

CARBUSTERS

JOURNAL OF THE CARFREE MOVEMENT #41 / MAR - MAY 2010

**FINALLY!
CARS GO GREEN**

**THE GREENEST
OLYMPIC GAMES**

**DENSE CITIES:
THE SUSTAINABLE WAY**

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What's in a colour?

Green is so much more than a colour: besides being the prefix to our movement and nowadays even a way of life for those who can afford it, it is also the colour of the future. But what does that future hold in its hands?

Last year the pro-business newspaper *Financial Times Deutschland* urged its readers to vote for the Green Party in the European elections, describing their Green New Deal-project as a market-friendly engine of innovation. With new, green solutions being presented, dismissed and exchanged faster than anyone can keep track of, what direction should a green and progressive movement take?

When people from almost the entire political spectrum are touting a Green New Deal as the solution, not only to climate change but also to the need of starting a new round of economic accumulation, is the word "Green" even usable anymore? With Green Cars, Green Computers, Green Clothing – hell, even Green Flights! – where is the space for a green system-critical movement?

To carve out that space for us, one thing we need to do is to make clear the differences between "Green" as in the make-up that corporations and states use to cover up the fact that business is continuing as usual, and "Green" as in the color of our movement and struggle for a system-wide change.

This issue is one of *Carbusters'* ways of contributing to that process; we have acknowledged the fact that green is the new black: the perfect cover for your shady business. In the article Carl von Amoudi (page 18), Helena Fernández and Annika Rydenstam give us the recipe for the detergent used in Greenwashing while at the same time exposing the dirty laundry of the petroleum company Preem.

"Green is the new black: The perfect cover for your shady business"

This year's Winter Olympics have been branded the "Greenest Games", but are in fact linked to a massive freeway expansion scheme around Vancouver, a fact which Erik Doherty uncovers in the article *Scrub the Greenwash off the Freeway Olympics* (page 11).

A lot of the things being promoted as Green nowadays are easy to turn off as imaginary or just the result of plain out lying, but others are harder to know what to think about. A Green New Deal definitely sounds promising at first, but is it really the restart of another round of economic growth that we want? Or do we need to consider the fact that we live on a finite planet and instead turn against the current economic order that depends on infinite growth?

The building and planning of dense cities is, just like the Green New Deal, an idea which has gained support in almost all political camps. It is presented not only as a way to make cities greener, but also as a way to reduce the need for cars and build livable cities. While not saying that there is no merit to these statements, Erik Berg (page 12) takes us on a journey from the 19th-century slums of London to today's gentrified inner cities and argues that it is time to step back and reflect on the discourse of densification, so we do not make the mistake of going for one solution while throwing alternatives out the door.

Sometimes it can be difficult to know which policies to support and what actions to take. But one thing we can do is acknowledge the fact that it is not only the black market that can work as a destructive power on our societies, and make sure to tread carefully so we do not end up promoting measures that will only strengthen the Green market, while not bringing any meaningful change.

Alexander Berthelsen

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Truman City

A critical look at the discourse of densification



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Carl von Amoudi

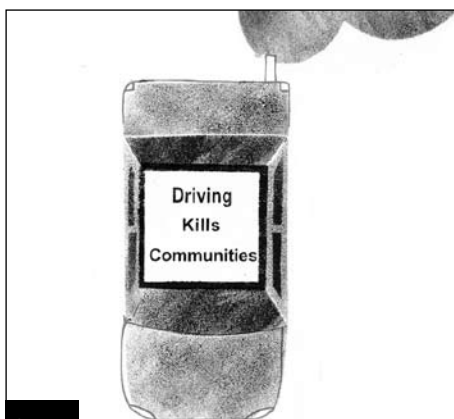
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Fighting for the Carfree Cause

Dear *Carbusters*,

Your letter writer Jeremy Stein (*Carbusters* #40), who calls himself a passionate car-hater, has not yet completely understood that the car's contribution to pollution and global warming is not its worst feature. The electric cars he would tolerate (even if fed by non-polluting energy sources) are still cars. And cars, widely held to be guilty of pollution, are also guilty of the more serious (and less recognised) crime of destroying our cities and countrysides.

The car has transformed the modern world into a no-man's land, choked with shiny metal objects, parking lots, gas stations, fly-overs, shopping malls, billboards, and urban sprawls. If you want to hate cars with a passion, that's as good a reason as any.

Wolfgang Zuckermann, Avignon, France

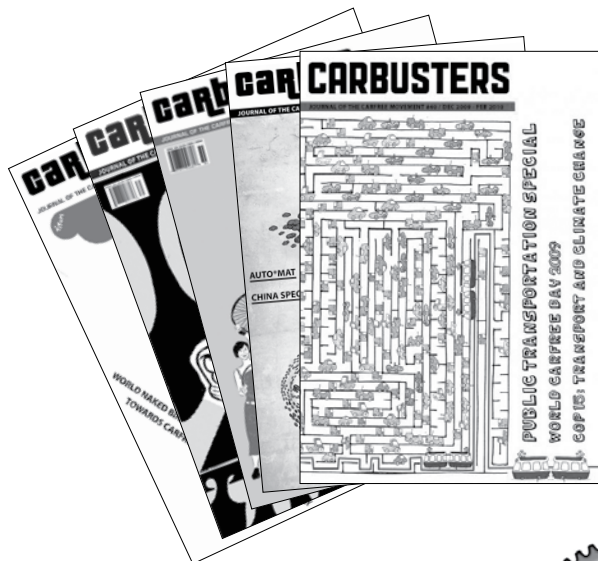
We are the *Carbusters* since 1998

Dear *Carbusters*,

My library in Ithaca, NY, USA is cataloging a large set of *Carbusters* magazine. Could you tell us whether you have any relationship with the magazine of the same title published in Lyon, France, 1998-1999? I see from your online back issues that you were established in Prague as early as Mar. 2001, but there could be more than one magazine with the title *Carbusters*.

Incidentally, your magazine could not have come to a better person in Ithaca. My household is carfree and proud of it.

Sarah Ross, Cornell University



Greenwashed Olympics

British illustrator and designer Shtig who was working for *Carbusters* magazine a few years ago created a series of spoof Olympics logos that ridicules this "corporate" event. All images are anti-copyright, so feel free to use them as you want – for stickers, websites or whatever.

Get them here:

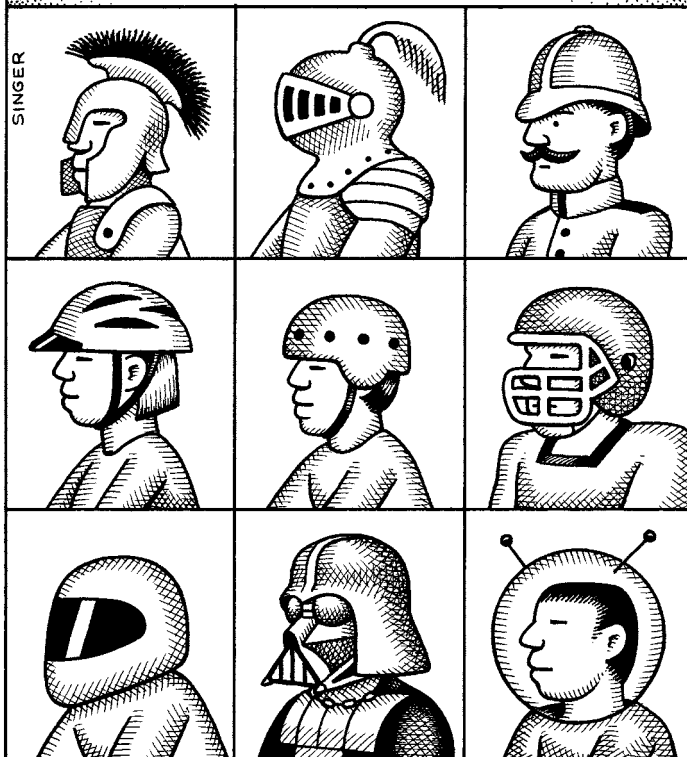
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NO EXIT

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BICYCLE HELMET EVOLUTION



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All back issues:
US\$50, €37, £33.5

■ by Pippa Gallop



World Carfree Network brings together organisations and individuals dedicated to promoting alternatives to car dependence. Member Group Profile outlines the history, latest projects and carfree activities of one member.

Green Action

Friends of the Earth Croatia

Zagreb-based Green Action, Croatia's largest environmental NGO, celebrated its 20th anniversary on January 22. On the same day, its activists, along with those of the Right to the City (Pravo na grad) initiative, temporarily occupied part of Zagreb's pedestrian zone, due to be turned into an entrance ramp for an underground car park, for several hours.

The car park, planned to accommodate 400 vehicles, is part of the Cvjetni project planned by Hoto Group (a Croatian corporate group), along with luxury flats and a shopping centre set in a sterile temple of glass and steel, slap-bang in the heart of Zagreb's already heavily congested old town. It is expected to lead to complete traffic chaos in the surrounding streets, as well as destroy part of the pedestrian zone and deny the possibility for its much-needed further expansion.

The project is also tarnished by the unmistakable whiff of corruption, with the city authorities declaring it to be a project of public interest on the flimsy (and no longer truthful) grounds that there would be a passage from one side of the block to the other. Taxpayers are paying for the construction of the entrance ramp in spite of unprecedented opposition from various groups, ranging from architects' associations to youth organisations and the Lower Town local district council.

The campaign has already lasted for three years (see *Carbusters* #31) and has formed a focal point for much of Green Action's work on urban mobility during that time. Far from being a single case, it is one of several similar projects planned in Zagreb's city centre, where it was previously forbidden to construct public car parks due to the resulting congestion.

The campaign has focused on a combination of relentless use of official procedures, such as spatial plan changes, meticulous media work involving a wide constituency of respected figures to critique the project and propose alternative investment priorities for Zagreb, and public actions, including civil disobedience and direct action where



Green Action activists holding a press conference in Zagreb

necessary. One of the key principles has been to concentrate on challenging the city and state authorities rather than the investor – as they balance the public and private interests. Another crucial point was not to use up all the action ideas at once, but to carefully pace the activities.

On February 10 the campaign attracted its greatest attention yet, when a demonstration gathered around 4,000 people. (*read more about this in the action report on page 9.*)

There are now two official bodies which could stop the project: the Zagreb city assembly and the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Spatial Planning and Construction. However, both are trying to evade responsibility and the next few weeks will tell whether they will finally stand up and do the right thing.

The evolution of this project will have a great impact on other planned projects in Zagreb and indeed on the whole governance

of the city. In any case the campaign, in combination with other political developments, has already borne fruit. In the coming months, there will most likely be another change of the Zagreb General Urban Plan and there is a good chance that the ban on construction of new public garages in the city centre will be reinstated. This would stop plans for the construction of several new public garages. In addition, the project has shrunk, as Hoto Group was unable to buy one of the existing buildings; the project has been massively delayed, providing a disincentive to other investors to act in a similar manner; and the composition of the city assembly has changed to be more critical of the mayor.

The challenge now is to build on the momentum, not only to stop the project but to make long-term changes in Zagreb's corrupt and antiquated spatial planning system. ■

More information; zelena-akcija.hr

The Jailed Car

Like so many people, Orhan Turan, a citizen of Turkey, decided to buy a car that would join the impressive flow of cars in the country. Cars are often perceived as a symbol of success and freedom, and as an object supposed to make life much easier.

This is only because people, like Mr. Turan, always underestimate the problems created by such an acquisition.

Just after he bought it, the car was stolen and he had to wait more than four years before it was found in another city. During these four years, the car changed hands ten times and was finally returned broken to its unfortunate owner.

He nevertheless decided to repair the car, hoping that he would finally be able to use it. In the end he had to pay twice the price of the car to make it work again, but soon after the repairs, the car broke down again. This was too much for the owner, who finally got upset after demonstrating such patience towards this mechanical trouble maker.

He decided to punish his car and condemned it to rot in jail for nine years in his garden. His family is also prohibited to drive it. We are very curious what will happen to it after being "released", since it is indeed rare that prison teaches anything good to its inmates...

radikal.com.tr



MA
MAN

Drink or Drive

A surprising monument was built last year in Moscow to remind people about the dangers of drink-driving. The 12-metre monument shaped like a bottle, is filled with lots of crushed vehicles – not really the epitome of good aesthetics. The monument was made during the run-up to the Worldwide Day of Remem-

brance of Victims of Car Accidents. The sign on it states: "Got drunk? Do not drive! You will have an accident." A good occasion for *Carbusters* to remind ourselves that we could unfortunately build lots of such monuments – in the shape of lungs, trees, humans, or anything alive on this planet.

englishrussia.com

Driving Addicted

Eris Steward, an 81-year-old Australian, experienced addiction to cars in an original way. He left home to go shopping one morning, but ended up more than 600km away. "I just went out on the road to have a drive, a nice peaceful quiet drive. I didn't know where I was going but I knew it was somewhere, and with a bit of luck I would eventually find my wife again," he said. It was only after eight hours of driving that he started to get worried and stopped to ask the police for directions. When the policemen asked him why he had waited so long before asking, Steward told them that he couldn't stop, simply because he "liked to drive".

news.bbc.co.uk



Fast Food

Often we get the impression that some people have more consideration for their car than for anything else: they work for their car, they work to upgrade it on weekends, they drive to relax, they drive to go to work, they drive to go for holidays... And there are a lot of useless things available to support the absurdity of this cultural feature. One of our latest favourites is the microwave oven for cars. This 600W microwave is able "to warm up a pizza in two minutes or to make pop corn in six minutes". Wow! You can get this amazing creation for only US\$299.95 and easily plug it directly to your battery or to the cigarette lighter and enjoy the warm and cosy radiation it will emit right next to you. Then you will only have one difficult task left: to find a use for it. paperblog.fr

In Love with my Car

Last January, BBC America screened a very surprising documentary about two American mechaphiles – men who are sexually obsessed with cars. They literally feel, see and talk about their cars like people sexually attracted to other human beings; apparently they even use the same area of their brain in the process. It is in a way better than men who seem to forget that women are not objects, but it becomes scary when these men seem to consider cars as more than objects of desire, but rather as living and feeling entities... bbcamerica.com

Stupid Car (Radiohead '93)

It's funny how
To drive your stupid car
It's funny how
'Cause I never
get that far
And you put my brain
in overload
And I can't change gears
I cannot see the road

You got concrete eyes
And I cannot see your face
And I failed in life
'Cause you crushed
me with your hands
And you put my brain
in overload
I can't change gears
I cannot see the road

Awards for Audi and BP

Last December, the organisation Consumers International published its Bad Company Awards for 2009, recognising excellence in the noble field of greenwashing. Among the four winners, next to Microsoft and EasyJet, Audi was awarded for its "far-reaching TV and Internet advertising campaign that appeared to claim that its Audi A3 TDI could be run on "clean diesel" and was as friendly to the environment as cycling or catching the bus". Another award went to BP for "publicly talking about its commitment to renewable energy but quietly pulling out of several major renewable

projects, while continuing to invest heavily on fossil fuels". A special award was given to the marvellous website CO2 is Green, "a new organisation backed by several key players in the US fossil fuel industry, claiming that increasing levels of CO2 are good for the environment" (see *Carbusters* #40). The real challenge will be to find a mainstream company that is not greenwashing, but is actually trying to change its way of producing and selling things – starting with selling things we actually need. And we don't want to wait in vain...

consumersinternational.org

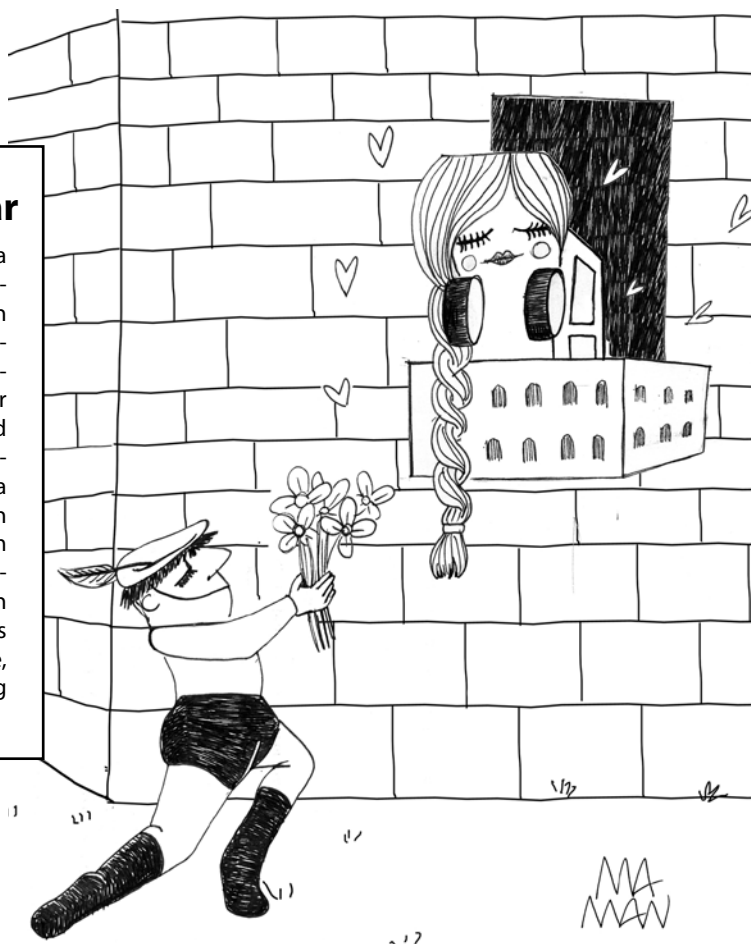
The Clean Diesel

Car manufacturers are probably among the best greenwashers and would deserve many awards in this category. They all promote their environmental actions on their websites and seem to find new ways to promote the beauty of nature and their efforts to preserve it. On Ford's Belgian website you can find out that "they are implementing a wide range of projects to reduce their impact on environment" and are about to produce cars that run on "clean diesel". They launched a campaign and a contest to promote this image of themselves, as well as the website miraclesutilesdeford.be



tilesdeford.be ("useful wonders of Ford"), presenting a movie where scientists create mini-cows to reduce the impacts of cows on the environment.

Genetically-modified mini-cows to solve the problem of too many cows, sodas to solve the problem of lack of water, Orwellian societies to solve problems of freedom and cars to solve the problem of cars! miraclesutilesdeford.be





Cycle Rally, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Bike49 for US and Canada

Cycle Rally Dhaka

The Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA) and Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) Trust organised a bicycle rally in Dhaka on December 26, 2009 to call for ensuring a bicycle-friendly environment in the city in order to make it both lively and liveable. Speakers at the rally called on the government to reduce the high tax on bicycles and for a separate lane to be introduced in the capital for bicycle riders. They also called for improving the quality of public transport service.

BAPA and WBB Trust also organised a press conference to draw attention to the importance of cycling not only to improve the city's terrible traffic congestion but to enhance the health of urban dwellers through exercise and reduced air pollution. The

events were part of the lead-up to the 3rd International Conference on the Bangladesh Environment (ICBEN) on January 3-4, 2010, at which WBB Trust underlined the need for quality cycling infrastructure in the city.

WBB Trust continues to play a major role in advocating for more people and environmental friendly transport policy, including discouraging car use and improving the situation for walking, cycling and public transit. In addition to its work in urban transport, WBB Trust works to change the conditions for rail transport throughout the country and to promote urban planning with a focus on high-density mixed-use areas that reduce the need for long-distance travel.

Maruf Rahman, WBB Trust

Seeking Teachers!

Starting May 2010, a four-rider team will leave Arcata, California, USA on a 49-State, 14-month, 15,000-mile tour, dubbed Bike49. The goal is not speed nor records, but to discover the country, share the love of bikes and put a dent in the car situation. The planning is moving forward with enthusiasm and flare. Bike49 team continue to gather support and sculpt the vision of a mobile resource promoting human transport.

While riding through 49 States (and a big chunk of Canada), the team will be speaking to students about healthy lifestyles for a healthy planet. These presentations are not just about teaching sustainability, but about inspiring students to dream big and create goals that test their strengths, challenge their bodies

calling for
action!

and fill their lives with adventure and fun. Bike49 is calling on the worldwide cycling community to help find teachers willing to open their classroom. A flexible lesson plan which allows teachers to choose centres which match the needs of their students was created: drawing the dream bike, unpacking a fully loaded touring bicycle, or brainstorming solutions to environmental problems. Check out the route, sign up for emails, or track progress online at www.bike49.org. Get in touch if you or someone you know would like to host us in a classroom. And of course, ride and ride and ride.

Sara Dykman, bike49.org





Bike Winter, Chicago, US



First day of info point, Zagreb, Croatia

One Scrap of Fleece

Little things, like a handful of fleece, can make a big difference. In Chicago, bicycle activists from Break the Gridlock helped fair weather cyclists stay in the saddle year round with simple gifts of homemade head gear.

Ten years ago, Bike Winter emerged from Chicago's Critical Mass community as a way to encourage people to keep cycling as the temperature plummets. At one of the early classes, we gave away colourful fleece balaclavas. They were a huge hit. Each year, we made another batch, but knew the demand was far greater than our capacity.

Willow naceo received one of those early balaclavas and decided to give back. She buys and scavenges fleece, burns up her scissors and sewing machine,

and dresses as Santa to share Bike Winter cheer and gifts. "That balaclava made my first Bike Winter cuddly and warm. If something as simple as a free fleece goody can keep more cyclists on their bikes, I want to help spread the warmth," explains willow.

In honour of Bike Winter's 10th anniversary, Santa willow decided to leave no cyclist's ears uncovered. She drained her savings account buying material and organised craft nights. "It is amazing how quickly a small group of volunteers can cut balaclavas in an evening of eating, drinking and socialising." We have distributed over 2,000 fleece freebies this winter, helping one person at a time discover the joys of winter cycling and living carfree.

Gin Kilgore, bikewinter.org

Defending Pedestrians

This February, 23 activists from Green Action and the Right to the City initiative in Zagreb, Croatia were arrested. The raid took place just hours after around 4000 people had turned out to protest against turning part of the pedestrian zone into a ramp for an underground garage.

The operation aimed to remove the accommodation container which the groups had put on a pedestrian zone as an info-point in order to block the beginning of works on the ramp, which is still under legal dispute. Activists inside of the container and on the roof peacefully resisted removal by locking themselves together using arm tubes, and were arrested after the fire brigade cut the tubes. At the same time, 50 activists blocked the road exits for the

lorry carrying the container but were also removed by the police.

The police also destroyed a five-metre high trojan horse which had been brought to the site as a symbol of private interests and corruption masquerading as urban redevelopment.

"Using riot police against a small group of peaceful protesters is a disturbing over-reaction to the civil offence of failing to obtain permission before temporarily placing the container in the pedestrian zone," said Teodor Celakoski from Right to the City. "The whole project is based on dubious legal manoeuvres such as the city authorities' decision to declare it a project of public interest when it is clearly nothing of the kind"

nedamovarsavsku.net





Vauban

Solar-powered instead of Fossil-fuelled

The small community of Vauban, on the outskirts of the South-Eastern German town Freiburg is a good example of how citizen participation can play a vital part in a city's effort to reduce its ecological footprint. With the aid of car-sharing programmes, parking policies and good bike and public transport infrastructure the city of Freiburg has, together with the citizens organisation Forum Vauban, managed to create a livable and car-lite community.

Vauban was, up until the reunification of Germany, the site of a French army base. Since it was conceived and planned as a military base, the street grid was never meant to accommodate private car use; rather the streets were small passageways between barracks.

When the French army left the area in 1992, the people of Freiburg found themselves with an unused, somewhat built-up area of 41 hectares which the city was planning to demolish for new housing. A group of students, single parents and unemployed citizens joined forces and squatted parts of Vauban, protesting against the proposed development, and began establishing an affordable and self-organised community. They called themselves SUSI: the self-organised, independent settlement initiative. After long negotiations with the federal government, the squatters were able to buy the four buildings that SUSI consisted of, and have since converted these military barracks into housing for over 260 people, complete with playgrounds, workshops, circus wagons – and all of it carfree.

The SUSI project was an experiment in alternative methods of planning and living suburban life; the aim was to be able to live and work more sustainably. Building ecological, carfree and inexpensive was a way to reach the goals of constructing a sustainable and socially integrating community.

The housing set aside for the SUSI project was only a small part of the whole Vauban, and on the remaining 38 hectares the council delegated the mandatory community consultation to Forum Vauban, who had convinced an initially sceptical council to try the carfree concept. Forum Vauban was the NGO functioning as the legal body of the extended citizen participation and was thus co-responsible for the district design by representing wishes and needs of the future inhabitants.

The real building project started in 1998, consistent with ecological solutions for electricity supply and sewerage. A combined heat and power plant burning wood chips and gas provides electricity for around two thirds of Vauban; solar and PV panels cover the rest of the demand, while a sustainable urban drainage system was built for the whole district. In order not to scare people away, their framework for transport behaviour and car use is very loose: instead of controls and penalties, they have chosen to use guidelines and hints. The sustainable alternatives had to be very attractive – low fares on public transport and higher charges for car parking, nice bike routes everywhere and parking spaces only in garages on the periphery. The idea of a carfree society has been a central part of the visions for Vauban, but the term “carfree” is seldom used. It is the individual driving behaviour that is con-

sidered to be the problem and car-sharing programmes are encouraged.

Residents of the carfree parts of Vauban must sign an annual declaration stating whether they own a car or not, and if they do own one they have to purchase a parking space in the car parks on the periphery of the neighbourhood. The parking spaces are priced so that the car owners pay the real cost of the infrastructure required: the price for one parking lot exceeds €17,000 plus a monthly fee.

Vauban is not actually considered carfree, but rather a car-lite place. A survey in 2000 found car ownership at 54%, but car use at only 16% of the trips made.

Even though Vauban may not be entirely carfree, there is actually another part of the Freiburg area which is: since 1971 the city has made major investments in pedestrian, cycle and public transport sectors, and since 1984, the historic centre, Altstadt, of Freiburg has been completely carfree.

Today the population of Vauban exceeds 5,000 persons. Families with children live close to each other in 4-5 storey apartment buildings, riding the bus to work and school together and sometimes sharing a car for a trip to the department store. Since 2006 there is a tram line extended to Vauban and new infrastructure developments are constantly in progress. ■

forum-vauban.de, susi-projekt.de, vauban.de

Scrub the Greenwash off the Freeway Olympics

This year's Winter Olympics has been branded the "Greenest Games", but they are linked to a massive freeway expansion scheme. In Vancouver, Canada activists are working hard to scrub off the greenwash and getting public money spent on real priorities such as public transit and affordable housing.

■ by Eric Doherty



The 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada have been branded the "Greenest Games". They include feel-good measures such as energy efficient buildings and a green roof on the new convention centre. But, the Games are linked to a massive freeway expansion scheme which is already boosting consumption of tar sands oil and funnelling dirty money into the pockets of Olympic sponsors such as General Motors, Petro-Canada, the Royal Bank and TransCanada Pipelines. They should more appropriately be called the "Freeway Olympics" or the "Tar Sands Greenwash Games". The previous Winter Games in Italy were bad enough, but at least they included a pledge to avoid any major roadway expansion. The current Games demonstrate a huge step backwards for environmental standards at the Olympics.

The Olympic Sea-to-Sky Highway expansion from Vancouver to the ski hill at Whistler was not needed – the existing rail line and highway would have been sufficient with modest upgrades. But, Olympic insiders insisted on a C\$1 billion highway expansion, deciding that a few saved minutes of travel time for VIPs is worth increasing climate change and destroying wildlife habitat. That public money could have paid for quality passenger rail services across the province for years to come.

To draw attention away from this waste and destruction, the provincial government decided to spend C\$90 million to experiment with only 20 inefficient hydrogen-powered buses – a ridiculously expensive public relations exercise, given that the same money would be way more beneficial if spent on cost-effective electric trolley

buses or electric passenger trains. Hydrogen buses are now widely seen as a technological dead-end after many similar pilot projects around the world.

Owe-lympic Games

The Sea-to-Sky Highway expansion is now

complete, and people in British

Columbia (BC) will be paying off the debt for decades to come. But, the Sea-to-Sky Highway is

only one part of a massive freeway and highway-building binge in BC. Just two of the Gateway Program freeways in Metro Vancouver (Highway 1-Port Mann Bridge and the proposed South Fraser Perimeter Road freeway) would cost about C\$5 billion. Start adding up all the freeway projects planned across the province, and the bill quickly surpasses C\$10 billion, in what many BC residents are already calling the Owe-lympics.

The proposed South Fraser freeway, planned for the banks of the Fraser River – one of the planet's most important salmon rivers – alone could take C\$2 billion away from transit and other public priorities. Only minor preparatory work has been done on this unnecessary and environmentally disastrous project; it is not a done deal. The Gateway freeways are only partly funded, and the post Owe-lympic financial mess will provide a unique opportunity to re-assess our public spending priorities. The question is whether people in BC will stand up and say "No" to continuing the multi-billion-dollar freeway expansion binge that started with the Sea-to-Sky highway.

We are working hard to scrub the greenwash off the 2010 Freeway Olympics, which is essential to getting public money spent on real priorities such as public transit and affordable housing. ■

*Eric Doherty is a member of GatewaySucks.org and lives in Vancouver, Canada.



© James Justin

■ by Erik Berg

Truman City

Today almost everyone, from the right to the left, agrees that we must build our cities denser in order to make them green. But is compact building really as good a solution as it is hyped up to be, and what kind of life are we buying into while promoting the idea of density? In this article Erik Berg argues that it is time to step back and reflect on the discourse of densification, so we do not make the mistake of going for one solution while throwing alternatives out the door.

Friedrich Engels wrote in 1845 that a town such as London is a strange thing. The colossal centralisation, “this heaping together of two and a half millions of human beings at one point”, has multiplied their power a hundredfold. With the fresh eyes of a visitor, Engels describes all the marvels produced by the city’s concentration of work and activity, industry and markets. Cities are, without any doubt, unparalleled as engines of creation, and Victorian London was the most magnificent of them all. However, as Engels notes, “the sacrifices which all this has cost, become apparent later”.

“These Londoners” he wrote “have been forced to sacrifice the best qualities of their human nature, to bring to pass all the marvels of civilisation which crowd their city; a hundred powers which slumbered within them have remained inactive, have been suppressed in order that a few might be developed more fully and multiply through

union with those of others.”

As Engels moved further into the streets of the great city, he approached what few members of the bourgeoisie ever cared to see: an endless archipelago of dark, damp, badly ventilated dwellings in narrow courts and alleys in “which the filth and tottering ruin surpass all description”. In this sterile land of bricks and ravines between steep walls people starve to death literally next door to all the wealth in the world. Once left to the mercy of the market “the proletariat is helpless; left to himself, he cannot live a single day. The bourgeoisie has gained a monopoly of all means of existence in the broadest sense of the word.”

To Engels it soon became apparent how the city itself in the industrial age serves as a tool to further concentrate capital and property. Just like the feudal system was built on a specific relation in space between the feudalist and the agricultural labourer, so is the industrial age built on a centralisation of

people that throws the workers into a war of each against all.

Engels and his contemporary thinkers sat in the middle of the passing between two ages and many of them had the same notion. They could see with their own eyes how the working class was being subdued, how free men and women, once transformed to an industrial proletariat, were fixated in an organic and constant dependence that deprived them of all their potential freedoms. And how the city, in the later words of Fernand Braudel, “generalised the market to a broad phenomena”, making every city dweller dependent on the market for food and income.

Thus, progressive planners, facing the horrific cities of their time, sought alternative forms. It seemed obvious to them that a return to, at least a partial, self-sufficiency was an absolute necessity. This conviction is reflected both in William Morris’ utopian novel *News from Nowhere* and Ebenezer Howards’



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“Suburbia became a pure autotopia; a society perhaps more locked up in remote dependence than anything ever seen before.”

Garden City, as well as in Frank Lloyd Wright's later American vision of Broadacre city, among many others. Peter Hall writes:

“The vision of these anarchist [planners and architects] was not merely of an alternative built form, but of an alternative society, neither capitalistic nor bureaucratic-socialistic: a society based on voluntary cooperation among men and women, working and living in small self-governing commonwealths.” (*Cities of Tomorrow*)

This dream of restoring a lost kind of *village life* became a prime mover in most progressive planning during the last century. It was a very compelling idea and therefore often rhetorically included, no matter how large scale the projects eventually grew. The form it sought out for the city was an open, decentralised and multicore urban landscape, with all the pleasures and advantages of urban life reachable for everyone without the need to sacrifice other values, such as small scale community life and easy access to nature, and without the concentration of capital and power they witnessed in their own cities.

Ironically, this progressive line of planning in time merged either with the more technocratic way of thinking best represented by Le Corbusier, and/or with the dominant paradigm of car culture.

In his libertarian vision of Broadacre City,

Frank Lloyd Wright had envisaged a lot of 1 - 4 acre per household, as a physical manifestation of their independence and self-reliance. But once it was turned into reality, suburbia became a pure autotopia; a society perhaps more locked up in remote dependence than anything ever seen before. No population on this planet votes more with their eyes on the fuel price than the American suburban.

So, the dream of a more decent and decentralised urban development failed. Instead, in the last quarter of a century, another discourse has made its way to the top of the agenda: the compact city.

The pendulum swings. Today planners and decision makers from the right to the left all agree we must build our cities denser and more compact in order to achieve sustainability. And the very same 18th century cities that progressives of the time criticised so heavily are once again seen as an ideal form. This time, however, the focus is entirely on the bourgeoisie flaneur city that Friedrich Engels in his time saw through, as he revealed the filth and oppression it rested upon.

You, who read this article, are probably, just like me, critical of a society dependent on the automobile. And you are, probably, just like me, tempted to accept, perhaps even embrace, the idea of the more compact city as an imperative necessity for a more just

environment.

Still I think it is necessary to halt and think for a while. Because just what kind of life are we buying into when we accept the idea of densification? Just what interests benefit from such an agenda? And what possible forms do we throw at the door in the process? **Four reflections:**

First, we must understand that discourses are powerful mechanisms. Once a discourse of densification has been established as a superior goal and built into master plans, it serves as a perfect excuse to developers who want to build at just the wrong places. The current Stockholm master plan provides an example of this. Its outspoken goal is to build a more compact city, summarized in the credo “build the city inwards”:

“To build the city inwards is the strategy and best response to a Stockholm that needs to grow in a sustainable way, which among other things means decreased energy use, shortened transportation routes and increased public transport.” (Stockholm Master Plan, 2000; 2007 as quoted by Karin Bradley)

This may sound green, but in practice it produces and legitimizes project after project that can be characterised as either one of the following:

- Gentrification through the redevelopment of “underdeveloped areas”, resulting in heightened social segregation, higher land values (meaning higher prices) and eviction of less profitable activities (such as allotment gardens).

- Densification in already too dense working class areas, resulting in deterioration of the local environment.



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- Exploitation of green belts (a particular quality in Stockholm), also resulting in deterioration of the local environment as well as longer distance to get out in nature.

- Externalization of production from brown field areas, which in reality means a less functionally integrated city and longer transportation chains.

Neither of those avenues seems particularly attractive from a progressive green perspective.

As a planner I've witnessed how this works in many municipal plans. The densification strategy provides a clearing for exploitation projects which in reality produces a worse environment for the people living in the city, and especially for the working class.

In practice the most obvious consequence of the densification discourse so far are cities that become more socially exclusive and more functionally homogenous.

Secondly, just as the bourgeoisie flaneur city in Friedrich Engels' time in reality was nothing but a coulisse floating on a sea of poverty, our dense cities similarly float at a sea of extraction of natural resources and production that goes on somewhere far away. As we pursue in building the city inwards, we continually export unwanted but nevertheless necessary production beyond city limits, and beyond our sight, while at the same time sweeping the total environment of consumptionist propaganda more closely around us. Where the cities of the industrial age were production centres, modern cities in the west are mainly centres for consumption, happily unaware of the real cost for

"As production moves beyond our sight in a compact city, nature itself is removed from our proximity."

its existence and way of life. We as citizens become engulfed in a fake world, where only a minor part of reality is visible and one particular aspect – commercial life, consumption – constantly beats its way into every corner of life. We become, like Jim Carrey in *Truman Show*, prisoners in a "perfect" world. A shining prison. But, all the same, a prison.

Thirdly, in the same manner as production moves beyond our sight in a compact city, nature itself is removed from our proximity. Sometimes replaced with things such as cultivated pocket parks, street trees, green walls and green roofs, which are all very nice things, but, unfortunately, nothing more than an artificial garniture of "green makeup". Entirely diminutive compared to the ecological footprint each citizen requires for his/her survival. Therefore, the concept of the "dense" city as it comes articulated, and practiced, carries in itself a continued alienation of man from nature.

The reason why this is problematic is because the environmental crisis is, at its root, a crisis in our relation to nature. Our unsustainable use of resources and the climate crisis are both byproducts of our inability to nurture the biosystem services we depend upon, to close the biogeochemical cycles and adjust our use of resources to nature's carrying power. This inability stems from a cultural

and geographical alienation from nature. In short, as a culture we have thought that nature must be exploited rather than nurtured in order to provide for economic growth and development.

What the dense and compact city does to this relation crisis is nothing but to further expand the mental and physical distance between the city dweller and the external world she depends upon. This is a "solution" of the same kind as when racial segregation is presented as a solution to ethnic conflicts and exploitation. We should know by now that segregation never actually solves any conflicts between two groups of people, but, rather, makes it harder to solve them. Segregation nourishes exactly the ignorant presumptions that form the basis of every conflict; segregation establishes the division between inside and outside, us and the other. And what's even worse: segregation creates a mental and physical distance sufficient enough to make the act of oppression and exploitation into a lesser moral dilemma for the stronger part.

In this respect, the compact city is no different than suburbia; both establish a totally encompassing artificial and anthropogenic landscape, with few outlooks beyond the thick weave of houses, streets and lampposts.

Some people might argue that this



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"I would urge all green progressives to keep a careful attitude towards densification agendas and the idea of the compact city as a superior form."

segregation between man and nature is of less importance, as long as we all agree on successively decreasing our use of energy. However, I think the opposition is faulty for the simple reason that we live in a parliamentary democracy, and in every democracy the amount of environmental consideration stands in a direct relation to the environmental awareness in the electorate as a whole. An electorate with high awareness elects leaders that are strong on environmental issues, while an electorate with a limited awareness – and a weak relation to nature – elects leaders that care more for other things.

This correlation is visible when comparing the political environmental awareness in Sweden, where the cities are rather well integrated in – and connected with – their upland, despite a high degree of urbanisation, and in the USA where the major cities are more clearly separated from their surroundings.

Fourth, the densification strategies of today reflect a recentralisation that stems from an ongoing change in the economy. Just like the industrial age under the regime of Manchester liberalism needed to centralise workers in order to push wages down and utilise the labour of the working class as inputs in production, power in the age of information and

neoliberalism is dependent on controlling the zones where the public is constituted. As noted by Lars-Mikael Raattamaa, "control is exercised through cultural dominance. Production of control is production of the [space that is recognized as public.] In order to be successful you must live where the successful people live. This is how the new disciplining works, centralisation instead of dispersion."

In the age of creativity, the value produced by the "intellectual capital" is tapped and mastered through controlling the interfaces where connections are made, be them physical or virtual. This, again, calls for a centralisation, and, as shown by Saskia Sassen, Manuel Castels and others, cities of all sizes are thrown into a game where they fight over attracting the "right population". In this struggle, cities go to extremes in prioritising the needs and demands of the mythical nomadic creative class, while at the same time denying the needs of other groups.

This shift of priorities is marked by a shift of focus towards the inner city, where one aspect of urbanity – a "pulsating city life" – suddenly is regarded as the highest of urban virtues. When this abstract notion of urban life is specified, it turns out to be synonymous with a city characterised by shops, restaurants, cafés and cultural institutions – all of

which are activities inscribed in an economic circulation, none of which are free. In the visions the perfect street is often imagined as a street with small, personal and specialized shops. But in reality the small units are more often than not outcompeted by global chains and by the Internet, leaving a much more conformist streetscape, dominated by transnational capital, on whose altar other values are sacrificed.

For the reasons argued above, I would urge all green progressives to keep a careful attitude towards densification agendas and the idea of the compact city as a superior form. We still need to tackle the same issues as the anarchist planners of 19th century faced; how to preserve freedom for all and fight centralisation of power, while at the same time having access to the benefits of urban life, and building an ecologically sustainable society.

This is not intended as a critique of cities as such. As Mike Davis rightfully points out in an interview in *Occupied London* (#1), the only possible "substitute for ever going intensified private or individual consumption is the public luxury of the city."

But a city, what is that really? We must challenge our presumptions much better – and acknowledge that there are other spatial forms that should be explored when we build the cities of tomorrow. ■

Erik Berg is a member of the Left Party of Sweden, he is working as a city planner, writes architecture criticism in magazines and runs the blog approximationer.blogspot.com.

Towards Carfree

How Do We Get There?

The World Carfree Network's flagship event, the Towards Carfree Cities Conference, is travelling to the UK for the first time this year and promises to be better than ever! Building on the work of previous Toward Carfree Cities Conferences, we will be asking the questions: how can carfree design theory be implemented, how do we best promote new carfree development and how do we gain support for the conversion of car-oriented cities? In short, "How Do We Get There?"

The conference is being co-hosted by Carfree UK, a voluntary group dedicated to promoting carfree development (see *Carbusters* #31 for their WCN member group profile), with the support of the Stockholm Environment Institute. *Carbusters* co-founder Randy Ghent, now relocated to York, is conference coordinator for Carfree UK, aided and abetted by former *Carbusters* staff members Richard Lane and Ivana Jakubkova, WCN steering committee member Simon Field and academic transport researcher Anzir Boodoo among others.

The goal of the Towards Carfree Cities Conference series is to promote alternatives to car-oriented urban and transport planning, ultimately leading to the transformation of towns and cities into thriving human-scaled environments rich in public space and community life. The event is designed to be inclusive and attract a range of speakers and delegates, with interests as diverse as the psychology of car reliance, critical mass cycle rides, the economics and modelling of carfree areas and how to organise a successful carfree day. There's something for everyone who thinks there's a better way of planning our towns and cities, and if you didn't think that is feasible, you will by the end of the conference! My experience at the successful Berlin conference in 2004 prompted me to quit my career in science in favour of transport and urban planning, followed by greater involvement in World Carfree Network: I was converted!



TOWARDS
CARFREE
CITIES IX
York 2010

This Year's Themes

This year's conference will focus on bringing carfree communities to life, considering a range of strategies from carfree and PARK(ing) days to permanent road space reallocation and European models of new carfree development. A highlight will be the street party we have planned for the last day of the conference. What can we learn from the carfree cities of the past and how should this knowledge be applied to accelerate the transition to a post-car urban environment? We will also examine the barriers to implementing car reduction measures – why are there so few examples of best practice and a paucity of political champions for carfree living, even in cities where a majority of the population does not own a car?

Why are there so few examples of best practice and a paucity of political champions for carfree living?

The programme

All this and more will be covered in four days of presentations, interactive workshops, panel discussions, outdoor exercises and excursions. Here is a small selection of activities – keep checking the website for programme updates:

- *The history and changing roles of the pedestrian versus the motorcar: how did the pedestrian end up as the underdog?*
- *Building carfree from the ground up: involving people in the implementation of the theory and the design of their neighbourhood; what has worked in existing carfree areas and why aren't there more carfree communities?*
- *The challenges in selling car reduction methods to practitioners and politicians.*
- *DIY Streets: a "design it yourself" workshop.*
- *Scaling-up from carfree days to carfree cities.*
- *Carfree modelling: case studies on the effects on greenhouse gas emissions and physical health.*
- *Freight transport in carfree cities.*
- *The promotion of walking and cycling through social marketing campaigns.*



Cities IX

– *Tackling car dependence: promoting alternatives to different groups of car user and de-marketing the car.*

If you have an idea of your own that isn't covered by an activity described on the programme page of the conference website, we may just be able to squeeze it into the programme: simply send us a 1-2 page proposal with as much information as possible.

Why York?

This year's host is a beautiful pre-industrial city of 200,000 people, located in the north-east of England yet only two hours from London by train. At its heart is a medieval walled city with rich history dating back to Roman times. Much of it is remarkably well preserved, main-

taining its character in one of Europe's largest pedestrianised areas, now known as York's "footstreets" network.

York is also a major rail hub, and home to the National Railway Museum, the world's largest railway museum. Other attractions include York Minster and the Jorvik Viking Centre.

As well as offering guided tours of the footstreets, city walls and National Railway Museum, the conference will offer the following outdoor activities in York:

- *Psycho-geography tour exploring alternative ways of looking at cities.*
- *An action reclaiming the streets for pedestrians and cyclists.*
- *Field-design of a carfree neighbourhood, with Carfree Cities author Joel Crawford.*

- *Leisure cycle rides, just for fun.*
- *An evening boat cruise of York.*
- *A street party community event with entertainment and music.*

We want your ideas for carfree-themed and pro-alternative music for the closing party – if we like it we'll play it!

York is a very popular destination, so please book your accommodation as soon as you have registered for the conference. As usual, there will be a free accommodation option for all those who need it – just let us know via the e-mail address at the end of the article.

There will be a post-conference study tour to Tyneside (the area around Newcastle), including the Metro system and urban redevelopment projects since the 1960s. A second excursion will take participants to the Yorkshire Coast and the car-lite village of Robin Hood's Bay.

Registration

We have a transparent pricing structure designed to make the conference affordable to as many people as possible. Prices start from €100 for WCN members from developing countries, with additional discount for those attending the WCN youth exchange being held June 23-26. For your money you get admission, a registration pack and lunch. Day rates are available on request.

General travel tips are available on the website, but feel free to contact us for personalised advice. Try booking your train tickets 90 days in advance for the lowest prices!

We look forward to seeing you in York this summer! ■

TCC IX, York, England, 28 June to 1 July 2010
worldcarfree.net/conference
york@worldcarfree.net





■ by Helena Fernández & Annika Rydenstam

Carl von Amoudi – King of Greenwashed Petroleum

Today Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778), Carl von Linné in Swedish, is regarded almost as a saint, “canonised” because of the scientific and cultural significance of his work. Science and Culture, together with pure untouched nature, are important ingredients in the detergent used in the phenomenon called greenwashing. That is, when corporations responsible for dirty and environmentally damaging activities want to clean up their reputation – without having to reduce their environmental impact. As environmental liability is becoming an increasingly important competitive factor, the words sustainable, future, purity/cleanliness and nature have become common in corporate marketing. This is particularly true if you want to sell fossil products.

Financier Mohammed Al Amoudi owns 100% of the oil company Preem. The company has two plants in Sweden: one situated in Gothenburg and the other, Preemraff Lysekil, about 100km further north, just off the coast. Giant tankers supply the raw material – crude oil. Preemraff Lysekil manufactures various types of fuel and is one of Sweden’s most active points of carbon dioxide emissions. Approximately two million tons of CO₂ are gushing out from the refinery every year, as well as a number of other substances, harmful to health and nature.

Now Preemraff Lysekil expands. A coker will use heavy oil as feedstock and produce diesel, among other things. When the coker is operational, the carbon dioxide emissions will increase by 25% according to Preem. “But that is a global issue,” they add. It is possible that tailpipe emissions of carbon dioxide decrease a bit if you use what Preem wants to call their “eco-diesel”. How much, that’s unclear. At best, this seems to be a zero sum game: less from the tailpipes but more from the refinery. In the worst case there will be a total increase in carbon emissions. Anyhow the company has already obtained all required permits and construction of the coker was just about to start when the financial crisis struck. The project was put on hold, but the plans may be put into practice anytime at the whim of Preem.

At the same time Preem deletes the word “petroleum” from its corporate name, a classic move of greenwashing. OPAB, one of its subsidiaries, is fighting for permission to drill for oil right at Dalders in the Baltic Sea, but both the Swedish government and the Supreme Administrative Court have refused thus far. Now company management threatens to acquire Latvian licenses to get around the rejection and start drilling for oil in spite of the denials. Joint owner of Preem and OPAB is Mohammed Al Amoudi.

In parallel with exploration plans in the Baltic Sea, Preem carried



A revelation: Linnaeus, the king of flowers, sits on a rock in a lush forest. On the ground wriggles twinflowers and in his hand he holds a flower for species identification. Above his head floats a shimmering halo. Trademark Linnaeus guarantees serious science and a love of the earth's riches. Now a man in clothes full of oil spills penetrates the picture. He places himself on the stone next to Linnaeus. It's Mohammed Al Amoudi, and greedily he goes after Linnaeus' halo. He pulls and stretches it in order to move it into a new position where it shimmers over both him and Linnaeus and he succeeds. Preem has got a new trend sensitive frontman – the petroleum King Carl von Amoudi.



out a lavish greenwash campaign. Photos of paradise images from different habitats were published in newspapers, magazines and on billboards. One of the pictures showed breathtakingly beautiful mountain scenery in Sarek National Park. Under the picture the Preem bear and a short text:

"As Sweden's biggest fuel company, we take great responsibility to save the environment. We work with wind, rapeseed oil, ethanol, DME and pine oil, and along with other renewable fuels and propellants they take up an increasing share of what we produce and sell. Therefore, we now remove petroleum from our company name and the name is simply Preem. It does not save the environment, but it shows that we are taking it seriously."

At the entrance to the oil refinery Preemraff Lysekil is a thin little tree. It is a young lime tree planted in honor of Carl Linnaeus jubilee year 2007 in the presence of both Al Amoudi and Sweden's King Carl Gustav. A king of flowers, a king of petroleum, and an ordinary king - such a tree planting the media could not miss. In Sweden, there is currently no debate about Preem, the coker and its production of carbon dioxide and toxins. ■

Helena Fernández and Annika Rydenstam are, respectively, a journalist and an artist who have for many years cooperated with exhibitions, books and actions on various environmental and social themes. Their latest project was the exhibition "Green Wash Village" which took place in autumn 2009 in Gothenburg, Sweden. All images © Majornas Luftvärn.



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The text *Wholly-owned* is, with the exception of the title, a direct quote from:
www.preem.se/templates/page_8815.aspx



illustrations by | Anna Nygård

Carfree

Living carfree with small children can sometimes be a daunting task, much more so than for someone living without kids. By concentrating on carfree families with small children, cities get a critical and realistic look at where their infrastructure and policies are lacking or inadequate. In this article, Gabrielle Hermann argues that a focus on carfree families are a great, but somewhat neglected, opportunity for sustainable transport activists.

When Germans ask me why I prefer living in Germany to the USA, I always give them a carfree pitch: it is much easier to raise kids in Germany without a car and this has a direct impact on my quality of life. People tend to look baffled until I explain how the overly car-dependent infrastructure common in the USA results in an inability to get practically anywhere without a car.

It would not be surprising to learn that it is small things that prevent most families from living without a car. Perhaps the car-sharing station is one block too far when carrying baggage, the car seat and a baby; or there is no place on the bus for a baby carriage, or one parent does not feel safe riding a bike loaded with children around the city. Often, pedestrian environments are not designed with children in mind. Crossing streets in Germany with two young children is very frustrating since crossing times are way too short for little legs.

Most inner-city families I know struggle with the lack of access to green space. Moving out to the suburbs is a great temptation, and car-dependence is seen as an acceptable price to pay. Fortunately, there seems to be a counter-trend in many cities, where families are moving back to the city from the suburbs. They want to experience the vibrancy and diversity that a city can offer. Perhaps many parents are tired of being a slave to their children's need to be driven everywhere.

Living without a car brings many (un)expected health benefits. The carfree and car-lite families I know have children who

from a very early age are accustomed to walking and biking several kilometers a day and taking public transport for longer trips. For them, having to walk does not induce the immediate whining that I see in a lot of children. Instilling these behaviors at an early age is the best way to change unhealthy cultural habits.

Children who take public transport on a daily basis learn valuable social lessons. When so many people share a small space, many interesting social interactions take place, some of them pleasant and some unpleasant. In either case, children are sensitized to others and must learn to be considerate. Through numerous train rides across Germany, my children have become comfortable with many different types of people.

Supporting and encouraging carfree-ness for families is of course not easy. In the Western world living carfree with children takes commitment. There is a big temptation to just "throw the kids in the car" when going somewhere. When you're an overworked parent, it is hard to imagine the added stress of having to figure out a bus schedule, or worry about your kids running or biking into a busy street. Driving a car can give parents a false sense of control and safety, especially when the outside world is seen as unsafe for children.

A main antidote to such "convenience" is, of course, making driving more difficult and alternative modes more attractive. This is nothing new. However, it cannot be emphasized enough how important a safe pedestrian-friendly environment is for enticing families

out of their cars. Families with small children need sidewalks large enough to accommodate baby carriages, separated bicycle lanes, and safe streets (preferably pedestrianized) to go to the park, teach their kids how to ride a bike, etc. Density is probably the single-most important factor when it comes to car-free families. When the nearest grocery store is more than 1 kilometer away, a carfree trip to the grocery store can become daunting. By concentrating on car-free families with small children, cities get a critical and realistic look at where their infrastructure and policies are lacking or inadequate.

European cities are trying to become more child-friendly to counter the decline of European populations. Some policy-makers mistakenly think that family-friendly cities mean offering families two free parking permits. The assumption is that families need access to cars, when in reality, what they need is a safe and accessible environment in which to raise their children. Cities often think they have to compete with the suburbs by offering families what they had in the suburbs – car-friendly infrastructure. Of course, cities cannot compete with suburbs on their terms because, with more space, suburbs will always "out-car" the city. Cities must embrace what makes them attractive: the possibility to live carfree. ■

Gabrielle Hermann lives in Southern Germany with her 3-year old-son and 1.5-year-old daughter. She is expecting her third child in March. She is Program Director for ITDP-Europe, based in Hamburg.



In conversation with Karin Sandqvist

Families

Karin Sandqvist recently retired after working as a researcher in Psychology at the University of Stockholm. She has done a lot of research on carfree families and has, among other things, written the book "The Appeal of Automobiles – human desires and the proliferation of cars". In this interview we talk to her about the myth that families need to own a car and the reality for families living carfree.

Most people think that families must own cars, because of the fact that most families own cars. But that is a myth, says Karin Sandqvist, while speaking to a group of mostly younger anti-car activists at a workshop organised by Friends of the Earth Sweden.

Her mission is to promote everyday life without a car; the way her family lived during her childhood in Stockholm in the forties and fifties. Karin was never a car-lover but did not give motorism a lot of thought until she as a part of her studies to become a psychologist moved to the United States in the early seventies.

"I did a study in a school and interviewed parents about why they did not turn up for parents meeting and they told me that they did not have the necessary means of transport. Meaning that they did not own a car."

This came as a shock to Karin, a society where cars are essential to do basic stuff in everyday life. Karin describes the three stages of motorism which she has identified. First comes the romantic stage where cars are a luxury for the few and problems like traffic jams have not shown their ugly faces yet. Second is the transitional stage where a majority of people have access to a car but it is still possible to live your life without it. This is the stage where most parts of Europe are right now. Finally you might end up in a totally car dominated society, where people who do not have cars are marginalised. The United States were the first place to enter this stage in the sixties.

Back to the car and family myth. Ten percent of the children living in Stockholm are growing up in carfree families and they are doing just fine or if they are not it is not the absence of a car that is the problem. Karin knows because she has, as a part of her research, interviewed children both in families with and without cars. However many children have experience of both. A common pattern is children who live with their carfree mothers during the week, but stay with their car-owning fathers every second weekend.

"Those children know that life works without a car and when you ask them you find that they are more negative to motorism."

Another part of the myth is that children need to go by car to do activities after school. In her interviews Karin found that children in carfree families do the same amount, and the same type, of activities as children in car-owning families. The only difference was that the children in carfree families never travelled extremely far to their activities, which might mean that their choices were slightly more limited.

"However if teenagers really want to do an activity they will make sure that they get there without a car."

She thinks that children in carfree families become more independent and that getting used to public transport also makes children more socially skilled.

"When parents drive a car their children will hear them yelling and complaining about people surrounding them in other cars and on the streets, but when you go on the metro or on the bus you learn to show

respect to your fellow commuters."

However even if it is possible to be a car-free family, there is a lot that can be done to improve their situation. Karin points out that many family oriented leisure facilities like theme parks assume that all their visitors come by car. She would also like to see food delivery for heavy commodities like milk and potatoes.

"Then you could easily walk or bike to get the lighter stuff in your local food store."

She makes comparisons with her childhood in a society adapted for everyday life without cars. In the fifties you would get help with your heavy luggage when you went by train and if you wanted to move furniture you could call a porter.

"Those services do not exist any more, they disappeared at the same time as cars became more common."

Even if life can be harder for a carfree family today than sixty years ago. Karin ends her lecture with optimism by showing us a graph with a steady slope; fewer and fewer 24 year-olds in Sweden gets their drivers license. This trend will quite likely lead to a future increase in carfree families. ■

Kajsa Lindqvist is an environmental engineer, journalist and activist, currently working for Friends of the Earth Sweden.

More publications from Karin Sandqvist: buv.su.se/pub/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=8070



Flying Bike Lane

Imagine your own bicycle traffic lane completely separate from the cars and safely out of their way. If it sounds unbelievably fantastic, check the concept of the Bulgarian architect Martin Angelov – a bike lane in the sky that he calls “Kolelinia”. Its design is meant to handle commuting bikes on a steel wire, high above traffic, to connect popular destinations. This idea doesn’t isolate the bike stream from the streets, it functions more like a bridge, connecting existing bike-lanes over problematic zones. It could be a bridge type, a longer transportation line or a special designed and independent touristic line. Of course, it’s too early to talk about mass use of them, as this is just a concept for the time-being. In the near future, a basic hand-made prototype for testing the real problems of the concept will be built. And after proving its safety the system will, hopefully, find its place for mass use naturally. kolelinia.com

Hummer as a Horse Cart

New York based artist Jeremy Dean has spent his entire life savings on a project to turn a US\$15,000 Hummer H2 into a horse cart, as a throwback to old cars reclaimed as horse carts during the Great Depression. The project is called “Back to the Futurama” alluding to the Futurama displays mounted at New York Worlds’ Fairs by General Motors, with a nod to the 1985 movie “Back to the Future”. The concept of the project is, according to Dean, “to hook our cars up to a horse”, as a strong message against polluting fuels. In order to underline the USA’s “consumption, greed and arrogance”, this ironical cart “will maintain all its former glitz and glamour: chrome rims, GPS, sound system, DVD player and TV screens; but will be pulled by a horse.” backtothefuturama.blogspot.com



A Bike for Autoholics

Want to drive less and cycle more, but don’t know how to give up your driver’s seat? There’s a solution – AutoVelo bike, one of the concepts to be short-listed at the International Bicycle Design Competition this March in Taipei. Designer Eric Stoddard considers his invention for those who were more accustomed to driving cars.

The bike mimics the arrangement of a car’s innards – the hand and foot positions, seat height, and back angle. The frame of the bike has very low step-over, allowing bikers to put their feet on the ground with barely a stretch. Also AutoVelo is an electric bike, with a rear-wheel motor and 36V battery mounted beneath the frame. In addition, it has a windshield protecting riders from rain and snow. Apparently it offers everything needed to convince you to give up your noisy and polluting beast and start cycling. There’s no point driving your car any more! speedstudiodesign.com/transportation/autovelo/

Obama and Transportation

With collapsing urban transportation systems and climate change induced snowstorms (not to mention a stubborn 10% unemployment rate) recently battering president Barack Obama, to what degree is he leading a paradigm shift in transportation policy?

Follow the Money...

On February 1, president Obama unveiled his Fiscal Year 2011 US\$3.8 trillion budget. Sustainable transportation activists saw some reason to celebrate: out of US\$6.7 billion dedicated to transportation, US\$530 million was allocated to the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, a programme aimed to enhance metropolitan affordable housing and transportation connections. Obama has also set aside US\$1 billion for high-speed rail (HSR), adding to the US\$8 billion that went to HSR from last year's US\$787 billion stimulus measure, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). And on February 17 the administration announced the winners for US\$1.5 billion in another part of the ARRA, the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) awards. Highway projects received 23% of funding, while rail projects won 19%, transit projects 26%, ports 7%, and multimodal projects received 25%.

"I think this administration has given the signal that it's serious about making communities livable," said Caron Whitaker, campaign director for the advocacy organisation America Bikes. "It's serious about biking and walking."

Construction and Cars versus Operations

Still, the amount of money being dedicated to any kind of transportation revolution is small. The largest single recipient of ARRA money in the country is the fourth bore of the Caldecott Tunnel, a US\$420 million project to relieve congestion on a California highway that carries about 160,000 vehicles daily. The Department of Transportation (DoT) has awarded US\$197.5 million in ARRA money to the project, one of the largest recipients of stimulus money in the country. The rebuild of a highway from the Golden Gate Bridge into San Francisco has also received stimulus money – US\$122 million – and then an additional US\$46 million in TIGER funds. And those are just two out of many highway construc-

tion projects that received ARRA funding.

Add to those figures last year's US\$3 billion Cash for Clunkers programme, in which consumers traded in old gas guzzlers for new, slightly more fuel efficient cars, and the combined US\$52 million that General Motors has received in the form of loans and the taxpayer purchase of 60% of its stock.

Then compare this amount to US\$114 million: the projected deficit for the San Francisco public transportation system – which carries about 700,000 passengers daily – over the next two years. In order to eliminate that deficit, the agency may cut services by 10%. (SamTrans, the transit agency south of San Francisco, has cut its service by 15% in order to close its budget gap.) Yet no – or very little – money goes from the federal government to transit operations. "It's a matter of political will," said Jim Berard, director of communications for the House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

On February 12, San Francisco Bay Area transit advocates received a sign that this political will may be emerging: the Federal Transit Administration announced it would deny US\$70 million for a rail extension to the Oakland Airport. The money that would have gone to construct a project widely considered a boondoggle will, instead, be divided among the region's ailing transit agencies for maintenance.

Congress

Meanwhile in the House and the Senate, the US\$500 billion renewal of the 2005 Surface Transportation Bill languishes. "The big issue," said Berard, "is how we're going to pay for it."

According to Berard, Chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure James Oberstar (D-Minnesota) has recommended an increased federal gasoline tax (now 18.4 cents), which has not gone up since 1993. Another possibility is taxing people based on vehicle miles travelled (VMT). But both these revenue-generating measures come with problems. People are buying more fuel-efficient cars, thus lowering what law-

makers can expect to generate from a gas tax; and both gasoline and VMT taxes depend on people doing something that good transportation policy seeks to discourage: driving.

In lieu of the stalled transportation bill, the House passed a job creation bill in December.

"Ten percent of the transportation money in the bill will go towards operations," said Matt Lewis, transportation staff writer for the Center for Public Integrity. "At the forefront is the idea that saving a job that is going to be cut is just as good as creating a job through a capital project." ■

Sue Vaughan is a San Francisco bicyclist, gardener, artist and public transportation activist in search of that most elusive of all luxuries: free time. She also occasionally maintains the blog Car-Free Talk.



by J. H. Crawford

Improving Biking & Walking

In the last article (Carbusters #40), we considered the public transport improvements that are necessary to support large-scale carfree conversions. Those changes will be time-consuming and costly. Here we turn to the need for better cycling and walking.

It is not enough simply to remove cars and trucks from the street. Fortunately, the necessary changes are fast, cheap and delightful. They will yield large improvements in the quality of street space, which in turn should bring sharply improved function as social space. The streets will look and feel completely different once this is completed, even though the changes are not so large.

Improvement in the quality of the streets as social spaces is vital. The common complaint in modern industrialised societies is social isolation. It is no coincidence that this problem arose in parallel with the arrival of widespread car usage. It is not just that people in cars are highly isolated from their fellow citizens; it is that the cars themselves damage the social functioning of public spaces.

Once cars are gone, the streets will become quieter, safer and far more attractive places. Even without much effort, their function as social spaces will improve dramatically. If evidence of this is required, we need only consult the work of Donald Appleyard, in particular his seminal *Livable Streets*.



Near Times Square, New York, US, summer 2009; A hasty conversion of a major thoroughfare to a carefree space

As you can see in Times Square, above, simply removing the cars helps a lot, but it is not enough. The hasty conversion of several blocks of Broadway reveals the need for planning and action to reap the full benefits. In the case of Times Square, only minimal improvements were made to the space. Even so, pedestrians hungry for space immediately took over the raw street and the hundreds of lawn chairs the city supplied. (In fairness to New York, the change was made on a trial basis. Improvements are in progress.)



Ostende, Belgium; ©1900 anon

Look at street scenes from a century ago. Notice how strongly integrated the streets are in the pre-automobile age. There is no reason that we cannot return to the simplicity and beauty of that era. Prove to yourself the importance of this change. Visit a randomly-chosen city street corner. Mentally remove from the scene everything that is needed because the street is used by cars. Speeding cars, parked cars, parking meters, pavement marking, traffic signals, gasoline (petrol) stations, traffic signs, overly-large commercial signs, and so forth clutter your field of view on most city streets. You will discover that the appearance of the street would change quite dramatically, and entirely for the better, if this clutter were removed.

We need to put outdoor furniture in these spaces once the cars are gone. This should be better than flimsy aluminium-and-plastic lawn chairs. Something more along the lines of the example from Zermatt is needed. And be sure to consult the work of William H. Whyte on making public spaces that the public will use and cherish. This is not difficult, but some thought is required. Whyte firmly believed that seating should be adjustable by the sitter. He gives countless examples of people coming up to a chair and making a change in its location and orientation. Some of the changes are so small that one wonders why any change was made at all. But notice your own behaviour around chairs. Observe that you do, in fact, tend to adjust their position, sometimes minutely.

Besides seating, there are many other elements that fall under the category of "furniture".

Curbs are probably no longer necessary, which means that curb-cuts, an ever-present tripping hazard, can also be removed. Some means is required to channel storm water to drains, but this can be quite simple and

unobtrusive, as shown above. Accessibility problems are greatly reduced when curbs are eliminated. This helps not only people in wheelchairs but anyone using wheeled carts, baby buggies, or bikes.



Amersfoort, Netherlands; storm drains

We are free to add many things to the streets, because, in nearly all cases, the street space that becomes available will be much larger than pedestrians and bicyclists require. The amenities that we add should be chosen specifically to improve life on the street.



Lisbon Fountain, Lisbon, Portugal

People love water. Kids really love water. There's plenty of room for it once the cars are gone. The roar of cars will be replaced by the quiet splash of water, and sometimes by the shrieks of delighted children. It's difficult to make a bad fountain. Practically anything you can do with water will improve the street. Just don't drown the kids.

The streets of most modern cities are barren. Cars have taken up most of the space that could have been used for plants and trees. Although trees can bring their own problems, think about planting some. Yes, the roots can get into the sewers and break



Basel, Switzerland; Street plantings

up the pavement, but these problems can be managed. When trees are thought too difficult, portable planters can still bring green onto the street, as shown in Basel, above.



Venice, Italy; News kiosk

News kiosks are found all over Europe and are quite common in many North American cities as well. European kiosks carry an astounding variety of useful things beyond newspapers and magazines. Transit passes, maps, lighters, and so on. If it's small and doesn't require refrigeration, it can probably be sold in a kiosk. A good kiosk can become a social centre in its own right and takes up very little space. Be liberal in their use.



Freiburg, Germany
A small outdoor café that fits in a narrow street

Perhaps nothing characterises the quality of life in Europe better than the outdoor café. They are found from one end of the continent to the other, even in surprisingly cold climates. They are a major hub of social activity. Governments in some countries provide small incentives to their owners, in recogni-

tion of their social importance. Although they continue to exist in streets with car traffic, their function is significantly impaired by the noise, stink and ugliness of car traffic. Put a café on every street corner in busy parts of town.



Venice, Italy; Local outdoor market

You will not want a great many markets, but any thriving district can support one. Once again, Europe shows the way. Most cities there still have outdoor markets that are a central facility in their neighbourhoods. Some governments have recognised the importance of their function and provide preferential tax treatment to stall holders. They are an excellent means of bringing life's daily necessities into every district. They should be centrally located. Often they can serve as an extension of the surrounding stores. Be wary of allowing truck traffic to serve markets. The practice is common, and in some cases it cannot (now) be avoided. However, as a long-term solution, trucks damage the very goose that lays the market eggs.

Better Biking

The cycling improvements are quite obvious and well known to every urban cyclist. Sewer drains need to be designed not to trap wheels. Pot holes need to be fixed correctly. Once the cars and especially trucks are gone, the streets should remain in good condition for much longer periods. Good bike racks are needed. In particularly dense parts of the city, multi-story bike parking garages may be needed. Amsterdam has a huge one, right next to the central train station.

I have long advocated what I call the drag-and-drop bike. The city puts out thousands of them. You grab one, ride it to your destination, throw it in a rack, and forget it. No coins, no passes, no locks, nothing. The seat height needs to be easily adjustable. Beyond that, the cheapest possible bikes can be used. Thefts can simply be tolerated, and they will be a comparatively minor problem if the bikes are indelibly marked with the name of the city that owns them. Paris has recently had some problems with its Vélib system. Those bikes, which are not free and are somewhat of a nuisance to use, apparently cost well over a thousand euros each. (I can't understand how.) Cheap, mass-produced 12-speed bikes can be had at retail for under

US\$50 in some markets. A city buying thousands of single-speed bikes should be able to get a better deal than that.



Ravenna, Simple traffic division scheme

Resist the temptation to install strong divisions between bikes and pedestrians. Something like the scheme used in Ravenna, above, is adequate. The bikes are supposed to use the white area in the middle. Pedestrians are supposed to use the darker part of the pavement. Nobody freaks out if someone is in the "wrong" place. People who, for whatever reason, are not where they are supposed to be should be alert to other street users, to make sure they aren't blocking them. And in streets this narrow, a reasonably sedate speed should be enough for cyclists. Larger streets with heavy bike traffic probably do want separate lanes and may even need traffic signals. But, for the smaller streets, cheap and simple is enough.



Lisbon, Portugal

In your efforts to convert neighbourhoods in your city to the carfree model, be patient. It will be difficult, frustrating and time-consuming. When you waver, just keep the photograph above in mind. Think what a wonderful street this could be, if not for the cars. That should give you incentive enough to carry on. And good luck. ■

In the next issue we will consider how to start conversions (at the transport halts) and how to increase urban density (add buildings that make the streets narrower).

All images by Joel Crawford unless noted below.

book review by Kelly Nelson

Car Troubles: Critical Studies of Automobility and Auto-Mobility

Edited by Jim Conley and Arlene Tigar McLaren

Ashgate Publishing, 2009, 258 pages, ISBN 9780754677727

Car Troubles is a collection of 13 academic essays, all but two written by professors at universities in Canada, UK, USA and New Zealand. The editors make a distinction between the system that supports car travel (vehicles, roads, gas suppliers) and the personal experience of car travel (freedom, frustration, thrill, rage). They signal this distinction with a hyphen: "automobility" for the system and "auto-mobility" for the personal experience.

The essays in Part 1 analyse the content of automobile advertisements, present a cultural analysis of transportation infrastructure, and describe the drag racing community in Vancouver, Canada during the mid-20th century. The essays in Part 2 discuss the changing discourse around auto-safety, argue for the integration of technology and social behaviour for improving car safety, and present how parents in Auckland, New Zealand think and talk about a walking school bus for their children. Part 3 includes a case study of the political and social discourse around hypermobility in Atlanta, USA an examination of the political and economic context of mobility in Chile, and a discussion of the pragmatic conditions and constraints that make driving seem compulsory. While the entire book is critical of cars and car usage, the essays in Part 4, titled "*Beyond the Car*", may appeal

most to the carfree minded.

Todd Litman, the head of Victoria Transport Policy Institute, writes about cars as "positional goods," items that confer social status on their owners. He uses this framework to discuss the many downsides to car-centred transportation systems and policies in North America. He offers a list of six policy strategies to reverse these negatives, yet devotes only a sentence or two to each idea. I wish

John Urry about how the current car system will likely, but unpredictably, change during the 21st century such that "the steel and petroleum car system will finally be seen as a dinosaur". Some combination of technological and sustainability turning points will usher in a post-car system, they say, though it's impossible to say when or how this will take place. This article is

"The steel and petroleum car system will finally be seen as a dinosaur."

he had expanded on these. How can we raise the prestige value of walking and bicycling and public transit? How could we devalue the status of car ownership? He suggests these can be done, in part, through promotion and marketing, but what would that look like?

Sociologist George Martin compares patterns of motorisation in North America and Western Europe with those in Asia and Eastern Europe where car ownership is surging. He says there is a chance that cities in less developed countries may evolve into what he calls "soft motorisation": cities built around multi-modal transportation where cars are smaller, powered by alternative fuels and often shared. I hope he's right.

The book closes with a thoughtful discussion by sociologists Kingsley Dennis and

more optimistic about the future than their co-authored book *After the Car* (reviewed in *Carbusters* #39).

The practice of building landscapes and lives around automobiles is thoroughly and repeatedly critiqued throughout *Car Troubles*. In much shorter supply are ways forward: how could we make changes in how we think, how we live, how we get around? While the book is slow reading, with academic language and many in-text citations, it does offer multiple frameworks for thinking about cars and the problems of car-centredness. It'll be up to you to find ways to use this information to move forward and make a change. ■

Interview with Jim Conley

Against Automobility

*Since the book **Car Troubles**, that we reviewed for this issue, was such an interesting read, we decided to have a chat with the book's co-editor Jim Conley. Conley is associate professor in the Department of Sociology, Trent University in Ontario, Canada, where among other things he teaches the course "Sociology of the Automobile".*

Car Troubles revolves around the concepts of automobility and auto-mobility. Could you describe them?

Take something as simple as a commuter driving from her suburban home to work. A configuration of people, organisations and activities make it possible: global chains of production, marketing, finance, insurance, maintenance and regulation; automakers, parts suppliers, oil companies, designers, engineers, advertisers, construction companies, police, driving instructors, urban planners and many more. Add to that the environmental and social consequences of car travel and you get what we mean by automobility: the complex and far-reaching system of automobile-dominated transportation. Auto-mobility, in contrast, refers to the practice of car travel as part of people's social lives: the commuter's experience, as she struggles to get her children to daycare and herself to work on time, sits frustrated in congested traffic, but also feels good about the car model she's driving and has the fleeting pleasure of a favourite song playing on the car radio.

Why do you choose to separate automobility and auto-mobility?

By distinguishing automobility and auto-mobility, we're trying to heighten attention to the difference between the system and the practices of car users, to encourage awareness of how they are connected, and to foster action on both levels.

How do you see these concepts as useful for understanding the implications that automobiles have on our societies? And in what way can the carfree movement benefit from a deeper understanding of automobility and auto-mobility?

Considering automobility as a system draws attention to the powerful, interconnected interests that support and benefit from it. More encouragingly, it tells us that complex systems are vulnerable to disruption, and can change relatively rapidly and in unexpected ways. Auto-mobility on the other hand, when viewed as practice, shows how car travel is embedded in people's social lives and its meanings for them. It leads us to examine how people become so dependent on car travel, why they use it rather than other modes, and the pleasures and pains of doing so.

***Car Troubles* is mainly centred around how automobiles transform our landscapes and societies, and a bit less on how to move forward. What would your suggestions be for the carfree movement, and how do you see the role of the academia in countering car culture?**

If we see automobility as a system, then the carfree movement, like the anti-nuclear movement in the 1980s and 1990s, might look at economic conversion so that people don't have to feel that their livelihoods are threatened by the movement. Auto-mobility alerts us to the benefits of car travel (such as autonomy and status) so that the carfree movement likewise needs to look for substitutes, or highlight other benefits of alternative modes such as cycling, walking and public transport. On the one hand, we know that simple anti-car measures won't in themselves produce public transport or bring



housing, shopping and work within walking or cycling distances of each other; on the other hand, simply providing public transport is not enough to get people out of their cars once they've become habituated to them. Appeals for people to change their habits are not enough; there need to be disincentives to car use, and incentives to use other modes.

In our review of *Car Troubles*, Kelly Nelson writes: "How can we raise the prestige value of walking and bicycling and public transit? How could we devalue the status of car ownership?" Can you share thoughts on that?

We might take hope from the success of the movement against tobacco. Smoking was once cool and sophisticated; now it is a stigmatised activity done by people huddled on street corners. For some urban young people, cars are now not cool. How do we expand that? Status comes from consumption that marks group boundaries, so the challenge is to convince car owners that reduced car use, if not abandoning car ownership altogether, is something that "people like them" do – e.g., that you don't have to dress in spandex and ride an expensive road bike to cycle to work. Or, that abandoning car travel doesn't require an asceticism that will cut you off from normal social life. Although opponents of the car will never have the resources of automakers, sophisticated marketing is one way to attempt to counter the status and other appeals of auto-mobility. ■

BOOKS

ALICE IN UNDERLAND

Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1999, 88 pages

US\$10, EUR 7, £6, or CZK 180

A curious mixture of nonsense, social satire and surrealist fairytale, takes the classical Alice through the dreary landscape of suburban America.

ASPHALT NATION

How the Automobile Took Over America and How We Can Take It Back

Jane Holtz Kay, 1998, 440 pages

US\$29, EUR 20, £18, or CZK 520

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, personal and architectural solutions to the problem, Kay shows that radical change is possible.

CARFREE CITIES (out of stock)

J.H. Crawford, 2000, 324 pages

US\$35, EUR 24, £20, or CZK 620

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.

CARFREE DESIGN MANUAL (out of stock)

J.H. Crawford, 2008, 600 pages, hardcover

US\$45, EUR 35, £27, or CZK 950

Carfree Design Manual starts from the urban planning principles established in *Carfree Cities* and shows how to design beautiful carfree districts that are places to build a satisfying and sustainable life.

CAR SICK

Lynn Sloman, 2006, 192 pages

US\$29, EUR 20, £18, or CZK 520

"Cars cause environmental destruction, provoke stress and tear the heart out of communities. *Car Sick* provides a page-turning account of how we got into this mess, and more importantly, charts an attractive way out." - T. Juniper, Friends of the Earth

CUTTING YOUR CAR USE

Save Money, Be Healthy, Be Green!

Anna Semlyen, 2007, 96 pages

US\$12, EUR 8, £7, or CZK 210

A personal traffic reduction guide available in UK or US version. Packed with easy-to-follow, best practice advice. For anyone who wants to cut their car use, or give it up completely.

DIVORCE YOUR CAR! (out of stock)

Ending the Love Affair With the Automobile

Katie Alvord, 2000, 320 pages

US\$20, EUR 14, £12, or CZK 360

Divorce Your Car! speaks to individuals, encouraging readers to change their own driving behaviour without waiting for broader social change, stressing that individual action can drive social change.

END OF THE ROAD

Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1991, 300 pages

US\$10, EUR 7, £6, or CZK 180

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, restructuring public transport.

FAMILY MOUSE BEHIND THE WHEEL

Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1992, 30 pages, hardcover

US\$10, EUR 7, £6, or CZK 180

Colourful illustrated book that teaches children the problems of car culture through the eyes of a family of mice who decide to buy a car, with all the consequences.

FOR LOVE OF THE AUTOMOBILE

Looking Back Into the History of our Desires

Wolfgang Sachs, 1992, 227 pages, hardcover

US\$56, EUR 38, £34, or CZK 990

Examining the history of the automobile from the late 1880s to the present, Sachs shows how the car gave form to the dreams and desires embedded in modern society and in so doing reshaped our very notions of time and space, our individual and societal values, and our outlook on progress and the future. In sum: an excellent and detailed cultural history of the car.

LIFE BETWEEN BUILDINGS

Jan Gehl, 2001, 202 pages

US\$40, EUR 27, £24, or CZK 720

First published in 1971, this book is still the best source for understanding how people use urban public spaces. *Life Between Buildings* is the undisputed introduction to the interplay between design and social life.

NEW CITY SPACES (out of stock)

Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzoe, 2001, 263 pages

US\$60, EUR 41, £36, or CZK 1,070 [hardcover]

Through colour photos, descriptive text and diagrams, this informative book highlights 39 public spaces around the world that have been won back from traffic.

PUBLIC SPACES - PUBLIC LIFE

Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzoe, 1996, 96 pages

US\$49, EUR 33, £30, or CZK 870

Describes the remarkable improvements in Copenhagen, capital of Denmark, over the past 34 years, and how they were accomplished.

SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY GUIDE

FOR MUNICIPALITIES (out of stock)

Justin Hyatt, 2006, 52 pages

US\$10, EUR 7, £6, or CZK 180

The *Sustainable Mobility Guide For Municipalities* provides a full spectrum of themes related to transportation, urban design, mobility management and more. It is aimed at decision makers as well as NGO's working in the field of transport and urban planning, or anyone else interested in a broad survey of urban mobility issues.

THE AGE OF THE BICYCLE

Miriam Webster, 1998, 270 pages

US\$15, EUR 10, £9, or CZK 270

"What if one afternoon all the cars in the world slowed down and then stopped in their tracks... soon tea shops burgeoned on the interstates... rush-hour traffic went by on bicycles at an average speed of eight miles an hour..."

THE LITTLE DRIVER [Special Offer!]

Martin Wagner, 2003, 56 pages

US\$7, EUR 4.5, £4, or CZK 105

A children's book for young and old, *The Little Driver* takes a fresh look at our obsession with cars through the eyes of a boy still young enough to take nothing for granted.

CARTOONS

CARtoons

Andy Singer, 2001, 100 pages

Book: US\$10, EUR 7, £6, or CZK 180

CD-ROM: US\$5, EUR 3.50, £3, or CZK 90

Optional CD-ROM contains high-resolution TIF images of all graphics

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.

ROADKILL BILL [Special Offer!]

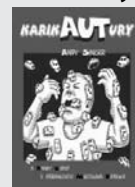
Ken Avidor, 2001, 108 pages

US\$7, EUR 4.5, £4, or CZK 105

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 and only time. Avidor gives voice to the suffering soul of humanity that feels bulldozed and paved over by industrial technology run amok.

Half-price discount: when you buy ten or more *Roadkill Bill*.

karikAUTury, GÉPregény, karikAUTúry, and AUTOKomiks



CARtoons has been published in Czech, Slovak, Hungarian and Polish. The books are part of a multilingualism project. To order, please contact: orders@worldcarfree.net

DVD

CARAVAN/PRAGUE

2007, 76 min., DVD, US\$20, EUR 13, CZK 320

A bicycle caravan travels across Europe to shut down the annual meeting of the IMF and the World Bank. It will function without money, without leaders, and without permission from any authority. The police have other ideas...

SOURCE* (out of stock)



2005, 77 min., DVD, region-free PAL (plays on all PCs) - US\$25, EUR 17, £15, or CZK 450

The tale of the Baku-Ceyhan-Tbilisi pipeline is a tale of corruption, greed and Western money flowing into the oil-soaked shores of the Caspian Sea. This documentary takes you to the source.

STILL WE RIDE!

In Tandem Productions, 2005, 37 min., DVD

US\$20, EUR 14, £12, or CZK 360

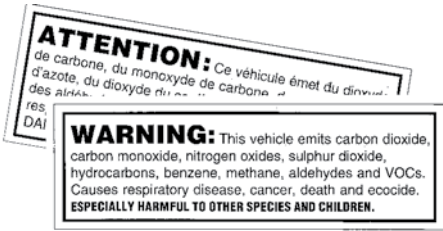
This action-packed documentary is a glimpse into the shocking showdown between the monthly Critical Mass bike ride and New York City police in the months after the Republican National Convention in August 2004.

STICKERS



“ONE LESS CAR” BIKE STICKERS

Ten stickers: US\$4.5, EUR 3, £3, or CZK 70
Sized for bike frames, water-resistant. Available in Catalan, Chinese, Czech, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Lithuanian, Norwegian/Swedish/Danish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Turkish and Welsh.



“CANCER WARNING” STICKERS

15 stickers: US\$4.50, EUR 3, £3, or CZK 80
Big stickers for cars.
Available in French, German, English (temporarily out of stock), Spanish and Czech.



STOP-SIGN IMPROVEMENT (out of stock)

One: US\$1.25, EUR 0.85, £0.65, or CZK 22
Ten: US\$9, EUR 6, £5, or CZK 165
Forty-six centimeters long. Bright red.
These big glossy vinyl stickers are just the right size to go under the word “STOP” on stop signs.

CARBUSTERS MAGAZINE

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTION

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

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