

CAR *Busters*

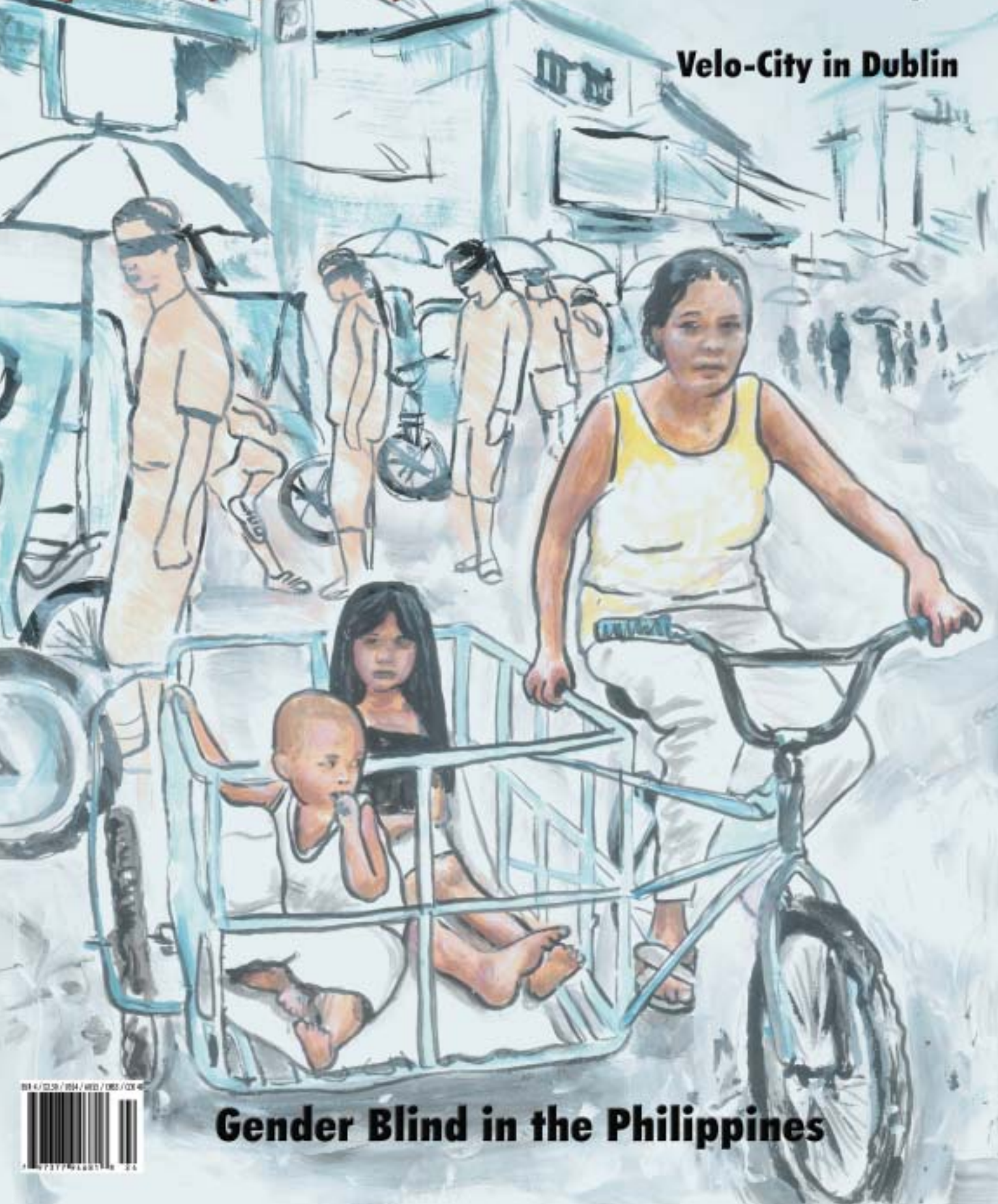
N°24

Dutch Street Playing Day

Highway Building in France

Filmmakers in Azerbaijan

Velo-City in Dublin



Gender Blind in the Philippines



CAR Busters

Editorial Collective:

Tanja Eskola, Randy Ghent,
Steven Logan, Stephan von
Pohl, Gandalf Tötting

Other WCN Staff:

Arie Farnam (Fundraiser),
Roeland Kuijper (EVS intern),
Lucie Lébrová (Office Manager)

Contributing Writers:

Bridget Brown, Roselle Leah K.
Rivera, Mokai, Anna Semlyen,
Rob Zverina

Contributing Artists:

Adriana de Barros, Markus
Biehal, Ken Avidor

Please send subscriptions, letters,
articles, artwork, photos, feedback
and your life's savings to:

Car Busters, Krátká 26
100 00 Prague 10, Czech Rep.
tel: +(420) 274-810-849
fax: +(420) 274-772-017
info@carbusters.org
www.carbusters.org

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Adriana de Barros is an artist, writer, and
poet. She works as an advertising and web
designer in Caldas da Rainha, Portugal.



Introduction:

On the Junk Heap

The automobile—the stalwart of American culture in the 20th century—is heading for the junkyard. Well not exactly, but Standard and Poor's, an independent provider of credit ratings, has reduced the credit ratings of GM and Ford to junk status, which is basically a public proclamation that the companies are not worth the trouble of investing in.

GM took a US\$1.1 billion loss in the first quarter of 2005 and has been unprofitable in Europe since 1999. Although GM continues to churn out new SUVs, their sales are plummeting—the delusional gasps of a crumbling empire.

Ford's performance is “extremely volatile and unpredictable” says Standard and Poor's. (Of course, the situation could be righted if it would “roll back its health care benefits,” but that pesky union is unlikely to budge.)

Although much of GM and Ford's poor performance are due to increased competitiveness from other car companies, we like the metaphor of junk status. It is becoming clearer that the car is no longer the status symbol it once was. It just isn't cool to drive an SUV anymore and one should wager that in a few years' time, it will come to be seen as a ridiculous *fauv* status symbol and go the way of the macho muscle Camero of the 1970s.

The car culture is losing its grip. In European countries, people are beginning to see a car more as something that might be used for a few necessary journeys, but otherwise the bicycle, tram and metro systems suit people fine, where infrastructure is built to support them.

However, as past *Car Busters* articles on China and Bangladesh, and now in this issue, the Philippines, have shown, car companies are increasingly setting their eyes on unsaturated markets, where two wheels, and sometimes three, are still more popular than four.

And when everyone in Asia has a car? Will the car companies slowly wither away?

Before this happens, the carfree movement should forge diverse alliances with people who may never have heard of the word “carfree,” but whose two feet are still the primary means of transport. The problem lies in convincing people who never had a car to begin with that it is not worth getting one and that the social and ecological price is too high.

In countries like Bangladesh and the Philippines it is clear that the culture of the automobile is detrimental to those groups of people who cannot, and will never, own an automobile. Poor women are one of the worst affected by transport policies that do not take into consideration mother travelling with small

children, writes Roselle Rivera in this issue. These women do not have the luxury to pile their children into a station wagon.

Automobile-based planning not only discriminates against the people who choose not to own or drive a car, but also against poor segments of society who have no choice, but to get around without a car.

Farmers, who might never have heard of a carfree movement, see the damage that super highways can cause to their crops. In France, a group of farmers are battling a proposed super-highway. Their story is also told in this issue.

Every country has different reasons for trying to fend off a dominant car culture. And these reasons should be carefully considered when deciding at what rate and to what degree the car can be phased out of each society.

Across the world, there are signs that the impact of driving is out-weighing any benefits. There are few answers for traffic-clogged streets, and the question of how to fuel the world's hungry vehicles is often more important than how to feed the world's hungry people. Billions of dollars are wagered on unproven methods to fuel vehicles with non-petroleum sources, when there are things that can be done in the here and now.

The car is just not cool anymore. The statistics show that it does not deserve the hefty status symbols thrust upon it by a nation eager to move in faster, more costly ways.

In their advertisements, car companies reach blindly for more ridiculous associations with their product. Their cars are like leopards and tigers or a breath of fresh air.

The open road is a paradox in a traffic-clogged world.

The junk status of the original automobile powerhouses, GM and Ford, should be taken as a warning against governments that welcome the car industry into their countries. During the prosperous times, the car industry proudly proclaims it employs one out of every seven employees in the economy. But then we look at the massive layoffs at GM and Ford, which can do nothing to help the economy.

This issue presents a truly global effort at taking apart, piece by piece, the car culture. Aside from our usual offerings of news, action, studies and reviews, we visit France, the Philippines, The Netherlands, Azerbaijan, and Ireland in different articles that look at highway building, transport from the perspective of gender, street playing, pipelines and documentary filmmaking, and one big bike conference.

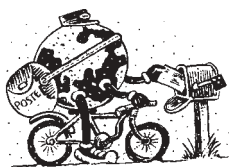
Car culture will be relegated to the junk heap of history.

—Steven Logan

World Carfree Day 2005 poster (designed by Tanja Eskola) can be downloaded from <http://www.worldcarfree.net/wcfd/> and customised to promote your local carfree September 22nd celebration.



Letters



Carfree, Not Pollution-Free

The Middle East's first carfree destination, called "The World," is under construction on a series of islands off the coast of Dubai. It is the world's

"first fully master-planned elite island retreat." Travel on and between the islands will be by ferry or through a network of walkways.

And sure, this particular development is carfree and there are no roads, but this is because everything is built on infill islands. If you look closer at An-Nakheel's publicity for the development,

than telling them how bad they are for driving, as this only serves to alienate.

It was with great pleasure that I saw that the Velo-city conference series was coming to Dublin. Here was a chance for the voice of the humble cyclist to be heard, but alas no, with astronomical attendance fees it was an occasion only for the great and the good. Could these apparatchiks hear the cry of the cyclists as the motor car once again encroaches on the coloured road that passes for cycle lanes in this delusional city?

I bumped into some people handing out your magazine while crooning a look at the proceedings of the conference. I must say I was a little put off by the title. The title *Car Busters* doesn't do justice to the insightful commentary contained within its pages. Any motorist would be affronted by this threat to their property, which after all they have paid lots of money for. Surely a more conciliatory, incremental approach is called for. Persuasion is a gentle art. Vitriol will only leave the activist on the sidelines preaching smugly to the converted. A magazine is invariably judged by its cover and the title *Car Busters* only speaks of anger rather than persuasion.

Frank Armstrong
Dublin, Ireland

Turn on the Air Conditioner!

I wanted to tell you about an outrageous news report I heard the other day on CBC radio. The latest results from Environment Canada and the Canadian government regarding deaths from exposure in different extreme climates were just released to the press. The big media splash was the very high number of deaths in the summer due to the combination of heat and smog.

The city is very concerned and right on top of matters. When the conditions are bad, the city will tell people to stay inside and issue hot weather warnings, it will put out a "drink water" advisory, and it will provide emergency areas throughout the city where people can go into air-conditioned buildings to cool down and drink water. And that was the end of the report. There was not one single reference to reducing smog, through reducing driving.

No one has the guts or balls or even the intelligence to tell people to stop driving!

Leah Lipszyc
Toronto, Canada

Pastor Needs a Bike

I'm a pastor. I would like to visit our church, but it is far away, and I can not go there. So please donate a bicycle to me.

Rev. Sheraz Siddique
Punjab, Pakistan

[Ed.: If there is anyone out there who would like to donate a bicycle to the Reverend, just contact us for the address.]

What About the Boards?

I am concerned that what your magazine is missing is skateboard-related articles and news.

Skateboarding in general and longboarding in particular are often overlooked when it comes to alternative personal transport. It's always about bikes. Bike this and bike that. When you, like I do, live in a very flat city longboarding is at least as effective as biking. If not more.

Anyway, the least you could do is to provide us boarders with some cool stickers. How about one saying: Four wheels never looked this good before.

You get the picture. To finish off on a more positive note, keep up the great work with making our cities livable for everyone.

Boardriders against cars.

Steve Novak

Melbourne, Australia

[Ed.: Although we have not covered skateboarding in-depth, we ran the above piece of subvertising on the back cover of *Car Busters* #10. Skateboarders are part of the life of any city street, occupying and transforming bland, concrete corporate spaces into playgrounds. We welcome any and all articles on the topic.]

you'll realise that normal transport in the archipelago is to be by private boat (i.e., petroleum-guzzling water borne equivalents of SUVs or worse).

And since this is intended as an elite playground destination, people will be flying in (and back out) by plane from their main digs in Europe, East Asia or the Americas or wherever else. And probably by private jets as often as not.

Christopher Miller
Washington DC, USA

The Art of Rosy Complexions

As a cyclist in Dublin I feel my mortality under threat with every trip as cars, trucks and buses rip by like giant fish above me in the food chain. The great automotive masses hurtle along while their owners wince as their muscles atrophy in their sedentary state. I feel so powerless, yet I must fight them in the only way possible—through the gentle art of persuasion.

So I tell all my friends (some of whom even drive to their gyms) to give up the car and take to the bike, but attempt to do so in a way that accentuates the positive aspects of cycling, like bulging leg muscles and rosy complexions, rather

Excited About Zero Pollution Vehicles?

Aside from tiny pockets (excluding progressive countries like Iceland and Sweden), there is very little interest in "green transportation." (In my opinion, there is lip service from the public only.)

Having attended electric vehicle and carfree festivals recently I am wondering if anybody (you?) might have an explanation, better yet, a solution, to getting the public excited about Zero Pollution Vehicles like electric bikes and scooters?

Although the carfree Commercial Drive festival was an unexpectedly huge success with 20,000 people attending, despite many other competing events in Vancouver, there was no information on how to get away from the fossil-fuel automobile. Many attendees I asked about this arrived in their cars! There were no carfree brochures or pamphlets. It was a first-ever event, and the massive crowds surprised everyone. The street was closed to traffic, for approximately seven blocks. [Ed.: See Action pages for more.]

Furthermore, there is little interest in two recent breakthrough developments in the last two years: Battery Revival (no need to recycle batteries, just revive them) and the 15-minute battery charge. The reason I say this is that the eBay listings for these didn't get any bidders, even though the seller has been successfully selling thousands of revived batteries on-line. (This battery revival technology should be used worldwide, not just Vancouver, and also works on wheelchair, hospital patient equipment as well as automobile batteries. If we can make recycling obsolete with battery revival, why don't non-governmental organisations take up this task, worldwide, since it generates positive cash flow, too?) Regarding the 15-minute charge technology, okay, so one individual bought the 15-minute plans, but he left a neutral feedback, suggesting that he didn't even bother to build the device. Another big yawn from that buyer who obviously didn't need the technology.


So, my question is, especially for the authors of *Divorce Your Car* and other carfree books and manuals: How can we get the public excited?

Well, to end on a positive note: The Commercial Drive carfree festival brought tons of smiles from people, especially those who tried out the funky choppers at the East Van Chopper Festival. The event coordinators are aiming for a carfree Sunday, every Sunday, on Commercial Drive. The merchants seem to be happy about it, which was a surprise to me. In addition, there were hundreds, if not thousands, of people who signed petitions to add a real bike lane (a wide one, closed to cars) on Commercial Drive. Most "bike lanes" in Vancouver are phony, in my opinion, when you compare them to Germany's, or even Toronto's bike lanes.


If I forgot to mention that the new tech process one-Bay, to revive lead-acid batteries, without the

Terracant

The all-new Terracant makes every day an adventure



The Terracant gives you the freedom to seize the moment



HYUNDA
Get in the Way

use of chemicals, was offered for only \$7,500 including equipment.

Dennis Smith
Vancouver, Canada

Seattle, Haifa and Tel Aviv
Thank you for your comments on biking in Prague. [Ed.: CarBusters co-editor Steven Logan wrote an editorial for the June 1 edition of the Prague Post.] Before moving to live with my daughter, I lived by myself (a poor choice) in Seattle, a very bike-friendly city. All the buses carry bike racks, most of the arterials have bike lanes, and there are miles of bike- and pedestrian-only paved trails, mostly along gentle grades. They use abandoned railroad right-of-way and more miles are added annually. Seniors can ride all over King County, with their bicycles, for only US\$0.25. This is helpful to older people, since getting to a biking destination by bus avoids the hills that are prevalent in the Cascade Mountain foothills.

I recently toured Haifa and Tel Aviv, Israel, which were less bike-hospitable. In both cities,

shoulders are very narrow, in hilly Haifa turns are sharp, and the bus drivers act like ex-fighter pilots. Several times I was crowded almost to collision. Truck drivers were a little more considerate.

Thomas F. Snyder
Perris, California, US

Hälsningar från Sverige (Greetings from Sweden)

I want to brag a bit about how good conditions are in my city, Malmö, in the southern part of Sweden. Malmö has been acknowledged twice in two years as the best city in the country for cycling by first Sweden's leading biking organisation, Cykelfrämjandet, and then by Naturvårdsverket, the Swedish environmental protection agency.

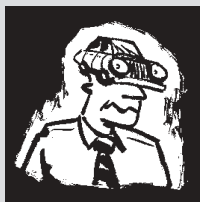
The city has 390 km of bike paths and 890 km of roads used for cars. About 29% of all trips and 40% of work trips in Malmö are on bike.

So that's something for all you out there to strive for.

Jens Broberg
Malmö, Sweden

“We are not in China; the symbol of Europe is not a bike – it’s a car.”

– Mirek Topolánek, Chairman, Civic Democratic Party, Czech Republic



CAR CULT REVIEW



“Divine” Car to Tour World
Having bought the former Volkswagen Golf of Pope Benedict XVI for nearly EUR 190,000 in an on-line auction on May 5, the Internet casino company GoldenPalace.com has started parading it around on a world wide tour, beginning in Cologne, Germany.

“We will offer an SMS text voting campaign that will allow people to vote for a tour stop in their hometown,” said CEO Richard Rowe. “GoldenPalace.com will bring the Pope Benedict Mobile to the major towns and cities with the most votes.”

“We have amassed a collection of what many consider to be holy artifacts,” Rowe added. “It seems only natural to get a blessed vehicle to carry these items. We are planning to showcase our acquisitions by bringing them on tour and allowing people to enjoy the experience of sitting

in the divine car...”

It is considered unlikely that the pope (then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger) ever drove the car, because he does not have a driving licence, according to Church sources.

Meanwhile, the humble blue 1975 Ford Escort once owned by former Pope John Paul II is tied up in a legal dispute between Jim Rich and his father Jerome. Jim Rich had intended the car to be sold June 5 at a Las Vegas auction, selling for between US\$2 million and US\$5 million.



Hey kids! How'd you like to take a school field trip to the Ford production-line simulator in Southampton, UK, and learn repetitive tasks for your automated future?

Anti-Car Cult Historical Review

“There is something uncanny about these new-fangled vehicles. They are all unutterably ugly and never a one of them has been provided with a good, or even an enduring, name.

“The French, who are usually orthodox in their etymology if nothing else, have evolved ‘auto-mobile,’ which, being half Greek and half Latin, is so near to indecent that we print it with hesitation, while the speakers of English have been fatally attracted by the irrelevant word ‘horseless.’

“Other nations are equally unfortunate, and it really looks as if the dispossessed, or to-be-dispossessed, animals are to get revenge on ungrateful humanity by stumping us to find a respectable name for our noisy and odorous machines.”

– New York Times, Jan. 3, 1899

Das Auto parkt neben dem Wohnzimmer!

The idea sounds crazy—drive your car into an elevator and up to the front door of your apartment. The company Car-Loft is behind the project and with these apartments it hopes to create “new living environments” in the Berlin district of Kreuzberg.

“We want to bring the convenience of single family homes to each storey,” says Car-Loft’s Johannes Kauka about the proposed 11 lofts in the new six-story Paul Linke-Höfe building.

Two car lifts bring the cars to their spots beside the loft and next to the living room and the garden.

A particular advantage according to Kauka is “the high level of security and convenience.”

– Berliner Zeitung, April 12

Your Own Private Sanitary Sanctuary

As a person on the go, you surely dread those uncomfortable moments when you have to extract yourself from your automobile cocoon to take care of your most personal of needs. But thanks to the Indipod, released by Day Car Ltd in the UK, those days are over.

Now you can create your own sanitary sanctuary without even pulling over. Just plug this suitcase-sized product into your car’s cigarette lighter, and *voilà!*—it inflates into a metre-square excretory assistance unit that fills the empty space of your backseat, ready to be deployed in 30 seconds.

Traveling with passengers? No problem. As Day Car notes, “When you are in the bubble you have complete privacy; the others in the car cannot see into the bubble and the noise of the air fan ensures no one can hear what you are doing” (although of course they might suspect). Or better yet, they can join you in the Indipod, as there’s room enough for two people in there.

And who would object to their bodily wastes being transformed into what Day Car describes as a “sweet smelling, inoffensive liquid”? That sounds pleasant enough to carry around with you for days on end, eight person-days to be precise.

Now you may have all the latest gadgets and gear, but without the Indipod, how free are you *really*? As Day Car points out, you can’t drive with your legs crossed.



Homeland Defense Vehicles Hit America's Streets

For some drivers, even a standard muscle wagon may not be enough. At a curb weight of more than 3.5 tons, the Humvee-inspired Hummer H1 is no skinny guy who gets sand kicked in his face.

But the Bad Boy Heavy Muscle Truck, a dressed-up military vehicle more than twice as heavy, is being billed as bigger, badder and more bodacious. This is no Hummer. Unlike that "car," which packages a working vehicle for consumption by urbanites, the Bad Boy is a real truck.

"It's the rugged Bubba," said Daniel Ayres, president and CEO of Homeland Defense Vehicles LLC and its division Bad Boy Trucks. The East Texas company aims to market the machine to civilians with disposable cash and a hankering for more protection from the outside world.

A US\$379,000 version made its public debut in January at the Dallas Safari Club convention.

For a base price of \$225,000—nearly twice the Hummer H1 wagon's base price of \$117,508—consumers can get a basic version of the 10-foot-tall Bad Boy that can drive through five feet of water, climb a 60-degree grade, tow six tons and keep rolling even with a quarter-sized hole in the tire's sidewall.

The price goes up from there, depending on options. Drivers can get infrared cameras that peer through darkness. The flat-nosed cab can be bulletproof and house a mini-safe behind three leather seats. The dash can include a satellite phone, a two-way radio and a global-positioning system—all alongside DVD, MP3 and CD players and a flip-out LCD screen.

For \$750,000, buyers can get the fully loaded "NBC" version that can, Ayres said, detect and block out fallout from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons by over-pressurising the cab with filtered, clean air much like an aircraft.

Ayres said he isn't playing on post-Sept. 11 fears by offering the NBC option.

"There's a certain group of people who colour outside the box," Ayres said, and if they want to escape a city targeted by terrorists with dirty bombs or biological agents, "this is the truck for them." Possible Bad Boy customers include ranchers, sports enthusiasts and possibly CEOs who need to travel through unfriendly areas, Ayres said.

He says he is negotiating with dealers in various regions to stock a couple of Bad Boys and customise what buyers want once they're hooked.

Art Spinella, president of CNW Marketing Research and an auto industry expert, said there's definitely a market for Bad Boy Trucks:

"It's exactly what the Humvee was all about—an absolutely useless vehicle for consumers," Spinella said. "It's a statement vehicle. I know people who would buy this and that's the only reason they would do it—because it makes a statement."

—*Homelanddefensevehicles.com*

Buy a Car, Lose a Finger

Police in Malaysia are hunting for members of a violent gang who chopped off a car owner's finger to get round the vehicle's hi-tech security system.

The car, a Mercedes S-class, was protected by a fingerprint recognition system.

Accountant K Kumar was run down by four men in a small car as he was about to get into his Mercedes in a Kuala Lumpur suburb.

The gang, armed with long machetes, demanded the keys to his car, worth around US\$75,000 second-hand on the local market.

The attackers forced Kumar to put his finger on the security panel to start the vehicle, bundled him into the back seat and drove off.

But having stripped the car, the thieves became frustrated when they wanted to restart it. They found they again could not bypass the immobiliser, which needs the owner's fingerprint to disarm it.

They stripped Kumar naked and left him by the side of the road—but not before cutting off the end of his index finger with a machete.

—*BBC, March 31*



"Dear God, promise me you'll strike me down the day I start doing car commercials."

A Natural Marriage:

Paul McCartney + Lexus

On May 30, the car maker Lexus and the former Beatles musician Paul McCartney announced a groundbreaking partnership that names Lexus as presenting sponsor of the Paul McCartney "US" tour this autumn. The Lexus tour sponsorship, which will include multiple marketing extension opportunities through March 2006, represents the first time McCartney has ever partnered with a commercial brand in his career.

"I'm very pleased to partner with Lexus because I think there is a natural fit. Lexus and I share the same philosophy and approach to creating the best work possible—me with my music and art and Lexus with the vehicles they create," said McCartney. "I'm looking forward to a fun and rewarding experience for all."

—*Lexus*



Urban Command Centre?

We did not make this up, although we might wish we had...100% verbatim from the Ford website:

"As the population shifts back to the big cities, you'll need a rolling urban command center. Enter the SYN^{US} concept vehicle, a mobile technosanctuary sculpted in urban armor and inspired by the popular B-cars of congested international hotspots. Short and slim for easy city maneuvering, it looks bank-vault tough on the outside—with intimidating and outrageous styling that even features a vault-style spinner handle in back with deadbolt door latching. When parked and placed in secure mode, SYN^{US} deploys protective shutters over the windshield and side glass.

"Small windows on the flanks and roof are non-opening and bullet-resistant. The SYN^{US} concept also signals security through its use of a driver-side dial operated combination lock on the B-pillar. Bold wheel arches make a design statement as well as accommodate the vehicle's exceptionally wide track.

"On its welcoming inside, the SYN^{US} makes any mission possible. The interior can transform into a mini-home theater with multi-configuration seating and multi-media workstation, all controlled by a Wi-Fi laptop. Use the 45-inch flat-screen LCD from Sharp for Internet research, DVD viewing or any screening needs. Plus, you can monitor your surroundings in real time as seen by the rear-mounted cameras.

"Driving SYN^{US} can be just as lively and efficient with a 2.0-liter diesel engine that delivers 134 horses and 236 foot-pounds of torque and is also designed to offer outstanding fuel economy."

—*Fordvehicles.com*

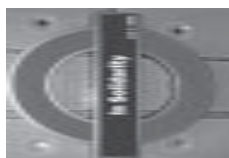
Prius Named Official Car of UN World Environment Day

Dignitaries from around the globe congregated in San Francisco June 1-5 for UN World Environment Day, where the Toyota Prius was recognised as the official car of the event and Toyota as the exclusive automotivesponsor.

"It's exciting to be involved in this important event building environmental awareness and to have the Prius represent what's already available in the way of environmentally friendly vehicles," said Mike Wells, Toyota vice president and general manager of the San Francisco region.

—*Toyota*

World News



health warning on car use."

Joseph asks some key questions: "Will a motoring tax encourage people onto public transport? Will traffic be displaced from key arteries onto unsuitable local roads? How can we use the system to stop traffic growing? Will charges be varied according to the 'pollutability' of vehicles?"

There is no distinction made between SUVs and more fuel-efficient cars.

Former *Car Busters* editor Richard Lanes says, "The government is not

doing it to try to make cars pay for the environmental damage they do, nor to try to stop people using cars—they're giving themselves control to spread the traffic around, improving the efficiency of the network by pricing congestion bottlenecks. More efficiency could mean more cars for the same amount of road. We're concerned that people are going to think that the plan is sound on environmental grounds."

If road duties and fuel tax are lowered to compensate for the extra tax than the environmental and social costs remain unpaid.

- *World Carfree News, July*

Stockholm Holds Its Breath
SWEDEN—After 25 years of discussions, the government approved a seven-month test period

for a congestion charging scheme in Stockholm, starting January 2006. The charges is expected to reduce car use in the city centre by 10% to 15%.

The plan counts on drivers installing mobile transponders in their cars, enabling payment of the toll directly from drivers' bank accounts.

Much of the financial support will flow to Stockholm's public transit companies. Starting in August, 200 new buses will roll down Stockholm's streets. New drivers are already in training for the proposed 14 new routes.

Experts hope that around 32,000 people will switch to public transport.

The EUR 2 toll will be collected at the entries to the inner city, workdays from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm. The test period will end July 31, 2006, after which the system will be evaluated. In September 2006, Stockholm residents will vote in a referendum on definitive implementation of the toll.

- *Radio Sweden, April 29*

Europe

The Reality of Road Charging
UK—London Transport Secretary Alistair Darling has said that a national road user charge system will be in place by 2015. Vehicles on all of Britain's roads will be charged anywhere from £0.02 to £1.34 a mile, depending on the road used and time of day.

In five years, the government plans to set up a pilot scheme in one of the country's regions.

Stephen Joseph, Director of Transport 2000, says, "Road charging is a real chance to change the way we think about driving. There is no point in going down this route unless this opportunity is taken to put a clear, unequivocal government

The Americas

20% For You, 80% For Me!

US—The US Senate has endorsed a six-year spending level that is \$11 billion above what the president requested, however only \$2.3 billion of this is to go toward transit. This number reflects an 80/20 split in highway to transit funding.

There are "modest but important improvements" to promote safety among bicyclists and pedestrians, including a Safe Routes to School programme.

The Boston Bicycle Planning Initiative reports that the bill also continues funding for Transportation Enhancements, a primary source of funding for bicycling and walking, and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality programme.

In Brief...

INDIA—The Tamil Nadu government is giving free bus passes, bicycles and textbooks to school children to make getting to school and studying easier.

- *The Hindu, June 7*

CHINA—Volkswagen and the Shanghai Automotive Industry Corp are currently building "Automobile City" in the area around the new Formula One race track. The plan, reports the *Economist*, is to "turn the area into a centre of car research and development, a place where cars and their components are made and where leisure revolves around them. As well as the race track, a US\$50 million car museum is due to open next year."

- *Economist, June 2*

BANGLADESH—Mosharraf Hossain, State Minister of Energy, has resigned because he could not explain why Niko, a Canadian gas exploration company, gave him a US\$150,000 Lexus. Niko was blamed for a gas field explosion in January by an investigative committee, but has not been punished. Hossain, who resigned at the request of the prime minister, says he will not return the car.

- *The Daily Star.net, June 19*

AUSTRALIA—The city of Adelaide has begun a public bike programme four years after the Danish architect Jan Gehl suggested it to the city council.

Forty bikes were made available on May 22, the first day of the programme, and are free for the first two hours, then charged at an hourly or daily rate. Councillor Richard Hayward says it is the first such programme in Australia.

- *ABC News Online, May 22*

GERMANY—In V-Day celebrations in Berlin, anarchists on bicycles helped keep a group of 5,000 neo-Nazis from interrupting commemorations in the city centre. When the police told the protesters to disperse to make way for the legally registered neo-Nazi demonstration, they sat down and refused to move. In the end, the neo-Nazis did not get their demonstration, so they went out looking for fights.

- *Timesonline.co.uk, May 9*

UK—Children aged under 16 are to be given free travel on London's buses in a £70 million scheme, the first of its kind in the world.

- *The Guardian, June 15*

The Surface Transport Policy Project notes that “existing community and environmental protections are diminished, including longstanding ‘clean rules’ that hold state and local agencies more accountable in achieving compliance with federal air quality standards and NEPA procedures that support the public and their communities in getting a fair review of project alternatives.”

Senator Tom Harkin sought an amendment that would see transport departments adopt a Complete Streets policy to address access to and the safety of non-motorised forms of transport.

“Our focus in a transportation bill should not strictly be on moving vehicles,” said Harkin. “We should be more broadly focused on moving people and making it possible for more people to move themselves by foot or by bicycle. For every American who opts to get to work, school, or the grocery store by foot or bicycle, that is less cost for road building and maintenance, zero contribution to traffic congestion, and zero costs in terms of pollution and environmental degradation.”

Now, Senate and House leaders will have to come together to smooth out the differences in the two versions of legislation now on the table.

Moving People in San Juan

PUERTORICO-A new 10-mile train service is up and running in San Juan in the hopes of slowing the growth in car use in one of the most heavily congested cities in the world. “It is the first metropolitan rail transit system in San Juan since the trolleys of the early 20th century,” writes the *Orlando Sentinel*. It is the first phase in a system of public transport that hopes to link ferry, train and bus routes. With 2.5 million vehicles for 3.9 million people, Puerto Rico ranks among world leaders in the ratios of cars per individual, per square mile and per road mile.

CZECH REPUBLIC-One of the biggest shopping centres in Central Europe is doubling in size to 125,000 square metres. The expansion of the Letnany shopping centre, which lies on Prague’s outskirts adjacent to a mass of concrete communist-style apartment blocks, will also lead to increased car use in this already car-choked city by adding another 500 parking spaces, bringing the total to 3,000.

- *Prague Post*, April 21

FRANCE-On May 19, the city of Lyon, with the help of JCDecaux, made 2,000 bicycles available for hire to the public. The bicycles are free for the first 30 minutes and after that the price varies from EUR 0.50 to EUR 2 per hour. The bicycles can be found at 200 locations around the city.

- *Le Monde*, April 26

CANADA-The federal government has passed a bill pledging CA\$800 million in new public transit funding. One cent per litre (10%) of the federal gas tax will be transferred to municipalities across Canada over the next two years specifically for investment in public transit.

- *Canadian Urban Transit Association*, July 4

Asia/Pacific

When the Car Makes News

AUSTRALIA-A preview of Hyundai’s new Sonata sedan, the company’s local president, Bong Gou Lee, announced a special offer for Australian journalists in attendance: “Half price for journalists, tonight only.” *Sydney Morning Herald* reporter Tony Davis, who was not present, said that “several journalists gave credit card numbers and specified models and colours on a deal that would have saved them more than AU\$17,000 and delivered a new car at below cost. After Davis began making inquiries, Lee withdrew the offer.

Hyundai’s spokesman, Richard Power, said the offer was a joke. One anonymous journalist told Davis “there’s no way people joke about things like that and take names and colours...I bought one.” Hyundai now insists that journalists would only be eligible for the “conventional six-month long-term evaluation” loan of a car.

- *Prwatch.org*, June 22

Seoul’s Success on the Bus

KOREA-“On July 1, 2004, seemingly overnight, the long declining fleet of some 8,000 buses turned up newly painted in bright colours,” reports the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) in their June bulletin. “Forty kilometres of dedicated median lanes opened on major trunk lines. A trunk-and-feeders system with color-coded buses and an entirely new numbering system replaced the old haphazard route map.”

A year later, the system has proved successful. Riders can now get up to five free intermodal transfers through the use of smart cards.

Data gathered by the Seoul Development Institute over the first five months of operation

show travel time cut by half in median-lane corridors. “Carrying capacity increased six times, and travel time variation decreased by a factor of five,” reports ITDP.

“System-wide, the total number of measured trip segments [ed.: ?] rose by 11%, and a 21% drop in bus-related accidents resulted from improved working conditions for bus drivers.”

Given the success thus far, another 120 km of dedicated bus routes are in the works.

Africa

A Better Boda Boda

KENYA-The Xtracycle Access Foundation recently began a ten-month trial of a utility bicycle called the Bigga Boda (a name inspired by Kenyan bicycle taxi operators, who are called Boda Boda) in order to expand the bicycle economy. In the city of Kisumu, where the project is based, there are 800,000 people and 10,000 Boda Boda.

The Bigga Boda can carry a much heavier load than the current bikes. For example, the passenger version can take two people at once whereas the current Boda Boda can only take one.

“The Boda Boda operators in Kisumu are getting by with a technology platform that barely meets their needs. The Chinese- and Indian-made bicycles they use are not equipped with enough cargo capacity or adequate safety features. And, with the exception of one or two towns, the government of Kenya has not invested in bicycle lanes or bicycle paths, despite the fact that bicycles play a central role in the transport of nearly all goods.”

Xtracycle Access hopes to expand to Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Sudan and Ethiopia.

- *Xaccess.org*, June 5

VENEZUELA-Iranian companies will soon be manufacturing bicycles in Venezuela for that country and others in Latin America. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has endorsed the idea of Iranian bicycles in Venezuela.

- *Islamic Republic News Agency*, June 10

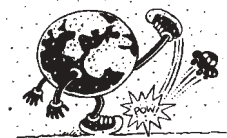
USA-A t its annual shareholders meeting General Motors announced it would close plants and cut 25,000 American jobs over the next three years due to poor truck and SUV sales. The job cuts should save GM US\$2.5 billion.

- *USA Today*, July 6

USA-In one of its ads, Lincoln car manufacturer used images and names of New York bike messengers to promote the vehicle by attempting to create a relationship between messengers and SUVs. “Just the idea of NYC bike messengers having anything in common with a Lincoln is so far from reality...Messengers hate cars,” says bike racer and ex-messenger, Bucky Turco. It’s like using vegetarians to sell furs, it doesn’t work.”

- *Adrrants.com*, May 25

Action!



photos: Septemberlegs.co.uk

World Naked Bike Ride

On Saturday, June 11 in London, 250 people streaked for the second World Naked Bike Ride.

The organisers consulted police and council officials so that riders and rollerskaters could enjoy much more freedom than last year.

The authorities were satisfied that experienced Critical Mass bikeriders would lead the way around the 10km route that headed through atypically busy Trafalgar Square and passed the Houses of Parliament prior to a vocal welcome by crowds of surprised onlookers in the West End.

The sheer numbers in various states of undress, combined with a lack of police presence, left pedestrians confounded, yet mostly supportive of this unusual spectacle.

"I was amazed to look around and see nobody feeling worried and covering themselves up," said Jesse Schust, contributor to the 12-person London Planning Collective. "It was obviously a very positive experience for a lot of people. Those we passed on route were totally bemused and not really able to comprehend the thing, but they all seemed thrilled."

People's various motives for wanting to dress down for the occasion were as diverse as the mix of people riding together in celebration of the power and individuality of their bodies. For many, cycling naked was a brand-new experience.

"I'm naked at home, I'm naked in the garden, but I've never ridden down Piccadilly naked on a bike before," said Suzanne Sessions, 29. "I just felt like myself today. It brings people together and unity works and it felt really special. I'm never going to forget it."

The World Naked Bike Ride took place in 54 cities worldwide this year. It has already been scheduled for June 10, 2006, with organisers hoping even more cities will get involved.

- Alistair Murray

Celebration as Revolution: Car-Free Fest Hits Vancouver

Ironically-named Commercial Drive is Vancouver, British Columbia's most free-spirited and eclectic neighbourhood. Grounded in a solid Italian community with plenty of Asian and Latin American panache, it is pan-sexual and politically diverse, working-class, gritty, arty, hippie, academic and upscale.

The commons of the "People's Republic of East Vancouver" (East Van) is a multifaceted gem of a community that, as it changes and evolves, becomes even richer and more complex.

The Drive is an awesome place to live, and to walk, bike, skate and hang out. On the Drive, dogs and lovers casually mosey across the lanes of slow-moving traffic, while stray soccer balls and flying hacky sacks vary the flow. On the Drive, cars come last.

But this urban paradise is now under threat by a black menace from on high. The "Gateway Project" is afoot; a scheme of the provincial government to twin a bridge, pump up a highway and dump thousands of more cars into the heart of East Van. The time is ripe for the people of the Drive to rise up and party in the street.



And so on Sunday, June 19, Father's Day, an eight-block stretch of the Drive plus a one-block buffer zone on either side were closed to motorised traffic for six hours. The people went into the streets and the Car-Free Commercial Drive Festival exploded one joyous mind bomb on the city.

There were bands and DJs, Indonesian stick-fighters and judo dojos, hare krishnas and healing circles, medieval minstrels, clowns, a marimba band and a gospel choir, storytellers and slam poets and sellers of funky handmade stuff.

There was a soap box for speechifying, a Free Store for giving things away, and street hockey all day long. And there were bikes—more crazy bikes than you could shake a stick at.

The East Van Chopperfest was wrapped into the mix, with tall bikes and bendy bikes and a 400-pound pedal-powered tank...all available for testrides.

It was one hell of a party. Estimates of attendance range from 20,000 to 30,000. Many stores and restaurants on the Drive broke record sales. The mayor delivered a proclamation declaring the day "Car-Free Day on Commercial Drive." The entire street was shoulder-to-shoulder with grinning folks.

And now, everyone knows about the highway

plan. And everyone knows what we have going here in East Van, and what we stand to lose. We have a big fight ahead of us, an epic battle against the dinosaur road-building paradigm. And we are going to win. And sooner or later (and

we think, the sooner the better) there will be no more gas, and there will be no more cars on our commons, and the Drive will be returned to the people of East Vancouver to do what we like to do best—and that is, to party!

- Carmen Mills, festival co-organiser



Court Victory! New York City Halloween Massers Not Guilty
In the first and last trial resulting from the 33 “parading without a permit” arrests the New York City Police Department made during last year’s Halloween Critical Mass bicycle ride, the New York County Supreme Court on June 28 found *The Wall Street Journal*’s senior art director, Liz Shura, not guilty of disorderly conduct and parading without a permit.

The Halloween Critical Mass ride came on the eve of federal Judge William H. Pauley III’s decision in *Bray v. City of New York* denying the city an emergency injunction that would have prevented the ride from happening. In response to Judge Pauley’s decision that Critical Mass rides were protected by the First Amendment, and that it was unclear whether the city’s parade permitting scheme could apply to them at all, the police department proposed a route for the Halloween ride by handing out flyers in Union Square Park prior to the ride, then diverted cyclists off the route and made mass arrests.

All of the 32 other parading without a permit cases arising from the October arrests have been dismissed without going to trial.

Shura pleaded not guilty to the arraignment and appeared in court more than five times over the course of eight months because she believed her arrest was false and unconstitutional.

Scores of criminal trials arising from the January, February and March Critical Mass arrests are expected to take place in July.

Over 525 people have been arrested for allegedly participating in the leaderless group bicycleride since just before the Republican National Convention (August 27, 2004), when the city decided to crack down on the rides. Some other cities, like Moscow, have followed New York’s lead and started arresting participants in their Critical Mass rides.

New York City is now seeking an emergency injunction against Time’s Up!, the environmental advocacy group the city believes is “behind” the rides, and several of its volunteers. The injunction would not only prevent the rides by making participation in them a misdemeanor or punishable by up to a year in jail, but also subject anyone who gathers in a group of more than 20 people in a city park, or advertises such a gathering, to prosecution for a misdemeanor, unless the gathering has a permit. The first court appearance related to the lawsuit took place on June 30. (No news yet on how that went.)

A number of New York arrestees have formed a group called Free Wheels to help provide support for people who have been arrested while riding their bicycles. For more information about Free Wheels, see <www.bicycledefensefund.org> contact Mark Taylor at +1 (646) 338-5643.

-Free Wheels

Breakfast, Anyone?



photo: Steven Logan

Inspired by Sara Stout’s “Skill Sharing” article in Car Busters #20, Car Busters editors and friends on two recent occasions staged breakfast actions in public parking spaces in Prague. Local media covered both events: April 12 in front of City Hall, and June 8 in front of the Czech National Bank on Republic Square.

Day of Action to Target G8 “Climate Criminals”

July 8, the last day of the G8 summit, was a global day of action against the root causes of climate change. This meant direct actions for climate justice in Scotland and around the world.

In addition to smaller actions, a big public demonstration called “Ceildh On the Clyde” (aka “Boogie on the Bridge”) was planned in Glasgow. The idea was a big, joyous and angry event that would confront, not collude, with the leaders who are marching us menily towards the cliff edge.

There were also protests against the M74 extension, Scotland’s newest and least popular motorway, which will cut through the heart of Glasgow and increase carbon-spewing traffic. The event was also an expression of solidarity with people fighting the root causes of climate change everywhere.

Actions also took place in Venezuela, New Zealand, Iceland, Australia, the Philippines and Reading. A global movement for climate justice is coming together. It is saying “no” to the G8, World Bank, IMF, UN and corporate market-based “solutions” to the climate crisis, and “yes” to a post-oil, post-poverty, post-capitalist future.

Why this day of action? Because G8 spin won’t drag us out of the downward spiral we’re in. Because the G8 mantra of “economic growth and damn the consequences” means business as usual and climatic, social and ecological meltdown.

On July 8, we will flood the G8 and the world with our demand for change and our vision of a just, fossil-fuel free future.

-G8 Climate Action

Wheels of Justice Don’t Spin
On May 7 in Adelaide, Australia, some 3,000 cyclists rode down the main street to Parliament house, to protest government inaction over cycling safety and the outcome of the Eugene McGee hit-and-run case.

Small demonstrations were held in other major cities across Australia.

Eugene McGee is a high-profile criminal lawyer who after a few drinks hit and killed local cyclist Ian Humphrey on November 30, 2003, in a head-on collision with his Mitsubishi Pajero.

McGee fled the scene, immediately called his lawyer friend, and turned himself over to police only six hours later. According to the officer who interviewed him, McGee’s vehicle smelled strongly of liquor even then, although McGee was not breath tested. He was fined AU\$3,100 (roughly one hour’s pay for him) and disqualified from driving for 12 months.

McGee had already received six speeding tickets in the previous six years, and at the trial showed no remorse, instead trying to blame the road condition and “bad luck.”

In the courtroom, Humphrey’s widow Di Gilchrist-Humphrey confronted McGee and said: “You killed my husband. I do not hate you, I pity you. I wake up in the hope that this has all been a bad dream. I would give up all my tomorrows to have one more day with Ian.”

Concerned citizens have formed a group called Wheels of Justice, pushing for stricter punishment for motorists who kill cyclists. More information at <www.wheelsofjustice.com.au>.

-Olly Powell and news reports



Gender Blind

Putting women's needs on the agenda in Philippine transport culture

by Roselle Leah K. Rivera

Susan Jong wakes up at 4 am and takes her household pails to the water queue in Marikina City (9 km from Quezon City, the capital). By 5:30 am, her water containers are full and she or her husband picks up the filled containers and bring them back home. Then, she wakes her children, cooks their breakfast and prepares their bath. After picking up the water, her husband goes back to sleep. Susan then brings two of her children to school at 6 am, usually on foot.

Susan and her husband have a small buy-and-sell business. They sell their goods to workers in different factories and communities. Three times a week, they make a three-hour trek to Quiapo and Divisoria, both located in Manila. They leave their house at 9 am, shop for their wares for three hours and the trip back home takes another three hours due to the rush hour traffic. Most often, Susan pays additional *patok* fare to load goods bought in Manila. She and her husband usually commute via *patok*, or jeep. On these days, they arrive home at approximately 7 pm.

Like Susan, Adora "Doy" Gonzales is awake by 4 am each day and prepares her two children for school. "I need twenty-five hours or more," says Doy.

It is a miracle if she can finish all the housework. By 6 am, she brings her children to school, which is 5 km away from their home. Doy peddles dry goods in her community or in the nearby areas for around five hours. Selling these goods commences after picking up her children from school at 1:30 pm. Her vending is irregular, as it depends on the capital she is able to save.

Her husband's income is not enough for the family's subsistence. "Whenever I have some goods to sell, I transform night into day. The things that have to be done during the day, such as clothes washing and house cleaning, I do at night when my husband and my children are asleep. My day activities become my night activities."

One of the most common forms of transport Doy uses is the *patok*. Doy says that she usually gets into heated arguments with the *patok* driver. They usually drive wildly and her small children are almost thrown off the vehicle. However dangerous, Doy has no choice but to ride this mode of transport because her children are often running late for school.

The other mode of transport for Doy is the *padayak*, a human-powered, non-motorised vehicle. The driver of the *padayak* often complains that Doy is overweight and usually demands more than the normal fare. According to the *padayak* driver, passengers with Doy's weight force them to pedal harder and get more tired than usual.

The day-to-day worries of these women's lives give a preliminary picture of poor, urban women's travel needs at the community level and bring to the fore women's voices in the discourse on transport. This is an area rarely examined by existing research on either transport or gender. In the 21st century, while we endlessly pontificate upon newer and more expensive technologies to improve a car's fuel efficiency, the real world still screams with the concerns of Susan and Doy.

Putting Gender on the Transport Agenda

As 70% of those living in poverty worldwide are women, according to a report by the Sustainable Transport Action Network for Asia and the Pacific, the transport systems and services that hardly meet the needs of the poor are disproportionately affecting women and their dependents:

"The lower the income of a household, the more probable it is that women will experience greater transport deprivation as compared to men," write Rahman Paul Barter and Tamim Raad in the report. "Transport deprivation may take the form of women's use of inferior modes of transport as compared to men; it may take the form of women's journeys having multiple purposes and thus generating greater anxiety in the travel context; it may take the form of customary or legal constraint on women's right to travel or to use a particular transport mode."

Transport is known to be one of the most significant investment sectors for many developing countries. Despite its recognised role in development, scant attention has been accorded to the social and gender impacts of transport investments. The recognition of its key role in economic development through classic planning methods remains wanting because of the failure to see the different impacts of transport on the lives of men and women.

Conventional planning methods assume that transport programmes are "gender neutral." Available literature from various countries in the developing world document the pervasive myth that impacts on men and women of transport are the same (see Priyanti Fernando and Gina Porter, *Balancing the Load*). Yet trailblazing case studies have begun to document how women comprise a large proportion of people who are economically and socially disadvantaged and of people who are harmed by transport policies that focus on economic efficiency (narrowly defined) and by automobile-focused transport priorities that do nothing to meet their travel needs.

The ground-breaking work of Grieco and Tumer on women's transport and mobility problems in Africa offers pioneering ideas and insights. They



Transport Glossary

Especial Special fares charged by tricycle drivers on top of the usual rate allowed by the local regulatory agency. This special fare is charged when the tricycle leaves for a lone passenger's destination without waiting for the public transport vehicle to be filled up with five or more passengers. More often than not, drivers also charge this fare arbitrarily, thus it is usually a source of imitation and complaints by public transport commuters.

Langgamman (Literally, "a queue of ants") Areas where one can see organised queues of commuters waiting for public transports such as jeepneys.

Padyak (Literally, "to kick") A bicycle with a sidecar used as public transport. Usually found on the corners of main roads of poor urban communities.

Patok (Literally, "ahit") Colourfully painted speeding jeepneys, which can accommodate more than 20 passengers. *Patoks* have stereos blaring loud music during their trips. *Patoks* are usually manned by younger (20-30 years old) reckless drivers.

Pila-pila means several queues of commuters.

Sabit (Literally, "to hang") Passengers of jeepneys, tricycles or buses who are unable to sit inside the jeepney because all seats are taken, yet drivers allow commuters, from one to as much as five people, usually male, to stand or hang onto the *estribo* (the entrance of the vehicle), holding onto any piece of the jeepney/tricycle/bus. This practice is especially dangerous as children (sometimes as many as five youngsters) are commonly seen hanging off of tricycles, which ferry them to public schools.

conclude that "women's greater domestic responsibilities coupled with their weaker access to household resources have significant consequences to their transport and travel status... (and they) experience greater transport deprivation as compared to men." Deike Peters forwards parallel insights in carefully-gathered urban and rural case studies from several developing countries. Women's disadvantaged position in transport systems was apparent throughout these case studies.

One study of 276 female fuel carriers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, showed that women carry an average load of 36.2 kg (i.e., 75% of body weight) an average of 11.7 km, and as many as 17% of the women carry loads heavier than their body weight. The maximum carrying weight recommended by the International Labour Organization is 20 kg. Among these women, eye, chest and back pains were common, as well as high rates of miscarriage. Kenyan medical sources document frequent backaches and kneedamage among head-loading Masai women. Peters calls for locally adapted gendersensitive transport strategies. Peters also stresses that, so as not to be left in lofty theoretical principles, the local dimension needs to be brought back in, to bring women's voices into transport planning and practice.

Development planning, while becoming more open to participation by various groups in society, has still remained blind to the implications of transport policies and programmes on women's lives. Women tend to be under-represented among transport professionals and participation of women from local communities is unheard of and not seen as a key element in programme design and the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of transport planning. This is a result of dichotomous thinking that separates "hard" sectors (transportation and communication, infrastructure, etc.) from "soft" sectors (education, health, social services, etc.) in development planning. The dominant thinking is that transport belongs to the hard sectors dominated by international agencies and top-down, state-led planning.

Women's Work:

In the Private and the Public Sphere

The outcome is that the formulation of policies and the conduct of studies on transport and travel is not just gender-blind, but even male-biased. The latter is manifested in the often implied assumption that women's immobility is not only "natural" but even socially preferred. Women are relegated to the private sphere of the household, usually romanticised as mothers or, as a favourite expression among Filipinos goes, the *ilawng tahanan* ("the light of the home"). Yet the needs of their families require women like Doy and

Susan to shift into the "public" sphere outside the household where cash can be earned, the objective conditions of the current transport system do not meet women's specific needs. Much of women's work in the informal economy (i.e., selling vegetables, rice cakes, cooked food, or dry goods on credit to factory workers) demand travelling outside the private confines of the household. Women's schedules are not as fixed as male members mainly because the host of domestic responsibilities are relegated to female member *nancys* like Susan and Doy.

It is in this light that questions must be raised: How can a reasonably participatory process of transportation planning be developed to review and compare modes of transport? How can user groups from the marginalised sectors, especially women in local communities, be included in the planning process? How can a space be opened to articulate the public interest and the mobility needs of the poor and of women in political processes?

"All the jeepneys with reckless drivers should be taken off the streets because they are a source of accidents," says Susan. "There was an incident when I almost fell off my seat because the jeepney kept swerving." Susan also complains of the cost of transportation and hopes that public transport fares will be lowered. Transport fare costs roughly PHP 5.50 (US\$ 0.10) per kilometre and Susan and her husband spend at least PHP 80 (US\$ 1.40) on their trip to and from Divisoria, which eats up more than 30% of their average daily income.

Susan shows excitement when asked about possible recommendations to the present transportation system. "There are so many *padyaks*. They are everywhere and undisciplined. The number of *padyaks* should be regulated," she suggests. *Padyaks* are motorcycles with a sidecar. With a seating capacity for two people, drivers usually squeeze in four to five people into the *padyak*.





“All the patoks
with reckless
drivers should
be taken off
the streets.”
- Susan Jong

Susan suggests hastening the construction of the Mass Rapid Transit from Marikina to Divisoria to lessen the inconvenience, saving on precious time as well as addressing the traffic problem.

Susan’s final suggestion is that “something serious should be done about the hold-ups inside public transportation.”

Unlike Susan, Doy has no specific ideas on how to improve the transportation system. When it comes to taking care of her children, this is not the focus of her attention. She suggests and hopes that transportation fares should be lower for poor families, even offered free-of-charge to reduce the burden on poor parents.

The voices of Susan and Doy can only be muffled voices in the dark if they are not orchestrated through networks of organisations, recognised by national governments and given exposure by national and local media. Sustainable transport advocates have been lobbying for support for developing the institutional capacity of community organisations and asking local governments to address the above concerns and issues regarding transport.

Imagining transport programs and projects which can contribute to quality of life for men and women is a formidable task. A reasonable starting point is to build a political base for more sustainable, gender-sensitive and equitable initiatives. This would mean involving representatives of women’s organisations, public transport commuters, and the voices of ordinary people like Susan and Doy in processes and debates about transport policy.

A widely accepted axiom in the international development community is that if plans are developed with the support of these key elements in society, then the constituency of such plans will be broadened and the likelihood of their becoming reality is not only better, but made more meaningful.

Dilemmas and Potentials:

Gender in Transport Activism

All the above tackles an advocacy which is essentially waged on the national and local policy levels.

However, what about the landscape of activism wherein local communities could put the interests of ordinary commuter citizens on the agenda? How can we vigorously influence the agenda of politicians and public servants with a perspective on the public interest? To take to task the need to express, register and demand for the transport needs of marginalised, vulnerable groups such as women?

It is safe to say that “transport activism” is still a vague and unexplored arena, not pushed by the majority of activists in the larger people’s movement in the Global South. Ironically it is here in the Global South, where “markets” of private vehicle corporations have set their sights, that transport activism is needed. As one car manufacturer put it so succinctly, “The market prospects for Asia’s motor vehicles are very positive. We aim to capture a big portion of Asia’s motor vehicle market by strengthening the supplier base of our automotive industry.”

Transport activism is, more often than not, conventionally tucked into the specific sectoral struggles such as the worker’s movement (transport workers, public utility vehicle drivers and the like) or in one corner of the consumer movement (a few leaders have emerged for the large mass of unorganised public commuters), or the broad environmental movement which has been swamped with discussion and action for strategic issues (global warming, clean energy, etc.), yet not tactically linked to practical transport concerns of marginalised groups.

A promising start is that the women’s movement is now visible in the transport arena, raising public safety issues and violence against women in public transportation.



“Participation of women
from local communities
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in transport planning.”



How to Please your Car

It is fairly obvious that drivers love their cars. They spend large amounts of quality time with them, discuss them with their closest friends and family, and even explore ten different ways to keep a car happy. But how do we know the feeling is mutual? How do we know they'll continue to love their drivers back? What do cars want, and how can we be sure to give it to them?

1. If you're tempted to try to look like your car by donning a headlamp, don't. Your car may mistake you for a bicyclist, which can be a threat – and a turnoff.
2. Cars also don't like pedestrians. They aren't interested in children, and they really don't care for old people, who move so slowly.
3. Cars love speed.
4. They like wide open roads. As soon as two lanes start to feel a little crowded, expand to four. When the four-lane feels a little claustrophobic, six, or eight or ten or more are all good.
5. Cars, of course, like to travel. Their perfect vacation would be an extended road trip with no destination at all. But if you're looking for a place to stop, cars definitely prefer Los Angeles to Manhattan and Houston to Amsterdam. Don't overlook Detroit, but don't even consider Venice.
6. If you're considering treating your car to dinner, remember cars prefer a nice drive-thru to a hard-to-reach bistro. Their taste in restaurants tend toward the fast food. Chicken McNuggets, say, over *coq au vin*.
7. If you're thinking about taking your car shopping, just remember "big box" over boutique.
8. In selecting a neighbourhood for your car, keep in mind that short blocks and sharp corners can be a drag, sidewalks add clutter and chaos, and trees are just unnecessary visual obstructions.
9. When communicating with your car, remember most cars still prefer the visual message and that it's best to keep it short. Enter. Exit. Gas. Food. And they're attracted to bright, primary colours. The bigger and louder the message, the better it is. Cars also appreciate billboards, especially if they are flattering.
10. But, most basic of all these tips is that to please your car is to keep the gas tank loaded and the body in tip-top condition. And remember that, above all, cars love money.



When the Children Come out and Play

n National Street Playing Day in the Netherlands brings out 250,000 kids

by Roeland Kuiper

Children like to be outside. They like sitting on the pavement, scouting out the neighbourhood with friends, walking or biking by themselves to school. Unfortunately, their freedom to move and play is restricted by road steaming with car traffic. Stepping out and playing in the streets is increasingly difficult because pavements [sidewalks] are too small, and there are either too many parked cars or too many speeding cars. There are almost no more safe places left to play. Since many parents are scared of the dangers of traffic, they decide not to let their kids play or travel on their own.

Children should be able to play freely in their neighbourhoods and be able to do so safely.

A Safe Place to Play

On June 1, 250,000 kids emerged onto the streets of the Netherlands to take part in National Street Playing Day. Thousands of children played in safe environments throughout the country with the help of more than 1,000 local groups and 25,000 volunteers. To spread their cry for help, 2,000 streets were closed to motorised traffic, a significant increase since the first National Street Playing Day was declared in 1986. It was one big street party for kids.

The initiative for Street Playing Day comes from the Dutch organisation 3VO—Voor Veilig Verkeer (For Safe Traffic). “This is a day for the

children to play safely outside and to protest against the unsafe streets and playgrounds—and the lack of playgrounds,” says Andre de Wit, co-ordinator of National Street Playing Day.

3VO is the culmination of the work of various organisations working in the 1970s and ‘80s to improve street safety in the Netherlands. In 1973, 3,264 people died in a traffic accidents and 450 of them were children under the age of 14. Because of this, the action group *Stop de Kinder Moord* (Stop Murder of Children) was founded. In the ‘80s, *Stop de Kinder Moord*, together with *Kindereen Vooming* (Children’s Right of Way), called for a national street day for children, which first took place on May 28, 1986. 3VO was formed when these two groups fused with *Veilig Verkeer Nederland* (Safe Traffic Netherlands) and *Voetgangers Vereniging* (Pedestrian Club) to form one organisation.

“3VO is an organisation of volunteers with one mission: traffic safety,” says de Wit. “Everybody is here for a different reason; noise, a close friend killed in a car accident, pollution.”

3VO’s priority is safety in the direct living environment of people and children. Their ‘Neighbourhood Playing Policy’ says that children aged four to six should be able to play in sight of their houses and of their friends. From the ages of 6 to 12, this area increases up to several hundred metres from the home.

Unfortunately, these ideal situations are rarely met. The threat from traffic is too high for

many parents, and children are often scared of the traffic.

“Complaints about speeding cars are growing rapidly,” says de Wit. “The intensity of motorised traffic has increased enormously in the past years.



B "Hey, kids! Colour me in and send me back to *Car Busters* magazine!"

Research points out that the age of children traveling independently from home to school (or to any outdoor activity) has grown from 6.5 to 8.5 years. A lot of educational social moments are thus lost in this way.

"Our cause is safety, or rather, unsafe streets. Parents and elderly people get scared and decide to go by car, too. This means a lot of extra cars on the road, creating especially dangerous areas around schools. It is a vicious downward spiral."

On several of the streets this year, there was reason to celebrate because neighborhoods got 30 km/h zones after successful actions on earlier street playing days. Other successes, says de Wit, include a 1990 Dutch government initiative called Sustainable Safety.

"Every year National Street Playing Day gets more attention," says de Wit. "More groups close streets for cars and open them up for our youth. More people become aware and get active for safe traffic on both the national and local levels."

The organisation for the day of action is mainly in the hands of around 3,000 volunteers, supported by 70 paid workers. 3VO arranges national publicity and offers a wider range of resources to local organisers such as stickers, caps, posters, banners, flyers and several informative brochures. However, it is the many volunteers who organise the actual street playing events in the different neighborhoods.

3VO's evaluations of the day's actions show that in 30% of the towns where the action is celebrated, the city council has actually improved situations that were proven to be dangerous,

putting in new crossing places for pedestrians and bikes and by erecting fences in front of schools and around playgrounds, etc.

To help expose these unsafe places, on the street playing days children create "It Can Be Different" pins and then put them on unsafe places. Mayors are then invited for a pre-arranged walk along these unsafe places.

"For a while the government had the goal of reducing the speed limit within cities to 30 km/h," says de Wit. "Unfortunately they dropped this idea. We have not."

This year the theme was "Stop Speeding." Last year, hundreds of groups of kids helped check the speed of cars throughout the Netherlands. The results, called "The Limit," were shocking. Almost all cars were speeding in the 30 km/h zones.

Play and be Happy

I decided to visit some of the streets that were opened to child traffic. While biking I could already hear the lovely sound of laughing, yelling and playing kids long before I reached the beautifully decorated fence that was blocking one street. Here, and on other streets, there was a banner saying "National Street Playing Day!" The whole street was divided into several playing areas with all kinds of toys and old-style Dutch games. There was a lunch place where people could go and get a drink, snack or some fruit.

Everywhere children were running, biking, playing and drawing, or jumping on the big air-couch while their parents, friends and grand-



Roeland Kuijper

parents sat together and talked.

The street has been a place for social interaction for centuries, just as children learn about life while playing. Car dominated streets deserve political attention. Humanity starts in the street! The normal living street has to be there for the people who live there.

A street is a country, a world.

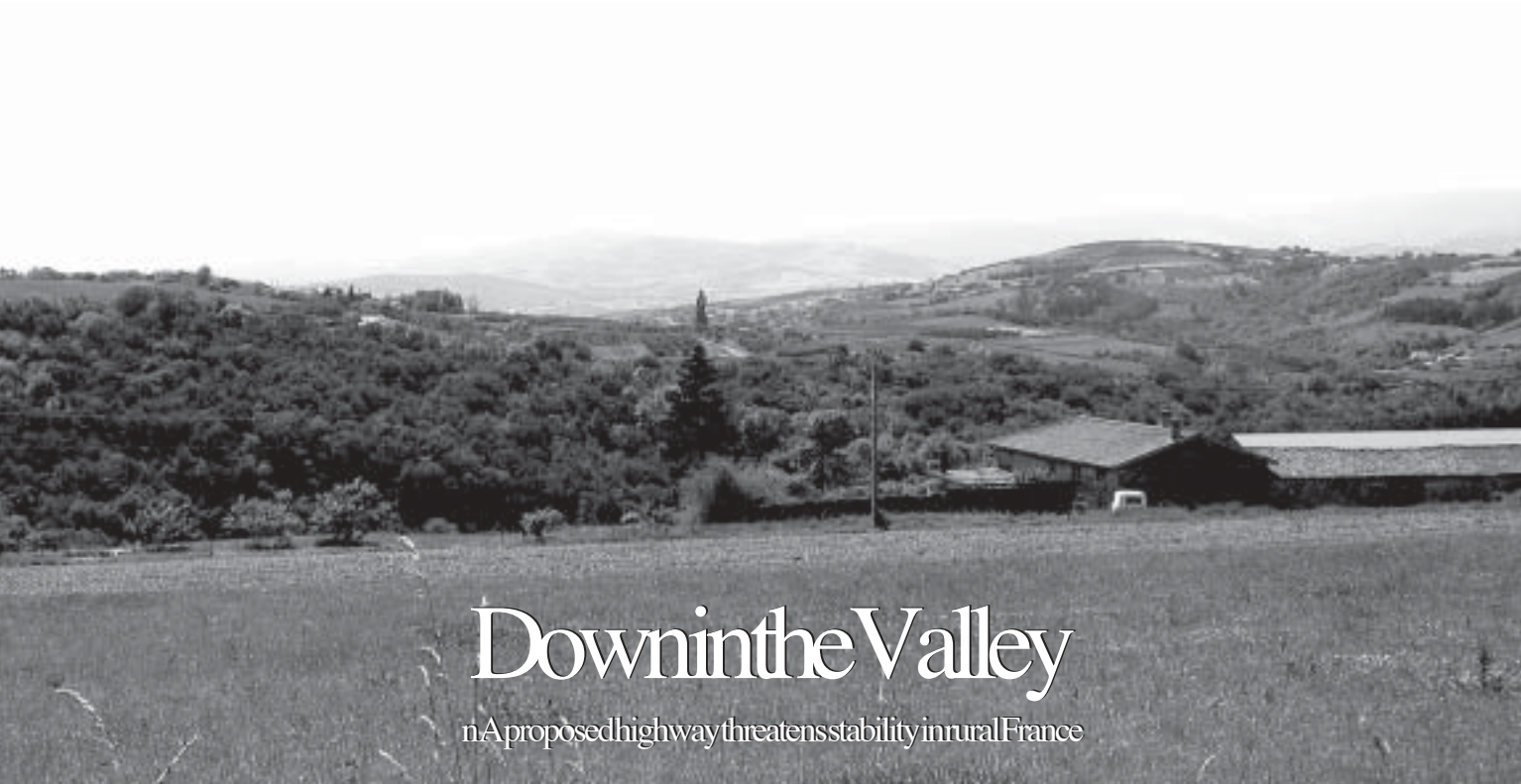
National Street Playing Day can serve as a glimpse into a world where children, adults and the elderly from all colours and sizes can actively live and play together on a street that they chose to make car free.

Your street could be next. . . n



Slow Down!

- Speed contributes to at least 30% of road traffic crashes and deaths
- A collision with a vehicle moving 50 km/h is fatal for 75% of pedestrians; at 30 km/h, this figure goes down to 10% (Source: 3VO).
- Traffic accidents kill more children and young people aged 5-29 than any other cause of death (Source: WHO).
- In low- and middle-income countries children have much higher rates of road traffic death than in high-income countries (Source: WHO).
- In the Netherlands in 2003, 42 children under the age of 10 died in car accidents (Source: 3VO).
- In Vietnam in 2001, an average of 11 children died each day in traffic accidents (Source: WHO).



Down in the Valley

A proposed highway threatens stability in rural France

by Mokai

Between the Loire and the Rhone rivers in the hills of France are the ruins of one of the longest of the Roman aqueducts, built almost 2,000 years ago. Called the Gier Aqueduct, this historic feat of engineering overcame a rugged landscape to carry water 75 km to the Roman city of Lugdunum—modern-day Lyon.

Today, these same hills could soon be the site of a proposed ultra-modern toll-road. Traveling roughly the same path as the old aqueduct, the A45 super-highway would cut a broad swath across the terrain and through fragile village communities, threatening to permanently alter the culture and the environment of a unique rural area.

This highway project fits together with a planned beltway around the west side of Lyon and other projects in France to form the links of a proposed super-highway linking Spain to Western Europe by a more direct Hamburg-Gibraltar axis.

For small farmers in the southeast corner of the Loire Department, the impact on day-to-day life will be immeasurable, as their villages

become the roadside scenery to tens of thousands of vehicles and trucks per day.

Plans for the “A45 Autoroute” have existed for over 30 years, but have always been controversial because the proposed route doubles an existing freeway five kilometres away. In June 2005, the government completed studies for the road’s construction, and the public inquiry will begin at the end of the year. Proponents of the A45 are confident the road will go forward.

Meanwhile, people in the path of the proposed construction await their fate, without information on how the government will deal with expropriated land or buildings; uncertain how farmers will be compensated for lost agricultural tracts; or what impacts on the value of their property and quality of life homeowners will see once they are adjacent to an active freeway.

Increasingly, opposition to the A45—which would link Lyon and St. Etienne—is growing in the more urban areas in the Rhone Valley, while some in the more rural and depressed Stephanoise region cling to the vain hope that the area’s economic and transportation woes could be solved by the project.

The old A47 freeway is in disrepair, overloaded with large trucks and clogged with people commuting from St. Etienne to work in Lyon. This congestion is the reason for the new freeway, but ironically, while the new road would provide quick transit through the region for foreign trucks, improvements on the existing road and work on alternative means of intra-region transportation, like tramways and better train service are being sacrificed.

The Gier Valley is experiencing a net loss of population after decades of under-employment in the steel industry. The countryside clings between the cities and the industrial areas, on the brink of being enveloped by the spreading suburbs. The convoluted topography has allowed isolation to endure, where tiny villages dating from the 12th century cling to rows of hilltops against the backdrop of France’s *Massif Central* and narrow, little-used roadways wind along the creases in the land, linking the villages.

The Fruits of Labour

The gem of this group of rural communities is the *Coteaux du Jarez*, where fields and forests give way to verdant orchards. In the spring, the hills



tum multi-coloured as the different varieties burst into flower, and by summer, abundant cherries, prunes, peaches and apricots are harvested, with apples and pears following in the fall. It is the kind of place where residents consume the milk, butter and fresh cheeses of local small-scale dairy farmers, and fruit-growers descend to the open-air markets in the valley to sell their produce.

Perched on a steep hilltop, the village of Cellieu is home to several dozen small family farms. Fruit farmers work the dozen or so hectares that they have tended for generations, taking pride in growing a premium fruit. Hervé Couzon, 35, inherited the ten-hectare farm his grandfather began; his father converted the farm to organic production 20 years ago. Couzon works ten-hour days to maintain it, growing less fruit with pesticide-free methods—about ten tons per hectare each year—but employing more people

“
From one day to the next, this quiet valley will receive 40 percent of the traffic between St Etienne and Lyon, which could include thousands of trucks a day.
 ”

than a non-organic farm would. In the process he accomplishes what he calls his “desire to nourish and please humanity with healthy products.”

Couzon was born and raised here, and has traveled and lived as far away as Eastern Europe and Senegal. His wife is an economics professor, and with two young children and his mother—retired from administering the farm—to support, the A45 hits home. “I stayed in farming because I wanted to maintain our family’s place here.” Referring to the noise and the visual blight on the landscape, he says: “I’m more worried about the overall disaster this road would cause than I am about the nuisance to me.”



But as he prepares for his role in the village’s annual “Feast of the Cherries” and transports his workers to the orchard along the quiet country roads, he realises that sheer physical disruption is not the worst threat from the road. He worries about the reputation of their region’s produce, and the effect of tons of pollution raining down on their orchards from the super-highway; chemical-laden dust carrying lead, zinc, and hydrocarbons that would cover the trees, the fruit and also the workers.

The Automotive Orchard

“I have to assume a major impact on my production and the health of my trees. The road is less than 200 m from half my orchards. The same pollution will be in the irrigation ponds,” says Couzon.

Because of the steep hillsides in the Coteaux du Jarez, the road would involve a series of tunnels and bridges across the relatively pristine hills. On the west side of the village, the freeway would enter a long tunnel, below one of Couzon’s orchards. Emerging on the north side, near more of his trees, it would enter the upper reaches of the densely farmed Vallée de la Durèze. Cutting across the hillsides through croplands, it would cross the area’s streams via a series of viaducts, before leaving the valley by a long 6% grade—the maximum pitch allowable for this kind of trucking route.

Imposed on top of the peaches and apples, the road would completely transform the small

valley and the lives of its inhabitants. It would take ten years or more of construction to complete the project. Then would come the noise and pollution of what the government estimates would be 31,000 vehicles a day, but what critics say would be many more. From one day to the next, this quiet valley will receive 40% of the traffic between St. Etienne and Lyon, which could include thousands of trucks a day.

The numbers are controversial. Forecasts predict a doubling of truck traffic before 2015—the earliest date the road could be completed. Traffic in the region has tripled in the last three decades, but the government has downsized its own predictions. In 1993, it was projected there would be 114,300 vehicles a day using the A47 corridor by 2010, but recent documents predicted only 83,000 by 2020. In the summer of 2002, at the height of the season, close to 120,000 vehicles scrambled onto the freeway each day.

According to “Sauvegardé du Jarez,” a local group opposing the highway, studies have shown that overall traffic in the Stéphanaise region could grow 3% annually—close to 135,000 vehicles on the road between Lyon and St. Etienne in 2020. The old A47, left to rot for over a generation, would have more traffic after the completion of the A45 than it does today, and the peaceful valley of the Durèze River would be constantly from traffic issuing from the tunnel, and the constant assault of noise and pollution from long-distance trucks down-shifting on the long, steep grade above the village of Chagnon. ➤



Stay and Farm the Land

Chagnon has a storybook charm. Tucked into the landscape, it feels like it's been inhabited forever, and it probably has, long before the nearby Roman ruins were built. Recently the locals inaugurated a new monument, a replica of the stone placed there by the Emperor Hadrien forbidding peasants to plant near the aqueduct, only this new version forbids paving and polluting. Quoted in the *Tribune Progrès*, Marcel Petiot, the mayor of Chagnon lamented, "A drama for our farms! Properties cut in two!"

He says the prevailing winds will blow the emissions and dust from the super-highway onto fields where farmers grow grain and hay for their cows, and onto the village itself. "Trucks full of fruit will be coming directly from Portugal and Spain in competition with our local produce. My administration was elected to protect our rural status. We want our young people to stay and farm. What good will the A45 bring us? Nothing!"

François Catalano, 64, is a locally born, retired teacher who has lived in Cellieu for 30 years. He is the spokesperson for *Sauvegarde du Jarez*. Catalano enjoys the morning sun on his small vegetable garden and loves to take quiet walks along the pathways by his home, where he can see the wildlife and experience the peace of the hills and valleys. "The businessmen of St. Etienne tell us that they need the A45," says Catalano. "Our elected officials say the same because industry is more powerful than the handful of those of us against the road."

"As long as most of the jobs are in Lyon, we should have a regional express train. But, really, the politicians should be creating local jobs, here in the Coteaux du Jarez and in the Gier Valley. They're ignoring the urgency. We need light rail to the industrial parks where the trains don't go. And what about carrying trucking containers on trains? It's good enough for Switzerland, but here, they don't dare stick their necks out and start developing it. Instead it is the super-highway."

Pascal Gamido, 61, has been the mayor of La Talaudière for 21 years. Situated on the edge of the urban sprawl around St. Etienne, this small town of less than 7,000 inhabitants has a well-defined town centre and an enviable setting in the surrounding countryside.

The A45 would destroy this, cutting the municipality in two, placing a bridge carrying tens of thousands of vehicles at the spot where the residents enjoy the banks of the Ondan River, diverting the river itself to make way for the massive road.

For Mr. Gamido, it makes no sense to put off fixing the existing freeway while waiting fifteen years for the new one. "We need the political will to fix the A47, which has not seen any improvement in 40 years!" he says. "Almost everyone here is against the A45. The town of Givors also opposes the new freeway. They understand that



François Catalano stands before a roadside display opposing the A45 in the Coteaux du Jarez near Lyon.

while they're working on the A45, the conditions in the valley will just get worse."

Feverish planning is underway for the rapid urbanisation of St. Etienne and its surroundings. Tramways are seen within the city, not between towns. The idea is that people will leave their cars at the edge of the city, not at home. The poorer, largely immigrant population along the old A47 are left with few transportation options, while those who can afford the higher gas prices and expensive tolls are favoured.

Even widening the old autoroute to three lanes, given that it must carry all the area's traffic for at least the next 15 years, is seen as too costly, while estimates of the cost to the public of the new A45—with its expensive tunnels and viaducts—are climbing to 70%, with the locals paying the lion's share. Yet all that many can see is the new road.

Businessman and chamber of commerce member Bernard Moissonnier was quoted in *Le Point* describing in glowing terms the creation of a huge urban area. "In fifty years, Lyon will look like Los Angeles," he crows. With the A45 as a direct link to Lyon he hopes to attract travelers to a new airport in St. Etienne. "It is our destiny to become the western airport of this great conglomerate." In this vision, the countryside around towns like La Talaudière, St. Martin la Plaine and St. Maurice sur Dargoire is to be swallowed up by mushrooming bedroom communities. The "destiny" of longtime, rural residents is to become

irrelevant in their own towns, land prices outstripping their family's means, expensive toll roads and high-priced petrol limiting their options.

Although they will live with the noise and pollution of the A45, many will be unable to access the new freeway—fewer entry points and toll areas means a faster transit for those crossing the region—so locals will continue to go down to the valley as they always have and, along with those languishing along the old free-way corridor, use the dilapidated A47 to get to Lyon and St. Etienne.

The Gier aqueduct was in service for 400 years before the peasants began to disassemble it to sabotage the waning Roman Empire or just to obtain stone for their own use. The A45 may not come on-line until 2020, and may never have as long a usage, arriving late in the petroleum era.

In December 2004, the highest bridge in the world—the Millau viaduct—opened at the southern end of the *Massif Central*. Two and a half kilometres long, rising 290m above the Tam gorge, it is like the A45: a kind of overkill, a paean to the French love for the car; a much-trumpeted symbol of modern France. Ironically, at the same time it is another link towards getting trucks across the country faster—at the price of the uniquely French values encompassed within their disappearing countryside.

Mokai is a musician and activist based in San Francisco, California, USA. His last name was destroyed by a super-highway.

want to cut your car use?

*Dear Anna,
I am a single parent with two kids. I want to be a car-free role model for my kids because I don't want them growing up into heartless car addicts, but sometimes I really need to use a car. Can you give me advice on how to use a car as little as possible, so my little treasures will be proud?*

Signed,
Single Parent

Dear Single Parent,
My friends in your position can't afford a car, yet are burdened with heavy loads. Localising is your best bet. It is convenient and cheap. Let's consider it from the kid's viewpoint.

Children have the right to clean air, to be safe and to active play. Did you know:

- Car users breathe three times more poisons from fumes as cyclists or walkers.
- Asthma is on the rise.
- Children are recommended at least one hour of physical activity a day.
- Inactivity leads to sleep problems and obesity.
- Children who walk or cycle to school are alert and get better results than those arriving by car.

Even if a destination that can only be reached by car seems superior, by driving there you aren't improving anyone's health. Choose the nearer option instead. Walking and cycling are feasible, even when travelling with two kids.

Outside of a car you randomly meet people along the way. These regular interactions help nourish your daily needs for friendships, child-minding, school runs, car or shopping-trip sharing.

For short trips, car-free or car-lite travel really matters. As the engine is cold, car trips of less than two miles pollute by up to 60% more. Catalytic converters take at least six miles to begin working.

Children love walking, cycling and public transport and if you are not driving, you'll have more attention for them. It can take longer but this is quality time with your family.

You'll require waterproofs, umbrellas, maps, lights and reflectives to keep dry, seen and safe.

Still, I realise that sometimes by car is the only sensible way. Better driving habits can cut fuel consumption and emissions by up to 25%. Take heed of some tips as petrol prices are sure to rise as oil extraction peaks.

Know the way to avoid getting lost, stuck in jams or roadworks. Plan a direct route, ideally off-peak and daytime. Drivers should use main roads. Zig-zagging through residential streets makes these streets unsafe, especially for kids, the elderly and the disabled. Plus it is a pollution and noise nuisance.

Try lift sharing. Who is going the same way? Ask about sharing and safer routes to work, nursery or school. Swap child-care, drop-offs and pick-ups. You'll enjoy cost savings and have more free time. Some local authorities run sharing websites. Register as a driver or passenger. Sharing benefits everyone. You'll pocket the fuel costs as well as those for wear and tear. Share a shopping run and save on two-for-one offers.

Mix your travel. Could you go part of the way on foot, by bicycle or bus? Sturdy cycle trailers (e.g., Burley or Chariot) can cope with two kids and luggage. Electric bikes mix human power with assisted propulsion. Lock bikes and switch to public transport, car hire, taxi or lift share. Or walk, cycle or park and then use a Park-and-Ride bus, train or tram. Try to keep town centres cleaner where air quality matters most.

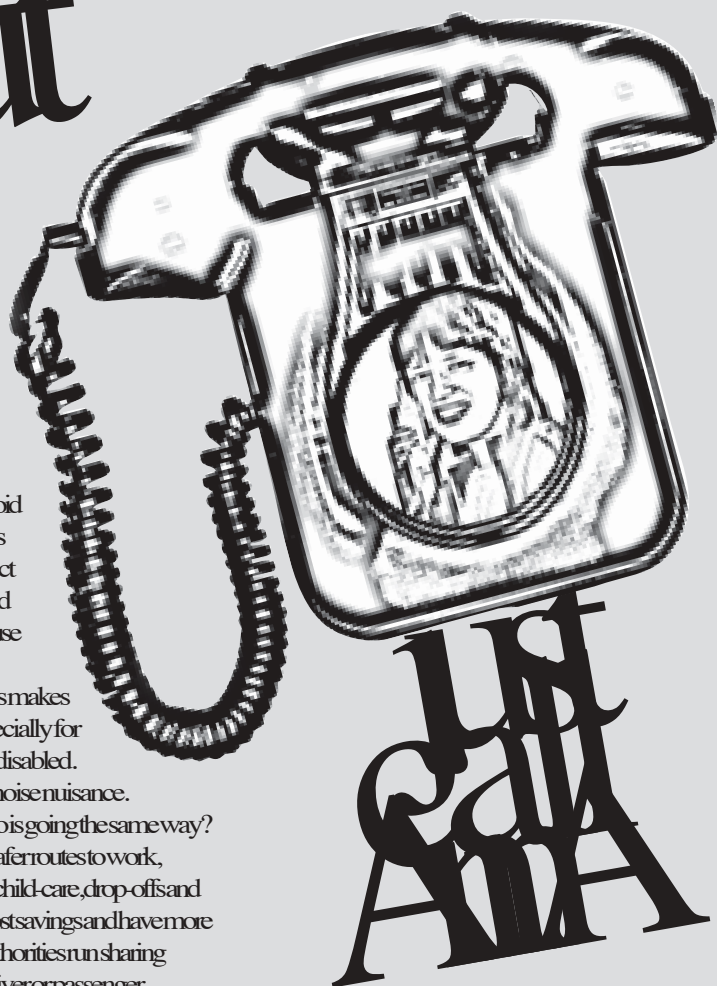
Take up family travel offers on trains.

If you rarely use a car, join a car club or share ownership with a friend or neighbour. Members pay as they drive and benefit from a choice of vehicles. They save around £1,400+ per year and have less maintenance and car-care hassles.

Go the lightest way. If there is a choice, pick the vehicle with the best fuel efficiency—the smallest. This is crucial when changing cars. A trailer or car hire is for exceptional needs.

Anticipate and think ahead for a smooth driving style that is safer, greener and saves on spares. Go below the limit in town where 20 mph is plenty; 40-60 mph gives best fuel efficiency on faster roads. Driving at 70 mph can use up to 30% more fuel than at 50 mph.

Fuel and energy efficiency is also important. Reduced drag by removing a roof rack or excess weight, and closing windows. Drive off straight away. Turn the engine off if you expect to wait for more than 10 seconds. This is crucial in towns.



Alternative fuels give cheaper rides as does turning off air conditioning.

Diesel is worse for health than petrol.

Regular maintenance will keep the engine tuned. Inflating tires to the correct pressure improves safety and cuts emissions by 5%.

When replacing your car, opt for a small model such as a Smart Car. British taxation favours low emissions and alternative fuels. Get one with a good user, pedestrian and cyclist safety record (i.e., no bull bars or four-wheel drives). Responsibly dispose of any unwanted vehicle.

Finally, enjoy the benefits. Spend less time and money on travel and you'll have extra for your family. British households spend £1 in every £6 on motoring, more than on food or housing. You'll also be healthier.

Persevere at responsible car use. Tread lightly on the earth. It is our children's inheritance.

If you have a question you would like Anna to address in a future column, write her at <info@cuttingyourcaruse.co.uk>.

Anna Semlyen is the author of Cutting Your Car Use (www.cuttingyourcaruse.co.uk). Sales £55,000+. She is actively seeking publishers and potential authors in other countries to produce local editions (except North America or Wales). Interested? E-mail john@greenbooks.co.uk.



We Are Part of It

Getting to the source with documentary filmmaker Martin Marecek

by Steven Logan

"Oil is everywhere. It is as if you were in London or Prague and you went four stops on the metro and then got off. The oil pumps are that close to Baku's [the capital city of Azerbaijan] city centre, says Czech documentary filmmaker Martin Marecek. The stink, the 50°C oppressive heat, it was terrible—an oil apocalypse."

"The city tram lines have mostly been shut down," he adds.

"Where do the things we have come from?" asks Marecek, whose film, *Source**, premiered at the recent One World Film Festival in Prague. Acknowledging the very everyday things we take for granted, he asks, "Where does this juice and t-shirt come from?"

As populations become ever more urbanised, we move further away from the source of our sustenance. The food that fuels the world's cars is no exception. Marecek decided to trace the connections of the oil to its source. It took him and his film crew to the oil fields of Azerbaijan, the Czech Republic's second largest supplier of oil.

What Lies Underneath?

On May 25, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline, a US\$3.3 billion project that will take oil through Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan and into the gas tanks of cardrivers throughout Europe, was inaugurated. Seventy percent of the funding comes from public institutions—taxpayer money—with public bodies such as the World Bank providing over US\$600 million.

The project has been plagued with problems. Czech-based CEE Bankwatch Network, in its *Third*

Fact Finding Mission report on Azerbaijan, writes that "a number of BTC affected communities are still waiting for compensation and [there are] widespread cases of corruption during the land compensation process." [Ed.: See "Studies and Reports," page 26, for more on the report.]

Transparency International ranks Azerbaijan 140th out of 146 countries in its global corruption index. Yet at the same time, out of 28 poor countries listed in the World Bank's 2005 "Global Development Finance" report, Azerbaijan received the most foreign direct investment by far with over \$1 billion. "Poor countries should continue efforts to improve their investment climate," suggests the report.

In *Source**, vice-president of the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCA) Chosbet Jusifzadeh

sits contently in his office, ignoring the ringing government phone while extolling the virtues of oil. SOCA holds 25% of the shares in the BTC consortium. The former service director, Ilham Aliyev, is now the president of the country. He succeeded his father as president, in elections generally regarded as falsified.

Marecek, who also edited the film, juxtaposes interviews with high-ranking officials who have directly benefited from Azerbaijan's wealth of oil with others who have seen little benefit from the huge investment in the country.

"Seventy percent of Azerbaijan is live in poverty," says Independent Union dissident Mirvari Gahramanli, whom makes a memorable first appearance in the film. Gahramanli and film crew have gathered at an oil worker's house next to Baku's oil fields. A luxurious villa is perched on the hill. "I want all of Europe to see this. When people drive their cars let them see how we get oil. How he [the workers sitting next to her] puts his soul into extracting it."

The foreign investor fueling this finance is British Petroleum, leading a consortium of 11 companies in the ownership of BTC. BP Azerbaijan president Michael Townsend says in the film that there are three things that drive the world of oil: To produce as much oil as possible for the minimum of costs to achieve the maximum profit. Marecek asked for access to the BTC facilities, but Townsend said this would be "virtually impossible" and anyway it is 20 km from the Georgian border and nothing much is happening there. Townsend does pass on promotional videos of the BTC pipeline. They are incorporated into *Source** and are wonderful examples of how BP is putting corporate spin on a complex issue.

Move Along...

Nothing Here to See

In the village of Zayam, western Azerbaijan, not far from the Georgian border, *Source** finds that something is happening. Some landowners are



Women from the town of Zayam in western Azerbaijan speak about unjust treatment from local government officials.

over-compensated and others who received no money are still seeing bulldozers digging up their land to build the pipeline. "They ruin land that is officially ours," says one landowner.

The Bankwatch report found that in 2002, village officials took the deeds to villagers' lands on the pretext that they needed to be translated; however, when the deeds were returned the documents had been changed and the land was no longer located on the pipeline route.

Marecek and his crew were also under surveillance by secret police and at one point, while filming residents who lived next to the pipeline in Zeyam, they were detained by security forces.

"They held us, but only for a short while because the government is afraid of international European journalists from the West and the possible scandal that might result," says Marecek.

Marecek's film is a project of Auto*Mat, a Czech organisation that explores mobility, particularly in Prague where car ownership is among the highest in Europe. Marecek envisions Auto*Mat, which began as a response to Prague families fleeing the unlivable city, as a machine that will work its way across landscapes. Its goal is to bring artists and film makers together with other alternative transport advocates to help bring the idea to more people.

"Have the feeling that *Car Busters* readers and people at festivals who see this film have already thought about the problem. I don't want my friends to see this film, I want my neighbour to see it," says Marecek. "He complained to me that I am getting in his way because I ride my bike. I am obviously going slower than him, he thinks, and I could fall in front of his car."

The film is also for granting agencies such as the International Monetary Fund and the European Investment Bank so they can get information about the problems with the BTC pipeline project, says Marecek. "They need to follow and know not to support corrupt projects."

"We need organisations like the United



This is the black gold. For that we work our asses off, says one worker in an oil field outside of Baku.

Nations or the World Bank, but we also need someone to distribute the money to local places. For example, the UN or the World Bank gives money to Azerbaijan. They create a local branch, try to cooperate with the local government and then attempt to do local projects, but the money gets lost in corruption," says Marecek.

"There is a place here for good NGOs, but many of them are corrupt."

As Elder Zeynatov, a dissident and member of the Human Rights Centre, says in the film, 10% of the money from oil goes to the people of Azerbaijan, while the rest ends up in the pockets of the government. The resources of the land are not benefiting the people of the land.

"When you buy oil you invest in the corrupt regime of Azerbaijan," says Zeynatov.

Marecek hopes that the film will provoke a response among groups looking for a solution to the problems. "Support for such huge projects like the oil pipeline is problematic, but if you support 20 small local projects, involving solar energy or biomass, then this might help mitigate corruption.

Count Me Out!

Auto*Mat makes a sticker with the phrase *jedv tom* which translates literally as "I go in it," but not going by foot; rather, in the sense that I am moving with the help of a machine or an animal. But the phrase can also be understood as, I play a role in it, or, in other words, we are part of it, a civilisation dependent on vehicle movement.

"Transportation is the number one problem, as our economies are based on transportation," says Marecek. "In the Czech Republic, 15 to 20% of GDP is tied to the car industry."

"Transportation is not only for people, but for foods, goods, and tourism," he says. The technologies that Marshall McLuhan argued are simply extensions of ourselves, take us further around the globe and perpetuate the problems.

And the technological promise that virtual mobility might solve the problems of vehicle mobility has not yet materialised," says Marecek, "rather, the virtual is supporting the physical."

The luxury of our position at World Carfree Network—where we often travel, virtually and physically, just not by car—is that we can publish magazines on Acer computers or we can shoot a documentary film on a Sony camera, but in using the things which come from societies based on transportation then we are still part of it, explains Marecek.

And so we should keep this in mind when we approach our former neighbours from the suburbs, who still drive their SUVs to and from work every day.



Martin Marecek (right) and director of photography Jiri Malek

*Martin Marecek lives and works in Prague. He is currently editing a second film under the Auto*Mat banner that will take on the carfree theme. If you are interested in screening Source*, or simply showing it to your neighbour with the SUV, contact Bionaut Films: bionaut@bionaut.cz or visit www.bionaut.cz and www.automatfilm.cz for more information.*

Velo-city by the Sea

n Car Busters goes to Dublin for the 25th anniversary of this bike conference

by Steven Logan

Two wheels good, four wheels bad! This was the impromptu chant of an old Irishman who had just come out from a dip in the Irish Sea, a stone's throw from the tower in which James Joyce set the opening scene of *Ulysses*. "I have pictures of cars parked in the bike lanes all over Dublin," he told me. "Should I bring them to the conference?" I encouraged him to. He and his fellow bathers, content after their refreshing swim, were generally pleased that a bicycle conference was happening in Dublin.

This was not part of the conference programme, but the cycle out to the sea felt necessary after three days of sitting inside *listening* to people talk about cycling. The aforementioned Irishman's chant reminds us that bike conferences like Velo-city—where people from over 40 countries gathered to talk about "Delivering the Vision," the catch-all conference theme—should address both the benefits of cycling, as well as the nuisance that driving represents to developing extensive cycling networks.

"It is more difficult to take space away from cars than it is to raise taxes," proclaimed Enrique Peñalosa in his keynote address. In one of the conference's more impassioned speeches, Peñalosa said that bicycle lanes should not just be placed where there is space; rather, they belong on every single road and this is the "obligation of any democratic government."

Paris Vice-Mayor Denis Baupin also emphasised that city space needs to be re-allocated away from the car and towards the bicycle. "Giving the world over to cars is barbarous," said Baupin.

Starting from 2001, and continuing until 2007, Paris plan traffic calming in over 30 districts. Cyclists are increasingly allowed to ride against traffic on one-way streets. This came up again in the conference on a session devoted to counter-flow. Cyclists are often chided for going the "wrong" way down one-way streets, but one study of a busy Montreal street where half the cyclists rode against the traffic showed that there were no more accidents than on a regular street. Counter-flow also slows drivers, keeps cyclists off busy, main roads and opens up new possibilities for cycle lanes.

These achievements, said Baupin, are the result of political will and pressure from cyclists, and contributed to a 41% increase in bike traffic in the last three years.

Aside from Peñalosa and Baupin, many of the conference speakers were there to find ways to increase cycling. Andrew Salkeld of Leicester, UK, suggested a bicycle film festival in cities, while other presenters emphasised the health benefits of cycling, as a way to combat growing obesity. Bernard Delhaye, president of GRACQ, The Daily Cyclists' Research and Action Group in Belgium, went as far to say that car drivers and cyclists need to get along better and understand each other to improve cycling conditions.

Angelavander Kloof, of the Centre for Immigrant Women in Tilburg, The Netherlands, had a small poster display among many others on the second floor of the main hall. The centre has been providing cycle training for immigrant women for over 20 years.

In Tilburg, 25% of the population is made up of immigrants from countries like Morocco, Turkey, Somalia, and the Caribbean islands. "Many women hear from a young age that cycling is not good for them, it is not proper and they are too stupid to learn such things," says vander Kloof. To address this, the centre started "Cycle Friends."

"We recruit Dutch women who would like to get in contact with immigrant women," she says. "They cycle together and arrange everything at their own convenience."

In another presentation, Damien O'Tuama, whose organisation helped prepare the Dublin public for the smoking ban in bars and restaurants, showed



Conference participant Dave Holiday wins our first annual best dressed cyclist award.

how the tactics might be transferred to banning cars. At first, many people were against the smoking ban, but it is now commonplace. Yet, this took years to develop and needed strong alliances between government departments, professional bodies and other organisations.

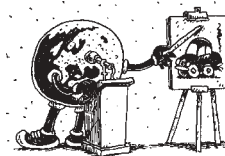
Although the issue of car-dominated streets as an impediment to cycling could have been addressed at the conference in more constructive ways, John Grimshaw, founder and director of Sustrans, made clear in his presentation that "you can't increase cycle use without cutting car use."

"One of the challenges is how to positively encourage people not to have cars, because at the moment you do not get rewarded if you give up a car," he said in an exclusive interview after his presentation. If people give up their cars, he said, the city could extend the sidewalks in front of their houses and plant trees there.

"All of us tip-toe around the business of restricting car use, that's why we build greenways because we are building them independent of the car infrastructure. I see greenways as creating a second layer of transport that is almost invisible, but when the crisis comes they will have their place."

By the end, it was clear that there is always room for improving the image of cycling and that city roads need to be opened up to cyclists, in a safe and significant way. As I biked home from our final day of the conference, trying to find a space for myself between the mess of Dublin traffic, the tiny bike lane, and the ominous curb, I returned to the bather's chant, "Two wheels good! Four wheels bad!" n

Skill Sharing



edited by *Gandalf Titting*

Have you ever imagined of starting your own cycling business? If so, then Jim Gregory might be able to help. Gregory is one of the co-owners of Bikes at Work <www.bikesatwork.com> a firm that has been delivering all sorts of things by bikes in Ames, Iowa, US, since 1991. What follows is an excerpt from Gregory's *Cycling for Profit*, now out of print. If you find the reading inspiring, there are bound to be a few copies kicking around both real and virtual bookshops.

Commercial Cycling

Some people ride a bike for recreation or exercise. Others ride a bicycle in competition. Still others use their bicycle to get to work or do personal errands. A fourth group of people uses a bicycle to earn a living. I refer to this last group of people as commercial cyclists.

Commercial cyclists do a wider range of work. They carry everything from pharmaceuticals or documents inside a messenger bag to large boxes or furniture using cargo bikes or trailers. Some commercial cyclists even carry people, using bicycle taxis called pedicabs.

Worldwide, commercial cyclists play an important role in urban transportation. They are most commonly found in countries where the cost of labour is comparatively low and the cost of automobiles or trucks is high. For example, *Sustainable Transport* magazine reports that there were an estimated 37,000 pedicabs operating in the center of Ho Chi Minh City in 1995. Pune, India, a city of 1.6 million, has 50,000 cyclists working for hire.

Commercial cyclists are much less prevalent in the US, where labour is comparatively more expensive. In the US, most commercial cyclists work as bike couriers in the downtown business districts of many large cities. Even the number of these has been declining, however, with the growing use of fax machines and e-mail.

Still, commercial cyclists could be serving much more of the local transportation needs of the US. According to TransAct, a nonprofit transportation advocacy organisation, nearly half of all trips are five miles or less in length, and more than 20% are less than 12 miles. These trips are well within the capacities of a cyclist, and in some instances can be done more quickly and cheaply with a bicycle than by car.

The Business

For those wanting to start their own small business, working as a cyclist has several advantages.



Ted Ingram, mountain bike racer, moving a washing machine in downtown Toronto, Canada.

The amount of money needed to get started is very low. In some instances all that is needed is a bicycle. Even the most capital-intensive businesses require only a few thousand dollars to get started, a fraction of what it costs to start most other businesses. Nor is a building or office usually needed; in most instances, you can simply work from your home.

Moreover, most cycling businesses are subject to few, if any, government regulations. A commercial driver's license is not required, nor will most businesses described in this book need a permit to operate. (Check with your state and local government to make certain, though.) Using a bicycle may even exempt a business from the rules that other businesses would follow.

For example, when I informed the city that I wanted to start a curbside recycling service, I was told that I would need a local waste hauling permit and have to get my vehicle inspected annually. When I told them that my "vehicle" was actually a bicycle, both the permit and inspection requirements were dropped.

The Disadvantages

Commercial cycling has some distinct disadvantages. First, it can be dangerous. Commercial cyclists usually have to ride in traffic and, unlike the vehicles around them, have little protection in a collision. For these reasons, it is important to always be alert to traffic, be aware of road con-

ditions, and always wear protective head gear when necessary. Perhaps most important is to not be reckless or foolhardy. There is an old adage among bike messengers that says, "there are old bike couriers, and bold bike couriers, but there are no old, bold bike couriers."

Second, cycling is usually not very remunerative. While a cyclist can often earn US\$10 per hour or more for each hour ridden, a significant amount of time is also spent off the bike, either doing repairs, preparing invoices, or doing other types of record-keeping. Consequently, earning a sufficient income can be a challenge. Most cyclists have to be frugal with their money.

Third, the work can be very tiring, especially when it is necessary to hurry all day, or carry several heavy loads. Commercial cycling requires a great deal of stamina.

Fourth, the weather is not always cooperative. Unlike a recreational or commuting cyclist, commercial cyclists can rarely choose what days they want to ride. No matter whether it is sunny, raining, or snowing, commercial cyclists have to work. Failure to ride on inclement days not only results in a loss of income, but can result in a loss of customers, especially those needing more dependable service.

If you are undeterred by these aspects of the job, then the next step in becoming a commercial cyclist is to determine what kind of work is most appropriate for your circumstances.

Lisa Logan

Studies & Reports



Traffic Jams Worsening

A report by the Texas Transportation Institute shows that congestion in the United States delayed travelers 79 million more hours and wasted 69 million more gallons of fuel in 2003 than in 2002.

The 2005 *Urban Mobility Report* found that overall in 2003, there were 3.7 billion hours of travel delay and 2.3 billion gallons of wasted fuel for a total cost of more than US\$63 billion. There are now 51 American cities in which the average motorist is delayed for least 20 hours a year.

London Traffic

Fatalities Down 21%

New figures from Transport for London, the city's transport agency, show that the number of people killed on London's roads fell by 21% last year.

There were also 939 fewer serious injuries compared to 2003, down to 3,953.

The positive results led Mayor Ken Livingstone to ask for an even more challenging target of a 50% reduction by 2010 in the number of deaths and serious injuries on the city's roads.

Other key figures: Cyclist deaths and injuries were down 23%, the government target for reducing the number of cyclists killed and seriously injured was reached six years ahead of schedule, the number of car occupants killed or seriously injured was down 24%, and the number of motorised two-wheeler riders killed or seriously injured was down 22%.

A Transport for London press release thanks measures such as 20 mph (30 kmh) zones, improved road layout and extra safety cameras.

Fact-Finding Mission Reports Problems with BP Pipeline

The *Third International Fact-Finding Mission to Azerbaijan and Georgia*, investigating the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline, was released in May by CEE Bankwatch Network, Friends of the Earth UK, Les Amis de la Terre, Green Alternative, National Ecological Center for Ukraine and Centre for Civic Initiatives.

The purpose behind the missions to Georgia and Azerbaijan was to investigate areas of environmental and social concern in relation to the pipeline project.

The Georgian report contains leaked documents detailing disputes between the Georgian government, British Petroleum and international financial institutions regarding safety concerns.

The Azerbaijan part points at the extent to which the project is being implemented in breach of agreed standards, particularly those relating to land acquisition.

Together, the two reports reveal a catalogue of unresolved problems with the BTC project, such as environmental risks and inadequately addressed compensation cases.

For more on the BTC pipeline, see also "We Are Part of It," our interview with filmmaker Martin Marecek on page 22.



Driven to Spend:

Trapped by the Automobile

A new study by the Surface Transportation Policy Project and the Center for Neighborhood Technology shows that US families are paying a high price to meet their transportation needs and families in areas with fewer transportation choices carry even greater burdens.

Driven to Spend: Pumping Dollars out of Our Households and Communities updates prior transportation cost studies published by the two organisations, but provides information for the first time on the effect of gas prices on family budgets. The authors conclude that US families need to find alternatives to expensive automobile transport.

"The big squeeze is on, with wages down and housing and transportation costs at record levels. Transportation is one area where we can do something to help families and regions spend less, but it depends on transportation officials making wise use of flexible federal dollars to provide less costly alternatives to automobile travel," says Scott Bernstein, president of the Center for Neighborhood Technology.

The full report is available on the website of the Surface Transportation Policy Project at <www.transact.org/library/reports_pdfs/driven_to_spend>.

Getting People to Walk: Changing Behaviour

A recent article in *Access*, the magazine of the University of California Transportation Center, asks, "Which comes first: The neighbourhood or the walking?"

In other words, what encourages people to leave their cars behind and walk instead of driving, asks Susan Handy, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Science and Policy at the University of California in Davis? Is changing the built environment enough to get people out of their cars?

The article looks at the difficulties of determining what factors play a role in people's decisions about their mode of transport.

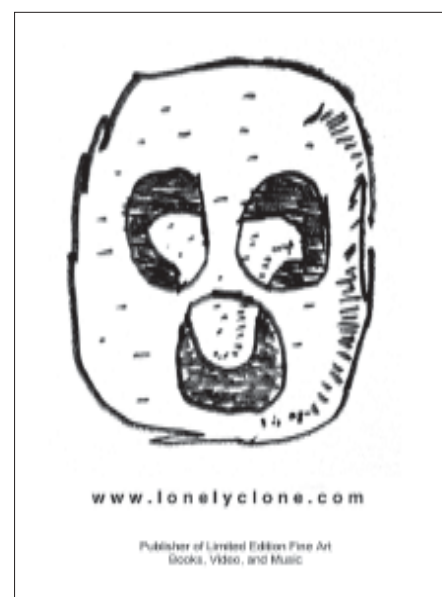
The magazine becomes available on-line sometime after publication at <www.uctc.net/access>. The authors' study can be found at <www.trb.org/downloads/sr282/papers/sr282Handy.pdf>.

What Makes Cities Child-Friendly?

We all think we know what children need in order to be happy and healthy. Not surprisingly, cars separate kids from these needs. Fresh air, exercise, a safe environment in which to play—these are important not only for healthy children but also for healthy neighborhoods.

Child and Youth-Friendly Land Use and Transport Planning Guidelines by Richard Gilbert and Catherine O'Brien, looks at the impacts of current transport planning on children. A good resource for anyone looking for more reasons not to drive. Read the report at <www.cstcd.org/english/docs/Guidelines.pdf>.

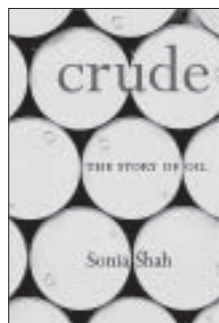
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Reviews



Crude: The Story of Oil
 Sonia Shah, Seven Stories Press, 2004
 ISBN: 1-58322-625-7



Sonia Shah's *Crude* tells the story of the realisation of oil's power at a time in history when American capitalists were particularly well-positioned to extract and sell it for great profit. Oil translated into big money and

money makes the world go 'round.

At 175 pages, *Crude* is a thin book, but dense with compelling facts, statistics, explanations of technology, quotes and engaging stories that give some helpful context for such news that Exxon Mobil's return on investments over the last 30 years were over three times those of other top US companies.

And just as the plastics industry has used chains of carbon atoms to shape new products, Exxon Mobil and others in the oil industry have used stacks of "carbon dollars" to shape government policy, transportation, public opinion, and science.

Recently, the influence of Exxon Mobil on US global warming policy came to light, thanks to the tenacity of Greenpeace. (Along with

descriptions of the treacherous lives of workers on floating rigs, *Crude* includes gripping accounts of Greenpeace activists trying to shut down the rigs and the tragic and heroic stories of those unlucky enough to be living on land above oil deposits.)

Convincing oil industry-sponsored politicians (Harken, Bush, Halliburton, Cheney, Chevron, Rice) that burning oil may not be the cause of global warming was probably not that difficult.

To convince the rest of the US public, university professors were given funding to come up with alternative theories for the cause of the warming (the sun has just got brighter), which were then treated by the US media with the same level of seriousness as the overwhelmingly accepted one, leaving the public with the sense that "the scientists really don't know."

In the transportation industry, long before there was science to dismantle, there were competing means of getting about—means that didn't need much oil—to squash.

At the beginning of the 20th century, after kerosene sales (on which John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil made its initial fortunes) had dropped with the rise of electricity, the recently discovered oil in Texas needed a new market.

Cars, which need three times more energy than trains and thirty times more energy than bicycles to transport people a given distance, were expensive and not immediately popular with the public. They became the natural beloveds of the oil industry, however.

The dismantling of the streetcars system by a coalition of Standard Oil, General Motors, Firestone and other rubber companies was probably the most obvious strong-arming (but punished with only a small fine). They convinced investors to abandon projects already started, like bicycle paths linking Pasadena to Los Angeles.

Later, the National Interstate and Defense Highway System Act put US\$26 billion into the laying of asphalt for cars and trucks, paving the way for a car-dependent society.

The US invasion of Iraq not only highlights this dependency, but perpetuates it as well. According to a story in the May *Atlantic Monthly*, US soldiers on the ground are each burning about nine gallons of gasoline a day (three times what even the average US citizen uses) and, along with Iraqi civilians, face the daily threat of bombs hidden in cars. At the height of bombing by the US military, hundreds of airborne oil tankers refueled the bombers, pumping hundreds of gallons a minute while hovering mid-air.

It is a rather extreme version of *The Scheme for Full Employment*, the 2003 novel by Magnus Mills in which delivery drivers spend all their time delivering parts to keep their vans going.

But this can't go on forever.

Shah's concluding chapter quotes a modern Saudi Arabian proverb: "My father rode a camel, I drive a car, my son rides in a jet airplane. His son will ride a camel."

—Bridget Brown

Music Review

Velo, by Bul Bul, PBE, Portland Bike Ensemble



Anyone who has ridden alone down a quiet road is familiar with the whining clicks, hums and ticks a bicycle can produce—music to a cyclist's ears. Riding is rhythm and rhythm is the backbone of music.

So it's no surprise that people on different sides of the world would turn bicycles into instruments. Oregon USA's Portland Bike Ensemble (PBE) and Austria's Bul Bul (aka Manfred Engelmayr) both succeed in transforming bicycle sounds into music—although their approaches and results are very different. PBE plays free improvised music on actual bicycles for live audiences. Bul Bul culls and edits bicycle sounds to produce polished techno beats.

PBE's methods are both straightforward yet ingenious. Bicycles are stood up side down, wired for amplification through various microphones, and played with a beguiling and surprising array of inventive techniques. Spokes are plucked like the strings of a harp, spinning wheels are touched with microphones to produce ethereal otherworldly tones, and pedals are tuned with metronomic regularity. The result is an ambient soundscape just this side of cacaphony, a mechanical jungle inhabited by curious and expressive machines calling to one another in an organic language. The music evokes a place while the gradual shifts in tempo and intensity call to mind the changing rhythms of a journey over uneven terrain.

Bul Bul's approach is more in the style of classic *musique concrète*, where sounds from one's surroundings are recorded and later reprocessed in the studio. Pioneered in Paris in 1948 by Pierre Schaeffer who spliced together audiocassette cuttings to "sculpt sound," *musique concrète* has undergone a renaissance in recent years as means of recording and reassembling sound have gone digital. Bul Bul records, edits, and loops sounds recorded from various ambient

sources. On *Velo*, his third CD, all the source sounds come from bicycles. The beats are heavy and would fit nicely at a techno rave. One could dance through the CD's 20 minutes of music without identifying the music's unusual source, but with the mini-CD's clever wrapper, the sounds are instantly recognisable.

Both records are noteworthy for the care and attention given to their packaging. The Portland Bike Ensemble's self-titled 2003 release is a 12-inch vinyl LP of which only 500 were made. The cover is hand-painted in abstract washes of vivid color visually echoing the recording's hypnotic layerings. Bul Bul's *Velo* is a cute 3-inch CD (playable on standard disc players) in a small green, white, and orange cardboard sleeve made to resemble a bicycle patch kit. Only 555 copies of *Velo* were made. Either record will be of interest to lovers of bicycles and experimental music.

—Rob Zverina

To order Bul Bul's CD (EUR9), visit [TrostRecords](http://TrostRecords.at/www.trost.at/PBE/svinyi/) at www.trost.at/PBE/svinyi/ (US\$10) on *Old English Spelling Bee* is at www.cosmicjoke.com/PortlandBikeEnsemble.html.

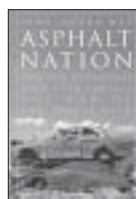
Resources



Nonfiction

Asphalt Nation

How the Automobile Took Over America and How We Can Take It Back
Jane Holtz Kay, 1998, 440 pages
EUR 23, £16, US\$23, AU\$40, or CZK 670



Asphalt Nation is a powerful examination of how the car has ravaged America's cities and landscape over the past 100 years, together with a compelling strategy for reversing our dependency. Demonstrating that there are economic, political, architectural, and personal solutions, Kay shows that radical change is possible.

Carfree Cities

J.H. Crawford, 2000, 324 pages
hardcover: EUR 40, £28, US\$40, AU\$68, or CZK 1180
paperback: EUR 30, £21, US\$30, AU\$52, or CZK 885

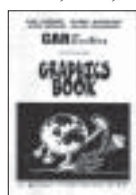


An unapologetic argument for carfree cities combined with a detailed and well thought-out plan, *Carfree Cities* outlines a city structure carefully designed to minimise environmental impact and maximise quality of life.

It gives practical suggestions for implementing Crawford's carfree design in new and existing cities.

Car Busters Graphics Book

Car Busters, 1999, 44 pages
EUR 5, £3.50, US\$5, AU\$9, CZK 125



Our graphics book brings together all the best graphics on file at Car Busters from the artists you see in the magazine. Includes information on how to produce attractive posters and leaflets. The graphics can be reproduced freely (for non-profit purposes) by activist groups for their leaflets, posters, newsletters, etc.

Critical Mass

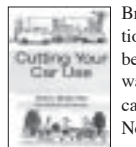
Bicycling's Defiant Celebration
Chris Carlsson, editor, 2002, 256 pages
EUR 23, £16, US\$23, AU\$40, or CZK 670



A pushy and irreverent collection of inkworthy social critique and optimistic celebration. Four dozen contributors document, define and drive home the beauty of a quiet ride with a thousand friends, the anarchy of grassroots inspiration, the melodrama of media coverage and the fight for the survival of our cities.

Cutting Your Car Use

Save Money, Be Healthy, Be Green!
Anna Semlyen, 2000, 160 pages
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250



Britain's first ever personal traffic reduction guide. Packed with easy-to-follow, best practice advice. For anyone who wants to cut their car use, or give up the car completely.

New updated edition.

Divorce Your Car

Ending the Love Affair With the Automobile
Katie Alvord, 2000, 320 pages
EUR 20, £14, US\$20, AU\$35, or CZK 500

Earth First! Direct Action Manual

DAM Collective, 1998, 152 pages
EUR 6, £4, US\$6, AU\$10, or CZK 150

Comprehensive guide to direct action tactics.

Ecocity Berkeley

Rivchard Register, 1987, 140 pages
EUR 20, £14, US\$20, AU\$35, or CZK 500
Richard Register describes his vision of depaving cities.



The End of the Road

Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1991, 300 pages
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250

There are half a billion cars on the planet, and this book takes a long, hard look at the contrast between the image and the reality of this fact.

Zuckermann offers 33 "ways out" of our car dependence, including pedestrianisation, alternative transport modes, restructuring public transport and re-arranging our lives.

For Love of the Automobile

Looking Back Into the History of Our Desires
Wolfgang Sachs, 1992, 227 pages, hardcover
EUR 40, £28, US\$40, AU\$68, or CZK 1,180

The Geography of Nowhere

James Howard Kunstler, 1994, 304 pages
EUR 17, £12, US\$17, AU\$29, or CZK 500

Home from Nowhere

Remaking Our Everyday World for the 21st Century
James Howard Kunstler, 1998, 320 pages
EUR 17, £12, US\$17, AU\$29, or CZK 500



Kunstler offers a way back from the "tragic sprawlscapes of cartoon architecture, junked cities, and ravaged countryside" that he described in his book *The Geography of Nowhere*. Kunstler calls for the restoration of traditional architecture, sensible urban design principles, and the development of public spaces that meet people's need to interact with one another.

Life Between Buildings

Jan Gehl, 2001, 202 pages, fourth English edition
EUR 20, £14, US\$20, AU\$35, or CZK 500

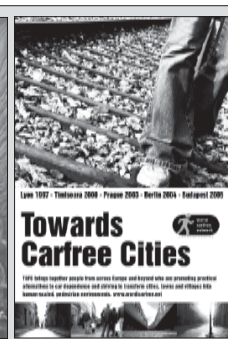
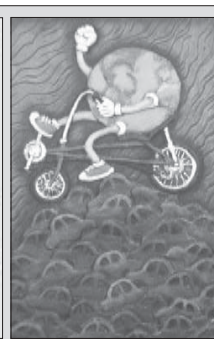


A classic is republished and revised. First published in 1971, this book is still the best source for understanding how people use urban public spaces. A standard textbook in many architecture and planning schools around the world, this book continues to be the undisputed introduction to the interplay between public space design

and social life.

New City Spaces

Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzøe, 2001, 263 pages
hardcover: EUR 55, £38, US\$55, AU\$95, or CZK 1,620
Through colour photos, descriptive text and diagrams, this informative book highlights 39 public spaces around the world that have been won back from traffic.



Among our new line of Car Busters postcards, the above designs expand our range of consumer products for the entire family! An assortment of ten postcards costs EUR 5 / US\$5 / £3.50.



Carfree Cities in paperback

EUR 30 / US\$30 / £21
shipping included

Street Reclaiming

Creating Livable Streets and Vibrant Communities
David Engwicht, 1999, 207 pages
EUR 23, £16, US\$23, AU\$40, or CZK 670



Street Reclaiming not only celebrates the potential of our streets to become vibrant centres of culture and community, but shows you how to make it happen. For residents it includes a simple six-week programme to reduce traffic by 30 percent. For city officials, it shows how reducing citywide

traffic is as simple as reducing rubbish.

Wise Fool Basics

K. Ruby, *Wise Fool*, 1999, 96 pages
EUR 13, £9, US\$13, AU\$22 or CZK 375

Fiction/Kids

The Age of the Bicycle

Miriam Webster, 1998, 270 pages
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250

Alice in Underland

Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1999
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250

Family Mouse Behind the Wheel

Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1992, 30 pages
hardcover: EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250



This colourful illustrated book teaches children the problems of car culture through the eyes of a family of anthropomorphised forest mice, who decide to buy a car, build a road into their previously intact forest and, eventually, create an urban hell. An eye-opener complete with the obligatory moral message.

The Little Driver

Martin Wagner, 2003, 56 pages
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250

"Freesources"

A growing selection of free texts available in several languages and file formats from <www.worldcarfree.net/resources/free.php>:

- *Energy and Equity* by Ivan Illich
- *Hypermobility* by John Adams
- *The Automobile and Décroissance* by Denis Cheynet
- *Time Pollution* by John Whitelegg
- *Depaving the World* by Richard Register
- *Road Raging: Top Tips for Wrecking Roadbuilding*
- *Motorism* by Daniel James

Not finding what you're looking for?

Our members/subscribers get a 10% discount at <www.detroitpublications.com> on over 130 books and other resources on transportation and urban ecology.

Videos, Etc.



Autoschreck / Car-Fright
1994, English or German, PAL only
EUR 20, £12.50, US\$20 or CZK 600
The car is taking over the city. Michael Hartmann refuses to bow to them, walks straight over the cars illegally parked on the pavement (sidewalk). A documentary about a man discharged from a mental hospital for being perfectly normal. He was just giving cars a taste of their own medicine.

We Are Traffic!

1999, 50 min., PAL or NTSC format
EUR 25, £17.50, US\$25, or CZK 735



A chronicle of the Critical Mass bicycle movement, now a monthly ritual in over 100 different cities in 14 different countries, starting in San Francisco in 1992. *We Are Traffic* tracks this leaderless, grassroots movement, which has brought together complete strangers in an exuberant, commercial-free public event.

Return of the Scorchers

1992, 30 min., PAL or NTSC format
EUR 25, £17.50, US\$25, or CZK 735



Before automobiles ruled the roads, cyclists were referred to as "Scorchers" because of their blazing speed. A century later, *Return of the Scorchers* discovers an inspiring bicycle renaissance. Filled with inspiring scenes of bike use around the world. The video that gave us the term "Critical Mass".

MATE Booklet and Map

(Map of Activities on Transport in Europe), A SEED Europe, 2000

EUR 7, £4, US\$7, AU\$12, CZK 200

A comprehensive guide to European transport, including an overview of TENs and TINA projects.

Car Busters Press

Bulk Discount: Ten or more CARtoons and/or Roadkill Bill books, any combination, for half price.

CARtoons

Andy Singer, 2001, 100 pages, optional CD-ROM contains high-resolution TIF images of all graphics
Book: EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 150
CD-ROM: EUR 4, £2.50, US\$4, AU\$8, or CZK 80



A personal and provocative look at our relationship with the car, from Ford's first assembly lines to today's "drive-through" society. Features seven pithy chapter texts and a compilation of hard-hitting quotations, plus 90 of Singer's infamous graphics (available for free nonprofit reuse).

Roadkill Bill

Ken Avidor, 2001, 108 pages
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 150



It's the comic strip that looks at cars, technology and philosophy from the viewpoint of a frequently squashed rodent. In *Roadkill Bill*, the wonderful, provocative, amusing and sometimes gruesome cartoons are collected together for the first time. Avidor gives voice to the suffering soul of humanity that feels bulldozed and paved over by industrial technology run amok.

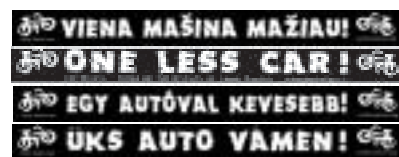
Stickers

"One Less Car" Bike Stickers

Ten stickers:

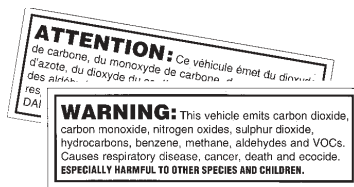
EUR 2, £1.40, US\$2, AU\$3.50, or CZK 50

Available in Chinese, Czech, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Lithuanian, Norwegian/Swedish/Danish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovak, Spanish and Welsh. Sized for bike frames, water-resistant.



"Cancer Warning" Stickers

15 stickers: EUR 3, £2, US\$3, AU\$5, or CZK 80



Big hard-to-remove stickers for cars.

Available in French, German, English, Spanish, Serbo-Croatian and Czech.

Stop-Sign Improvement

One: EUR 0.75, £0.50, US\$0.75, AU\$1.50 or CZK 25
Ten: EUR 6, £4, US\$6, AU\$11 or CZK 180



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T-Shirts

EUR 10, £6.50, US\$10, AU\$20 or CZK 300



Front: World Carfree Network. Back: Towards Carfree Cities. Specify colour (yellow, orange, red, forest green, or beige) and size (XS, S, M, L or XL).

New styles! "Carfree" available in black, red and light blue; "Parasites" (graphic by Andy Singer) in red and black; Sizes: for boys: S, M, L, XL; for girls: S, M, L



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Payments: Car Busters, Krátká 26, 100 00 Prague 10, Czech Rep.

Should you prefer to pay by bank transfer, please contact us.

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Eurozone	16 Euro	26 Euro
UK	10 Pounds	16 Pounds
US	16 Dollars	26 Dollars

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Saviour: EUR 100, £70, US\$100, AU\$160, CZK 2000

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Distribution Orders (5 or more copies): EUR/US\$2.60 each or equivalent (you sell at EUR/US\$4 and keep the difference). In Eastern Europe and the "Global South," you buy at EUR/US\$1 and sell at EUR/US\$1.50. This is beginning to sound like the stock market...

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Order from worldcarfree.net/resources.

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Prices for new shirts not available at press time. Check our website for details.





WORLD CARFREE NETWORK WORKS TO **BUILD AND MAINTAIN** THE GLOBAL **CARFREE MOVEMENT**. ITS PROJECTS AND PUBLICATIONS **ASSIST** PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD **TAKING ON** CAR CULTURE AND PROMOTING ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF LIFE. WE AIM TO **FACILITATE EXCHANGE** AND **COOPERATION** AMONG ACTIVISTS AND CAMPAIGNERS, REACH OUT TO THE PUBLIC, **INSPIRE** NEW ACTIVISTS AND **CHANGE THE WORLD**.

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Announcements



Bike Zine Available

WorldCarfreeNetwork member GoByBicycle is offering reprints of the *GoByBicycle* zine, available for US\$5 for all three issues or \$3 for just one issue (international orders please add \$1). More information and to check out the zines: <www.gobybicycle.com/goodstuff.htm>.

Childstreet2005

August 24-26, Delft

Making streets attractive places for children will be the topic of the "Childstreet2005" conference, taking place August 24-26 in Delft, Netherlands.

The conference will look at street design, public space, and how to make streets safe for playing, walking and cycling. Interactive workshops will produce concepts for child-friendly solutions using local case studies.

A maximum number of 80 persons can participate in this conference. There are still a few places left: <www.urban.nl/childstreet2005>.

Walk21 Conference

Sept. 21-24, Zurich

This year's topic is "Everyday Walking Culture." The conference will focus on the planned implementation of walking into daily life by technical, political and structural means.

The conference aims to increase recognition—in the eyes of public representatives, experts and policy-makers—of the positive contribution that walking makes to everyday city activities.

More information at <www.walk21.ch>.

Youth Environment Workshop, Hungary, Sept. 19-24

The Hungarian Green Bridge Foundation is organising an international programme in the field of environmental protection and education, with 22 participants from all over Europe. This is a good opportunity for youth concerned with environ-

mental education and protection to exchange ideas and experiences.

Participants (about 20) should be youth workers concerned with environmental education and protection in their local communities. The meeting language is English.

For further information please contact your national European Commission Youth Agency.

On-line Blog Against "Big Box" Development

A new on-line weblog tracks recent developments in the shopping phenomenon known as "big box" retail. Big Cities Big Boxes.com was founded in response to plans by IKEA to build a large store in New York. Much of the website's content is about the local struggle to stop the store's construction, but it also includes information and news from around the world.

The large mega-warehouse shopping centres known as "Big Boxes" (IKEA, Walmart, etc.) are often criticised for being car-oriented and for leading to the demise of the kind of main street shopping districts that make cities pleasant places to live (and walk) in.

We often overlook development issues in these pages, so letting our readers know of this website is our way of introducing this topic.

Velo Mondial:

March 2006, Cape Town

Transport issues in both rural and urban areas, incorporating the bicycle into transport planning; ways in which bicycle-related initiatives can improve lives in communities around the world—these will be some of the topics of Velo Mondial 2006, taking place in Cape Town, South Africa, March 5-10. The theme of the conference is "Towards Prosperity."

Immediately following the conference, Cape Town will be hosting more than 35,000 bicyclists for the Cape Argus Pick 'n Pay Cycle Tour, the

world's largest timed cycling event. So stay a little longer if you want to experience this unique event: <www.velomondial2006.com>.

Car Busters Goes Hungarian

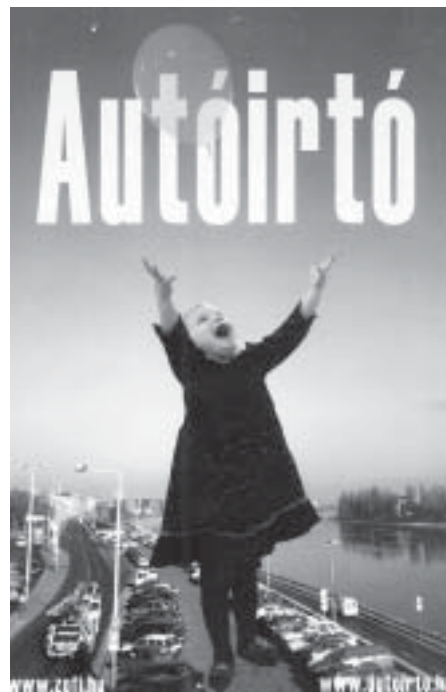
The folks at Hungarian Young Greens have begun putting out an independent Hungarian version of *Car Busters* magazine. *Autoirtó* brings reports on great anti-car actions like billboard "improvement" and Critical Mass to a Hungarian audience.

There are also tips on biking and (of course) Andy Singer's great cartoons.

Hungary certainly could use some car alternatives, with car use having increased dramatically since 1989.

On the other hand, Budapest's Critical Mass bike ride has thousands of participants (the April 22 ride had 10,000).

The Hungarian Young Greens can be found at <www.zofih.u>.



Changes in our Website

By the time this magazine goes to print, we will (hopefully) be completing some changes to Worldcarfree.net.

The main change is the rechristening of our on-line Contact Directory of carfree or car-alternative groups as the "Carfree Green Pages," and giving the pages a new design. The Carfree Green Pages can be found at

<www.worldcarfree.net/directory>. There are now more than 500 organisations, institutions, businesses, and web pages in the database.

Visitors to this magazine's website will know that Carbusters.org has long contained summaries in foreign languages. We have begun a similar process for Worldcarfree.net, so that foreign visitors whose English is not so good can at least get an idea of what we are all about. We already have Spanish, German, Russian and French versions and are looking for volunteer translators for other languages. Please contact us at <web@worldcarfree.net> if you are interested.

Car Busters Call for Submissions

In the next issue of the magazine, we will look at carfree islands. Leonard Cohen lived on and wrote about Hydra, in Greece, and many other islands are both paradises, as well as simply places where people live ordinary lives, like on the Toronto islands.

If you would like to write about a particular island somewhere in the world, send us a proposal by Sept. 15 at editors@carbusters.org.

Of course, we also welcome submissions on all issues related to our on-going mission.

