

# **Interdependent, imagined and embodied mobilities in mobile social space: disruptions in ‘normality’, ‘habit’ and ‘routine’**

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## **Highlights**

We draw on an ethnographic study of mobilities and disruption.

We explore the concept of interdependent mobilities in relation to ‘normality’, ‘habit’ and ‘routine’. In doing so we draw from Lefebvre’s notion of social space in situating these interdependencies in mobile social space.

In approaching the notion of ‘normality’ critically we reveal its multi-dimensionality.

## **Abstract**

This article draws on ethnographic research of everyday mobilities to further understanding of interdependent mobilities practices in relation to normality, habit and routine. The contention here is that a rethinking of ‘normality’, ‘habit’ and ‘routine’ reveals how mobilities are interdependent, imagined and embodied. We draw from Lefebvre’s (1991) notions of social space and rhythmanalysis to illustrate the relationality of these aspects of mobility. In doing so we build on

recent theorisations of habit in the field of mobilities, which have opened this concept as a key site for interrogating body-society relationships arguing that both ‘routine’ and ‘normality’ have similar potential in revealing the regulation and control of everyday spaces. We consider everyday embodied engagements with mobile space and how these become normalised, habitualised and routinised. This paper draws from a Research Council UK Energy Programme funded project, ‘Disruption, the raw material for carbon change’, which uses ‘disruption’ as a lens through which to reveal potential for changes in mobility practices that result in carbon reduction. Our exploration of interdependent, imagined and embodied mobilities concurs with existing scholarship in the mobilities field that argues for a rethinking of individualised conceptions of ‘normality’, ‘habit’ and routine in seeking an understanding of mobilities that are socially, culturally and materially contingent.

## Introduction

Although the sustainability of mobility has been approached from a number of different perspectives (see for example Geels, 2012), there is often a lack of attention to relationalities of the social. Yet mobilities are interdependent in relation to families and in relation to wider socialities and spatialities (Jiron and Iturra, 2014; Holdsworth, 2013; Murray, 2009; Nansen et al., 2015). Much work has gone into re-aligning concepts such as habit in demonstrating its potential to effect change (Bissell, 2014, 2015; Dewsbury and Bissell, 2015). This literature has been successful in debunking the notion that patterns of non-deliberative mobility practices need to be undone, that habits are there to be broken. The focus here is most often with the individual and is related to individual behaviour change (Schwanen et al., 2012). However, existing studies tends to underestimate the ‘tension between individual and collective mobilities’ (Holdsworth, 2013, 2), which necessitates that mobile habits are reconceived within a framework of relationalities, both social and material (Bennett et al. 2013). Alternative socio-technical approaches such as the ‘multi-level perspective’ (Geels, 2012) and social practice theory (Cass and Faulconbridge 2016), similarly underplay socially complex mobile interdependencies and the ways in which they produce mobile space. Here, we suggest that Lefebvre’s theorisation of ‘social space’ (Lefebvre, 1991) and ‘rhythmanalysis’ (Lefebvre 2004) provide the conceptual tools through which to understand mobile interdependencies in their socio-cultural contexts and attend to the intersections of space and spatial practices, both experiential and imagined; as everyday mobile lives are constituted within ‘an enormous range of spatio-temporal contexts within which multiple rhythms are produced and interweave’ (Edensor, 2012, 189). We argue that Lefebvre’s notion of social space, alongside his unfinished project of rhythmanalysis, can elucidate the relationalities of habit formation, placing analytic emphasis on the various social interdependencies that provide not just the context to our everyday movements, but that produce them. We are concerned here with the experiential and imagined aspects of routine and habitual movements and how they, together with a range of strategies to coordinate everyday life, become what is regarded as ‘normality’. In order to scrutinize these social interdependencies we argue that it is useful to consider the concepts of ‘normality’ and ‘routine’ alongside habit.

Recent scholarship on mobilities (Bissell 2014; Middleton 2011; Schwanen et al. 2012) has sought to reconceptualise habit, examining the nature of embodied habit and its role in everyday mobilities. This re-examination of habit has arguably followed a broader turn towards embodied mobilities, and epistemological questions about the relationship between cultural and institutional discourses on one hand, and an embodied being in the world on the other (Doughty and Murray 2016; Jensen, 2010; Martens et al., 2014). We draw from these current debates that move away from the ‘reductive’ idea of habit in reasserting that it is situated within wider contexts, with the contention that it would be fruitless to call for change in mobility practices by targeting individuals in a way that abstracts them from the networks of interdependent mobilities in which they are imbricated. In these accounts habit is a permanent change of disposition, whilst at the same time potentially transformative and forward moving (Bissell, 2014, Middleton, 2011, Schwanen et al., 2012). Notions of ‘habit’ and ‘routine’ are interrelated, as habit is considered to be ‘intimately bound up with’ routine behaviour (Middleton,

2011, 2859). However a (perhaps overly simplistic) distinction relates to their respective deliberation, with habit associated with embodied and non-deliberative practices. Here, habit is more than an ‘external force that somehow drives human behaviour’ (Middleton, 2011, 2857). However, as emerged clearly in our empirical data, we also need to consider those for whom habit is an indulgence – those whose embodied dispositions are secondary to their caring responsibilities. Routine on the other hand is deliberated and Middleton sets this out in relation to the negotiation of complex and gendered lives. It is an aspect of the mundanities of everyday life that are situated in social space (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004).

Our heuristic lens is that of ‘disruption’, with data drawn from an ethnographic element of a Research Council UK Energy Programme funded project, ‘Disruption, the raw material for carbon change’. In this project ‘disruption’ was used to reveal the potential for changes in mobility practices that result in carbon reduction. The particular aspect of the research that we look to here is an ethnographic investigation of people’s everyday mobility practices and the ways in which these practices become disrupted, which was carried out in Brighton between 2012 and 2014. Our methodological approach was inspired by a mobility cultures perspective that incorporates understandings of experiential movement and its meanings, the social and cultural production of mobilities and the political contexts in which these take place (Cresswell, 2006, 2010; Packer, 2008; Sheller and Urry 2006). The project’s focus on mobility cultures (Sheller and Urry, 2006) rather than transport, revealed the way differences in personal circumstances affect experiences and responses to disruption, and illustrated that a focus on mobilities is an important way forward as part of efforts to transition to lower carbon travel, moving emphasis away from modes themselves and towards the entanglement of travel practices with the interdependencies of daily life that shape and produce them. As such, we contend that changing mobility practices to reduce carbon emissions is rarely situated at the level of the individual, because mobile lives are interlinked. Through our research we found that striving for lower carbon mobility means accepting that, for certain people at certain times, higher carbon emitting practices must currently be considered necessary and acceptable. Policies need to take into account the interdependent nature of people’s mobilities, and this requires a rethinking of individualised conceptions of habit and routine. Our conceptualisation of disruption therefore incorporates a mobility cultures approach, where disruption is similarly produced and situated, and mobility disruptions are complex interdependencies between different aspects of meaningful movements and the circumstances that sometimes constrain them. Disruption is therefore not a departure from ‘normality’, but is inherent to ‘normal’ everyday life, with ‘breakdown and failure...no longer atypical and therefore only worth addressing if they result in catastrophe’ (Graham and Thrift, 2007, 5). The ambiguous state of disruption can thereby be considered illustrative of the complexities of everyday life. Disruptions to mobilities are framed within everyday mobility practices and their socio-spatial contexts so that the uneven terrain of mobilities is revealed. Before discussing these complex interdependencies, we firstly expound our conceptual framing and the ways in which Lefebvre’s social space becomes mobile social space.

### **Situating interdependencies – everyday and imagined space**

Lefebvre’s (1991) social space is often conceptualised as a triad of space: spatial practice, the mundane doings of space; representations of space, ‘the space of the scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers’ (Ibid., 38); and representational space. Representational spaces are predicated on their history – ‘in the history of a people as well as in the history of each individual belonging to that people’ (Ibid., 41). This aspect of space acknowledges the importance of the past, of individual and collective stories as well as future imaginings, where space is ‘occupied by sensory phenomena, including products of the imagination’ (Ibid., 12). These aspects of space come together in a dialectical relationship so that ‘space may be said to embrace a multitude of intersections’ (Ibid., 33). *Mobile* social space is thus the intersection of lived and imagined mobilities and the institutions of power that control and regulate movement. It is the prominence given to imagined space that is particularly relevant to our rethinking of mobility habits

and routines. For Lefebvre the myriad incarnations of space produce the impossibility of comprehension so that the version of space ‘embodied in the representational space which its inhabitants have in their minds... plays an integral role in social practice’ (Ibid., 93). Thus mobile space is both socio-culturally produced and imagined. His representational spaces are ‘spaces which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate’ (Ibid., 39), but that remain dominated by powerful institutions. Lefebvre (1991, 97) viewed social spaces as ‘strange: homogenous, rationalised, and as such constraining; yet at the same time utterly dislocated’. For him, mobile space is homogenised through, for example, a lack of boundaries between ‘the domain of automobiles and the domain of people’. Bodies become caught up in the spin of ‘analagons’: images, signs and signals’ that define their ‘needs’, where ‘even cars may fulfil the function of analogons, for they are at once extensions of the body and mobile homes, so to speak, fully equipped to receive these wandering bodies’ (Ibid., 98). For Lefebvre the ‘abstract space’ of neo-capitalism is produced through automobilities – where space becomes abstract ‘where cars circulate like so many atomic particles’. Driving makes the mobile subject an ‘abstract subject’ with ‘the capacity to read the symbols of the highway code, and with one sole organ – the eye – places in the service of his movement’ (Ibid., 313). Mobility and its productive capacities are integral to Lefebvre’s vision of social space. In turn, situating habits, routines and normality within the context of mobile social space reveals otherwise overlooked applications of these concepts to enhanced understandings of mobilities.

Furthermore, Lefebvre’s analysis yields understandings of embodied experiences, which are associated with habit. Although the dialectic understanding of different aspects of social space, described above, is implicit in recognising the interplay between embodied experiences and their setting within ‘abstract space’, it is his rhythmanalysis that more explicitly theorizes at the level of the body through understanding the tensions between linear and cyclical rhythms. As in his articulation of social space, the body is situated within the capitalist system; there is a ‘hierarchy in this tangled mess, this scaffolding? A determining rhythm?’ (2004, 43). Conceptualising different aspects of mobility in space as rhythms reveals an understanding of the imbrications of bodies in their socio-political setting: ‘rhythm appears as regulated time, governed by rational laws, but in contact with what is least rational in human being: the lived, the carnal, the body’ (Lefebvre, 2004, 18), and allows us to make the apparent leap between the micro mobilities of bodies and their assemblage and wider mechanisms of governance. Lefebvre’s rhythms do not operate in isolation, but intersect with others, as well as in relation to dominant rhythms (Ibid.); embodied rhythms are interdependent as well as multiple. Lefebvre conceptualised this as polyrhythms, where people have their own ‘bundle of rhythms’, ‘each body, each being, having its place’ (Ibid., 41). Hence, even when habits are situated, there is still a tension between habit and collective mobile experiences where these are not individual but shared. Thus it is routine that characterizes spatial practice, the mundane doings of space, of mobility. For Lefebvre ‘the cyclical is social organisation manifesting itself. The linear is the daily grind, the routine, therefore the perpetual, made up of chance and encounters’ (Ibid., 30). It is argued here that as everyday spatial practice, routines reveal interdependencies, but that these interdependencies are also revealed in representational space of the imagination in the complex intersections of bodies and the spaces of mobile practice.

## **Methodology**

We collected a range of in-depth data on everyday mobilities in Brighton between spring 2012 and summer 2014. In reflecting the importance of relationships in mobile lives, the research focused on ‘families’ rather than households with 42 people from 23 ‘families’ participating in the study. In seeking to understand the myriad interdependencies of mobilities, we adopted a critical approach to the concept of family, as encompassing all of the key people that they identified as ‘family’, including parents and children, single parents, single people, non-cohabiting couples, intergenerational families living in the same house and a range of social characteristics that reflect the diversity of the city of Brighton. Around half of the participants were from families in which there were children and approximately 20% of the participants had caring responsibilities for family

members who were not children. As Holdsworth (2013, 3) argues in relation to family, and the notion of family dispersal in particular, such ‘static or immobile reading of family’ conceal the ‘ongoing project of mobility in maintaining, sustaining and dissolving family’. In this research such a fluid and flexible notion of family is used in understanding the complex interdependencies of wider social networks.

The participants took part in the project in a number of different ways, in narrative interviews, mobile interviews and filmed journeys, and through self-generated data collection. The self-generated data includes photographs, videos, diaries, and posts to a private Facebook group, focusing on everyday practices rather than just recording ‘journeys’. These were used as data in itself but also, importantly, as visual and textual cues that aided reflection on mobile practices during the interviews. The methodology used in this research allowed us to permeate the range of social connections upon which mobilities are generated, as well as reveal the situatedness of mobilities. We collected a set of rich data on everyday mobilities, which illustrate how mobile routines and habits are developed within social and material environments and constraints, often embedded within caring relationships. This challenges established notions around behaviour-change as driven by individualised imperatives. In its multi-contextuality, the methodological approach allowed us to capture situated mobility interdependencies through attention to notions of normality.

Clear narratives emerged from the participant data, stories of everyday mobilities that made visible aspects of the intersections of normality, habit and routine. We therefore adopted an innovative method of representing the stories, where representation is not static, but mobile and practiced (Murray and Upstone 2014). We collaborated with illustration students at the University of Brighton in producing comic book stories for a number of our participants (Figures 1 and 2). This was an iterative process of interpretation and re-interpretation, so that the illustrated stories became part of an ongoing process of knowledge making. This was, as Ingold argues, a process in which ‘the mental and the material, or the terrains of the imagination and the physical environment, run into one another to the extent of being barely distinguishable’ (Ingold, 2010, 17), thus in keeping with the Lefebvrian notion of mobile social space. The comic stories are not foreclosed narratives but are productive in themselves, part of understanding. As Jiron and Iturra (2014, 170) argue, such representations ‘requires adopting and adapting methods as journeys take place and as research processes evolve’.

The data we draw on in this paper is taken from the four narrative interviews we conducted with the participants over the course of the project. The life-history elements of the initial interview, and subsequent follow-up interviews which focused on daily practices and their disruption, and reviewed on-going data collected by participants themselves, allowed us to focus on participants’ narratives of everyday mobilities – how they are actually ‘talked about’ (Middleton, 2011, 2859) – showing how these practices are made sense of by participants themselves within the social, material, temporal and spatial contexts of their lives.

## **Disrupting normality through interdependent practices**

As discussed, normality is discursively constructed and situated within dominant discourses of mobility as well as individualised notions of embodiment (Doughty and Murray, 2016). It is used in relation to social ‘norms’ of mobility rather than to static or settled states of being, from which disruption occurs. A number of our research participants use ‘normality’ in this way. For example:

[...] in those days it wasn’t normal to take the car shopping for example, we’d walk to the shops, there’d be a whole variety of shops that you’d walk round, very different from today’s drive to a supermarket experience, so yeah it was more special occasions and long trips (Adam)

Adam is referring to the normality of shopping on foot rather than by car when he was a child insinuating that it is now more normal to do so. He is situating normality in his mobility history and in mobile social space; an imagined space that is predicated in history (Lefebvre, 1991). Adam's change in shopping practice has come about not only from changes in embodied practices, but from changing cultures of shopping and ideologically motivated changes to mobility infrastructure. Nevertheless normality is also used to refer to particular embodied dispositions, which when disrupted, can lead to altered mobilities. We can see this in Cilla's narrative about her injured shoulder:

The big thing there is because of my shoulder I can't carry as much weight as I used to be able to so it's a bit, it's a bit tricky [...] so hopefully soon that will change and I'll be back to normal, normally I just take a big backpack and load it up. (Cilla)

The focus on habit as productive of consistencies and regularities in daily life downplays, as Bissell (2015) points out, the transformative potentials of habit, which he suggests are better understood as 'virtual infrastructures' that depending on the situation can wax or wane as the embodied competencies we have developed shift in intensity and thereby at times can transform acuity into clumsiness. In Christoph's story, drawn in cartoon form as a comic strip (see figure 1) his moments of 'normality' are pictured in relation to his state of embodied being. The rhythm of the comic strip allows an engagement with the ebbs and flows of his everyday life and the ways it becomes disrupted. It is punctuated by mobile imaginings and these are again more comprehensible through engaging with and becoming part of his comic book story. Normality, therefore, is an ambiguous notion, which is dependent not only on social and spatial contexts but on the mobile social space of Lefebvre that encompasses the imagined. The significance of normality as an undulating yet rooting notion, becomes visible through the lens of disruption. In turn, the concept of normality reveals social interdependencies and their consequences. Eleanor describes a socially produced 'hypermobile' (from Adams, 1999) way of being that denies her a 'normal life':

... I feel like I don't have much of a life, by the time I've sort of done the commuting and done my job and done the housework and given the kids what they need there's nothing left, you know, I've no energy left to do anything else other than a bit of art, you know, that sort of just about keeps me alive, but I don't have a social life really and I don't have a normal life in that sense [...]

It appears variable normality reflects an acceptance of disruption as part of interdependent mobility practices. For Eleanor the notion of normality is changeable and incorporated into her complex mobility practices, which are both dependent on and productive of mobility infrastructures, transport routes and family.

## **Determining interdependencies through habit and routine**

From Lefebvre, social space is premised on the dialectical relationship of lived practice, institutional control and imaginings. Mobile spaces are characterised by intersecting rhythms, of shared embodiments, for example in imagining the mobility of others or imagining, like Christoph, the ways in which mobility can be disrupted. At the same time this embodied and imagined mobility is productive of mobilities. Figure 2 depicts Edith's story in comic book form. Edith is a single parent, whose mobilities are particularly dependent on her intimate relationship with her daughter, on imagining her future needs, with the understanding that some of those may not be met:

I've always got really good intentions of sitting down and doing a meal plan and looking at recipes and working out what I need to get and then doing like batch cooking but I never quite get round to organising it [...] and then I'll put in place good habits but I don't do it, I end up... because I've got

Waitrose at the end of my road, just every day or every couple of days just nipping up there to get everything. (Edith, second interview, May 2013)

Hence mobilities intersect with the rhythms of parenting, in ways that are highly complex as figure 2 demonstrates. They are part of Edith's mobility story. Interestingly, for Edith, habits are something to be aspired to and are the source of conflict between 'real' and imagined good parenting practices. Lefebvre differentiates between cyclical spontaneous, unscripted rhythms and more purposeful linear rhythms of 'the daily grind, the routine, therefore the perpetual' (Ibid., 40). Habits become bound up in the complex 'relations of the cyclical and the linear' where there may be 'domination of one over the other' in 'an antagonistic unity' (Ibid., 85). They are situated in social space and are thereby dependent on the places in which bodies are located. For example, Cilla relates her adoption of 'bad' habits to the opportunities available in a city like Brighton.

I think everyone gets in that habit and I think as well you start, you know, I used to drive half an hour, 45 minutes to see my friends for half an hour and didn't think anything of it, and now if I have to travel more than fifteen minutes to see someone in Brighton I think it's really far away and maybe not worth it, like it's the Brighton problem, it's there! (Cilla, life history interview, February 2012)

Hence habit is situated in the intersections of social space, within a 'mobility constellation' (Cresswell 2010), relative to embodied practices and political, historical and geographical context. Such a constellation is thereby dependent on hierarchies of power, which are made visible through dominant discourses of mobility (Doughty and Murray, 2016). For Roger therefore habitual practices were developed at an early stage of his life and this mobility history has informed his current mobilities and has also been transferred to the next generation.

I used to just walk almost all the time back from school. So I got into the habit really, really young, just thinking that a seven-mile walk is nothing... So I've always tried to instill that same sort of attitude in my son, really, and he really likes it, so I always offer him the choice, "Shall we get the bus, or shall we walk?" or, I don't know, sometimes, "Shall we use the car?" (Roger, life history interview, March 2012)

Roger refers to the 'good' habit of walking home from school, considered 'good' as it sits easily within local mobility cultures and is a practice that has become embodied through repetition, with the premise that this is considered easier to imbue at a young age. Habit is discursively constructed in a number of contradictory ways at both local level and within policy discourses (Doughty and Murray, 2016). It is situated in the context of other and institutional mobility structures and discourses: in 'representations of space' or 'determining rhythms'. It is also, of course, embodied, as Christoph demonstrates in referring to himself as a 'creature of habit'. This, he considers to be a marker of his imperturbability, his ability to be 'unconfrontational'.

I'm quite a creature of habit. I can hear my colleagues laughing, just me saying that, what an understatement that is! I have a banana at a certain time in the morning... I don't really, but they think I do. But I am quite... not structured, but I do tend to do the same things over. (Christoph, life history interview, February 2012)

Habit is situated and is also a localised embodied discourse within these determining rhythms. However, it is within these sets of 'antagonistic' relationships that mobile subjects seek to navigate their everyday lives in relation to their interdependencies, and this is where mobile routines become significant. It is in the context of mobile social space and its complex rhythms that routines are needed.

Habit and routine are often used interchangeably by those who develop habitualised mobilities, as our participant, Christoph, demonstrated in his transpositioning of the two terms when referring to the same kinds of embodied practices. As revealed through his comic book story, Christoph has

caring responsibilities for his mother; but these are more intermittent and flexible than for other participants, as they do not share a household. This social arrangement is therefore more likely to lead to the kind of habitual behaviour that is potentially transformative (Bissell, 2014; Middleton, 2011). However, rather than changing his mobility practices to lower carbon mobilities, Christoph's transformation is from a habitualised use of the bicycle to a more deliberative and contingent use of the car, thereby a transition to higher carbon emitting mobilities. Here Christoph, who is in his 50s, is talking about breaking out of the 'routine' or 'habit' of using his bike to do the shopping and instead using a car following his recent acquisition of a driving license:

I don't know because it's such a big life shift for me. I'm not used to doing something like a Saturday shop or a big shop once a week. ... three or four times a week I'll go to the supermarket on the way home and buy, and just pick up what I need. So I don't know if I'll get into a routine of, I don't know, I mean there's still just me so I don't need to buy things in such bulk or in such quantity that I can't carry them home on the bike generally. And I don't mind shopping several times a week because it's fairly quick [...] [I] suppose I might get into bulk shopping. (Christoph, second interview, November 2012)

Despite 'good' intentions around sustainability, Christoph's body has, in Lefebvre's terms 'become caught up in the spin of "analagons"' (Lefebvre, 1991, 98). His needs are becoming defined by the private car, which he considers facilitating in relation to his caring role, however here he also imagines how it will impact on his embodied dispositions.

When people are less interdependent, the relationship between habit and routine becomes more blurred. One of our participants, Adam, is a retired man in his early 60s, who has a non-cohabiting partner in the same city, who he sees at weekends. Adam demonstrates that when mobilities are less dependent on close relationships, routines can become more focused on the micro-mobile, and the distinction between what is a routine and what is a habit becomes blurred.

Yes, I do get thrown by disruption undoubtedly, I like planning and when the plans are disrupted I kind of feel slightly miffed and I mean there's a lot of disruption at the moment, as you know, there's road-works all over the city [...] I mean sometimes it can be a positive thing, if it throws you out of your routine and you discover something new, you might go a different route [...] You do get inevitably get into routines, and I think it can be mildly frustrating if those things, those routines that you almost depend on, get disrupted, [...] but, you have to try to embrace change and make it your friend [laughs], that is the trick. (Adam, life history interview, March 2012)

However, for many of our participants, and especially those with caring responsibilities, routines are a necessary means of coping with the myriad aspects of everyday life that produce complex mobilities. It was Christoph's mother who influenced his decision to acquire his driving license, as this would facilitate his caring role, which they foresaw as becoming more intense over the next few years. When participants adopted routines in order to take up these varied roles, they were highly deliberated amongst the social group concerned, which was usually the family. One family: Clark (father), Audrey (mother), Alice (child) and Emmeline (child) have a complex routine that Clark says has 'developed over time'.

Alice: It's very regular.

Audrey: Yeah, it's very regular. Yeah, it's very routine-y, which I don't really like. But I suppose the summer holidays were a bit more dashing around.

Alice: But it is a routine. It's very, very regular.

Audrey: That's most people's lives though. I suppose unless you do something...

However, this routine takes some effort to maintain and often, embodied dispositions can get in the way:

Alice: Like this morning, I normally leave about eight, and this morning I woke up at quarter to eight. I had my alarm set for seven, and I woke up at seven and I was like, “No!” so I fell back asleep.

Audrey: It’s very unlike you, isn’t it?

Alice: It was very unlike me. And then I got up and I was like, “AAH!” and speed dressed and had my breakfast.

Audrey: It’s amazing, you can do it in 15 minutes. You did everything you normally do in an hour in 15 minutes. (Second group interview, November 2012)

Despite experiences of this routine as something that is fairly fixed, further discussion illustrates that it is constant flux. Disruption becomes incorporated into the routine to the point that it is often overlooked. When the family is asked to reflect on this, they suggest that disruption to their routine is potentially positive.

Alice: Wednesdays we run, not swim. I used to do a random morning, either Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday morning, which I don’t normally do as much now, but I am doing tomorrow morning ‘cause it’s half term, because I’ve got a four day weekend, so it’s my last day of school for the week today, which I’m very happy about. And because on Saturday there’s a swimming gala, so we’re not swimming on Saturday morning, so I have to make up for it by doing another morning.

Audrey: Is that what you would class as a disruption? Or is that just a change in routine? What do you think?

Alice: I don’t know. I think it’s a bit of both. It stops you from doing your routine. It’s the same sort of.

Audrey: Disruption and what? And routine? [...]

Alice: Yeah. Changing routine would be a more happy thing, whereas a traffic jam would be a disruption, it wouldn’t just be a change in routine.

Audrey: It’s a happy thing not to get up on Saturday morning, isn’t it? (Second group interview, November 2012)

Hence routine becomes a mobility practice that can be differentiated from habit – it becomes aspirational, and necessarily thought through or deliberated. Routine becomes a considered and integral part of parenting, a reflexive response to the requirement of parenting. For Edith, another participant, the routine is something important to hold on to as part of her caring role. It is a way of managing her role as a parent and being a ‘good’ parent.

Okay. So because I’m a full-time mum my daily routine and activities are based around being a mother [...] I have NCT friends and other friends who’ve got small kids and we’ve had lots of regular activities, meet-ups to do, all sorts of things, we’ve been to music groups and crafty events and baby yoga and meeting up for swimming and all sorts of things [...] and in terms of like a daily routine, repeating patterns of behaviour, I think with children it’s good to know what’s happening and to feel secure, you know how things happen [...] (Edith, second interview, May 2013)

Hence routines reveal interdependencies, because they are a means for coping with the challenges of negotiating everyday responsibilities, such as caring for a child as Edith’s comic strip illustrates. In this way, routines are deliberated within the context of interdependent socialities. These deliberations take place in the context of mobile social space, as Edith demonstrates. It then becomes difficult when, inevitably, routines get disrupted, especially as this can get bound up in conflictual intimate relationships. For Edith it is disruptions to childcare related to her child’s father that are considered to be particularly challenging and produce a range of negative emotions.

Well...we’ve got this sort of routine going on so there’s obviously disruptions in the routine which are just practical like there stops being certain groups that we go to when its half term or something like that. At the moment we’re supposed...I’ve got a big (stresses word) issue about what day contact<sup>1</sup> happens on. Yeah, so the contact thing is a big disruption thing and that hasn’t settled down into a regular [...] I just keep being messed around and I’m finding that really difficult cause ideally I’d like to arrange to do something while that’s happening. Have company or use it to do something productive with my time. (Edith, life history interview, March 2012)

Although it is considered a necessity, Edith likens her routine to being electronically tagged, a form of mobility surveillance that is highly restrictive in both space and time:

It feels like punishment. Basically I've got to be in every day at 5:00 to give her dinner. And then between 5:00 and 7:00 it's a case to her eating and then doing the bedtime routine. So basically from 5:00 (voice raises), that's before some people are on a tag<sup>ii</sup>, most people are on a tag at like 7:00, 7:00 till 7:00. But I'm on mine from 5:00. I can't leave the house so everything I need to do in a day I have to do it before then, which is part of the reason I use a car [...] (Edith, second interview, May 2013)

Significantly, these complex routines, often associated with caring for children, are shared rather than individualised, and are characterised by a range of interdependencies (Murray, 2009, Jiron, 2014). They are responses to social contexts and involve a range of interconnecting mobile trajectories.

I mean I think it's sort of happened organically anyway because a lot of my peers are having second babies so they've stopped doing many routine activities anyway [...] (Edith)

So when one set of routines change, the interdependent routines also change, as we saw in later interviews with Edith:

[...] but now my daughter's a little bit older and she's spending more time with her dad and she's also now going to pre-school, that's meant that that's taken away part of that time that we were using to have those regular meet-ups so I've found it difficult to keep that routine going and the regular events that we were doing has really reduced so yeah, it's impacted both our lives and I guess it will again when she goes to school. (Edith, fourth filmed interview, May 2014)

Hence routines are a characteristic of the complex interdependencies of mobilities; independencies based that are situated in mobile social space.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, we suggest that mobilities are interdependent, contingent and situated and that this is revealed when viewed through the lens of disrupted mobilities and with attention to normality, habit and routine. We have shown the ways in which mobilities are imagined and embodied in Lefebvrian terms. A focus on 'normality' makes disrupted habits visible, by emphasising the persistent social interruptions to everyday mobilities. Normality here is not a constant but is shifting, contingent on social and spatial processes. Disruption only makes sense with reference to these multiple normalities. Mobilities can be understood as instilled through the body, but social disruptions can make these come undone. Disruptions, particularly those that involve caring for others, can make habits secondary. So there is a tension between habit and embodied experience – especially shared embodiments. 'Disruption' then is useful as a heuristic tool for understanding not only everyday mobilities and their broader context, but also the way in which particular concepts have become enshrined in thinking around carbon reductions in transport.

Here we have followed on from other mobilities scholars (Schwanen et al., 2012; Bissell, 2014; Middleton, 2011) in arguing for a need to move away from the 'reductive' idea of habit, which sees it as an external force acting on travel behavior. We argue that habit is situated within 'constellations of mobilities' (Cresswell, 2010), which are historically and geographically specific. Our analysis in this article also demonstrates that habit can be understood as intersecting rhythm in relation to dominant rhythms, drawing on Lefebvre's (2004) rhythmanalysis. Habit emerges as embodied discourse contesting wider discourses of mobility. However, and following on from previous work, we recognise the implications of habit being problematically embedded within discourses of mobility

that focus on an individualised mobile subject and do not anticipate the significance of imagined mobilities.

We also need to understand habit as formed within interdependent embodiments. Our evidence suggests that embodied experiences are shared rather than individualised, in relation to caring relationships in particular. Habits become interrupted through, for example, practices of caring, and in particular circumstances the establishment of routines become paramount in managing everyday life. Here routines can be distinguished from habits as they are deliberated within complex sets of mobilities. Routine is often conceptualised as a context for habit formation and can be habitual, but routines are often carefully constructed in order to cope with particular aspects of everyday life, and is especially important for those with caring responsibilities, including parenting. These deliberations take place in the context of dominant discourses of mobility, and this also has a bearing on the formation of habits. A continued rethinking of these concepts could open up opportunities to make changes to cultures of mobility that will endure. They are required to facilitate a shift in emphasis within policy, in thinking beyond transport solutions to problems of sustainability, to a consideration of the ways in which broader social policies of, for example, education and healthcare shape mobile and carbon-emitting practices.

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<sup>i</sup> 'Contact' refers to the arrangements made for access to children when parents have separated.

<sup>ii</sup> Being on 'a tag' refers to the practice of electronic tagging where an individual is fitted with a mobile device to ensure that their movements are restricted.