sitting outside in summer is social – creating opportunity and making familiar
  - Example: Locked out: feeling there is someone to turn to in emergency
  - Example: Gendered entering of public space, public houses. Women not talking to others in pubs
  - Example: not having friends on street making one feel down
  - Example: Wanting to buy because longevity/duration makes you feel you will build up relationship and belong
  - Example: influence behaviour of others using street
Mobile internet technologies: Social traffic

internet connectivity

Weaving together walking provision, walking competencies, network competencies and mobile technology for internet access

ask questions of Web2.0 applications and social traffic
• User generated: content, communities, optimization criteria and strategies for travelling
  – Initial initiatives were citizens data collecting include:
  – e.g., report a pot-hole,
  – http://www.fillthathole.org.uk/
  – pedestrian road risk register: user generated areas of avoidance

• Methods: Generating datasets on where, how, when and Contacts and services
Implications: Social equity

- Understanding connectivity through focus on sociality and time-spaces. Analysis of social practices and competencies to highlight processes of social reproduction and change recognizing individuals agency and power

- Implications for transport as a policy activity:

- Interaction between who walks, who has opportunity to, or not to walk and provision and investment in walking
  - Disjunct in planners’ provision and policy
    - Maps: Landmarking, Scales, Schedules, Information provision
    - Time-space organisation: different contours for different communities

- Interaction between walking, re-localisation, and participation: identity, social cohesion, social inclusion
Implications: Social equity

• Exacerbating existing patterns of inequality: gendered access

• New forms of sociality and new patterns of exclusion

• Appraisal methodologies
  – Appreciation of the social resource and potential

• Civic participation
  – Interaction of user generated content and policy or practitioners actions and decisions
  – Implications of user generated content and policy delivery
Implications and next steps

• Methodology for structures of encounterability
  – Encounters on different modes (e.g.,)
    • Regular commuting (iterative practices of travelling on rail)
    • Group travel over distances: working class package holidays

• Design research to investigate actors’ perceptions of structures of encounterability
  – Transport history; Social networks and migration;
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