

# Marginalized or Empowered? Street Reclaiming Strategies and the Situated Politics of Children's Mobilities

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## Abstract

This article argues for the importance of acknowledging street reclaiming strategies and the situated politics of urban mobilities as a vital part of the production of urban space. Urban mobilities often form the basis of formal processes of political contestations as well as informal temporary appropriation strategies. As contemporary cities are often dominated by automobility, various other mobile practices tend to be marginalized in policy and planning. This article centres on an analysis of street reclaiming strategies and the situated politics of children's perspectives and experiences. These two themes provide unique examples of the dimensions of marginalization and empowerment in urban mobile practices. Issues of 'the just city' and dynamics of participatory planning are discussed as initiatives to attain more democratic urban mobilities.

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## *Whose Street Is It?*

The history of Western European urban life illustrates how multiple mobilities have formed the city streets throughout centuries. A focus on mobile practices in streets is interesting, because various rationalities and ideals of what the city should be like are played out in them. These, often contested, rationalities are reflected in the regulation of mobility, in the infrastructural design and in the production of urban space as a space for living, consumption and growth (Sheller and Urry 2000; Wachs and Crawford 1991). In a historical perspective, automobility and speed in general have been related to the rise of 'sensate passivity' and the loss of face-to-face communal space (Sennett 2002). However, contemporary research also emphasizes how speed and automobility are not only complicating social bonds, but also generating new ones (Kellerman 2006; Larsen et al. 2006; Urry 2000). Contemporary automobility is not something that is good or bad *per se*. It is regulated and manifested differently in various contexts. This article argues that automobility is an inherent part of many current neoliberal growth policies that dominate the production of urban space. Street reclaiming practices, including those of children and other non-motorized citizens, have the potential of

renewing the regulation of urban mobilities. It is complicated to reach a democratic and just political production of urban space and the question of 'whose street is it' remains as vital as ever.

I examine street reclaiming strategies in general and elaborate on the practices of 40 Danish 11- to 12-year-old children. Children under the age of 18 years form one-fifth of the European population, but their perspectives are often marginalized in urban policies (European Union 2002). Since the late 1980s, research within the 'the new childhood paradigm' has urged us to take children's own perspectives seriously and to acknowledge children's rights as citizens. Rather than emphasizing the child's psychological development to *becoming* a fully adult person, the specific experiences of *being* a child are to be respected and acknowledged (James et al. 1998). Such a research perspective involves recognizing all the individual, cultural and age-specific differences within the category called 'children', as well as grasping the more general socioeconomic conditions structuring a specific cohort of children.

The mobility and autonomy of 11- to 12-year-old children are different from the mobility of, for example, children who are 5 or 17 years old. One of the striking results from my research with 11- to 12-year-old children was their capability to cope with mobilities. In interviews, and with their photographs and drawings, the children reflected in detail on the complexity of regulating urban mobilities. In some instances, it nearly seems as though the power balance is turned around, and children become the ones who 'own' the city streets. In this case, children's reflections resemble other street reclaiming practices; when they succeed, the result is often broad processes of empowerment, i.e. feelings of deliberation and emancipation (Freire 1972; Friedman 1987). Dimensions of marginalization and empowerment are not fixed or essential, but continuously played out in the everyday production of urban space.

### *Multiple Mobilities and Situated Politics*

The term mobilities includes much more than mere physical transport from A to B in absolute time and space. It relates to global flows, ontological and epistemological aspects of fluidities, and practices influenced by local/global processes. The following quote summarizes these tendencies well and links the research on mobilities to a critique of modernity:

Moderns value mobility, especially leisure travel, and many of us take travelling for granted. But if travel is central to modernity, then the critique of travel must be a fundamental priority in contemporary critical practices. In this critical approach to deconstructing something that one engages deeply and care about, the term 'travel' signifies the multiple aspects of an expanded field including transportation and communication technologies, divisions of labour, and representational practices. Travel in this expanded sense leads to a theoretical practice, to theorizing subjects and meaning in relation to varied histories of the circulation of people, goods and ideas. (Kaplan 2003)

Now this increased focus on mobilities and 'travellings' have led to analyses of nearly all types of mobilities across the social sciences. Good reviews of the field of mobility research are found in Canzler et al. (2008), Sheller and Urry (2006) and Urry (2000, 2007). In short, and without covering the whole field, analyses have focused on materialities and technologies sustaining mobilities (Graham and Marvin 2001; Sheller and Urry 2006), on automobility as well as other types of corporal mobilities (Kellerman 2006; Miller 2001; Sheller and Urry 2000); as well as aspects of inequalities, ethics and dwellings in local and global mobilities (Fotel 2007; Molz and Gibson 2007; Thomsen et al. 2005).

I want to direct attention to the situated politics of the corporal mobilities in particular. My emphasis on situatedness owes a debt to Donna Haraway's notion of situated knowledge, which privileges the epistemological importance of historicized and socially embedded knowledge production. Knowledge is always partial, as well as embedded in the differing visions of active, embodied and sensing subjects (Haraway 1991; Lamphere et al. 1997, 5). Viewing all social practices as potentially political (Mouffe 2005), situated knowledge productions and experiences have the potential to form the background of formal or informal political articulation. However, conditions structuring family routines or the neighbourhood culture and infrastructure are not traditional political arenas. Neither do the situated experiences of women or children fit into a traditional Marxist class-based theoretical framework. Situated everyday experiences are most frequently not articulated as political issues, but they do have the *potential* to be so. Collective processes of deliberation often help street reclaimers to articulate their situated experiences with mobilities as a political issue in urban politics.

From time to time, children's situated knowledge production is included in participatory planning schemes or wider bottom-up street reclaiming strategies. The report 'Kids on the Move' published by the European Union (2002) and the UNESCO project 'Growing up in Cities' (Chawla 2002) both illustrate cases from around the world in which children have had adult allies to help integrate their perspectives. Some of the projects have dealt with initiating walking buses, improving playgrounds and calming thoroughfare traffic in residential areas to increase children's safety and independent mobility. Projects involving children are often not high on the political agenda and there is no legally defined responsibility to integrate children's perspectives in city planning. However, well-intentioned adults such as planners, schoolteachers or adult street reclaimers are all in a position to take up the responsibility to include children's perspectives. Of course, children should not be heard in all situations, but they can occasionally form an interesting voice in urban policies and planning. The distribution of mobility-related 'goods and bads' in public space has many positions and stances, and it makes networked processes of mobilization, temporary revolts and humanist expressions part of the urban logic alongside capitalist and neoliberal rationalities (Castells 2000; Harvey 1996; Lefebvre 1991).

Street reclaiming practices in urban settings illustrate the varied ways that everyday experiences provide the foundation for political expressions. The streets are full of corporal mobility that often entails implicit or explicit struggles for power, rights and responsibilities in public space. Arguments in such struggles include policies of getting *better potential mobilities*, for example, improvements of roads, footpaths and the like; *better accessibility*, for example, improvements of bus services to city centre; and policies for *getting rid of too much mobility*, especially automobility and the side-effects of the flows of motorized traffic (Figueroa 2005). The situated politics of urban mobilities include all those explicit and formal mobilization processes that are part of formal urban regeneration schemes, participatory traffic planning and the like. However, the situated politics of mobilities also include more implicit and informal articulations of street appropriation, such as the events and demonstrations of the Reclaim the Street movement (Mosey 2000) and children's temporal playing in the streets coping with the flows of traffic.

The metaphor of rights is a well-suited prism that can be used to grasp such processes of situated politics, but it entails a twist worth considering. First of all, the prism includes rights *to be* mobile (also automobile, as the automobile organizations argue), and rights *not to be* mobile and to be shielded off from the side-effects of other peoples mobilities. In the following, I use the metaphor of mobility-related rights to include both of these types of mobilities, and I discuss these according to ideals of urban democracy and urban justice. Democracy and justice are, just like the notion of rights, not essential and fixed, but contextually produced in times and spaces.

Lefebvre's humanist-oriented interpretation of Marx's theories exemplifies how the production of space is both a democratic and mobility-oriented challenge. In Lefebvre's work, the production of space is conceptualized in dynamic ways with the everyday marginalized practices dominated by capitalist logics in abstract space (1991). Harvey's (1996) and Lefebvre's theories are both concerned with justice in the city, but Lefebvre's emphasis on the everydayness and the playful production of space has a more humanistic and phenomenological perspective than Harvey's historical materialism. Especially in Lefebvre's essay 'The right to the city', the production of urban space is articulated as both an appeal for the city of *oeuvre*, i.e. the city as a democratic product of art, and an argument of the equal right to contribute to this production (1996). Discussed in this way, Lefebvre's theories do have the potential for enlightening contemporary discussions on citizenship and local and global mobilities (Purcell 2003).

In the context of street reclaiming practices, it is constructive to use Lefebvre's argument concerning the need of empowering alternative, playful, artistic and humanist expressions in the production of urban space. Street reclaimers often produce such alternative urban visions by stressing the need of, for example, reducing motorized traffic and create better play spaces for children, as well as introducing more green areas and recreational spaces

in the inner cities. This way, street reclaiming contributes to transform urban space from being dominated by exchange value and to increase its use-value in a consequently more democratic city. The process is not without conflict and contestation. It runs counter to neoliberal rationalities of growth, speed and automobility, which tend to exclude non-automobile groups and more environmentally friendly types of collective transport (Flyvbjerg 1998; Jensen and Richardson 2004; Thomsen et al. 2005; Whitelegg 1997). As illustrated in the following, these processes often form the background of street reclaiming mobilizations.

### *Practices of Street Reclaiming*

Policies for street reclaiming often have the goal of creating 'liveable streets'. The notion of liveability can include a focus on environmental sustainability, but first and foremost it points to the wish to gain back the streets 'as the centre of community life'. The most obvious sinner who has 'stolen the streets' is automobility (Engwicht 1999: 5). Interestingly, the scholar David Engwicht defines street reclaiming as going beyond mere traffic calming, because it 'helps reclaim your street as a place for play, social activity, and community building' (1999: 9). Street reclaiming can be practised in a variety of formal and informal ways. Psychological and behavioural street reclaiming is of the more informal type. It can be practised by, for example, playing and dwelling in the footways and in the streets and appropriate space in ways that do not lead to permanent changes. Street reclaiming can also be practised by engaging in a formal dialogue with city planners and introduce physical and regulatory changes to formal planning and policy initiatives.

A wish to reclaim the streets is often about two things: firstly, empowering hitherto marginalized actors and practices in the production of urban space; and secondly and related to the first, producing a more just distribution of mobility-related rights and possibilities (Whitelegg 1997). In the Danish urban regeneration schemes and planning initiatives, the regulation of traffic and improvements of physical facilities have, in general, been of central concern (Andersen 2003). In a survey from a deprived area with extensive social and physical problems, the side-effects of automobility were interestingly considered as being worse and more far-reaching than other problems in the area (Fotel 2006). This finding was surprising, because the public authorities had a tendency of marking the social problems as the worst. The side-effects from motorized traffic were described as noise, insecurity, stress curtailments of outdoor activities and a general intensification of the feeling of being excluded. For instance, one of the residents reflected on how the flows of traffic enhanced the atmosphere of being excluded: 'They just drive by, they do not see us at all.' While long-term street reclaiming policies could be seen as signalling radical and protectionist 'not in my backyard' strategies, the interesting lesson from Danish case study is that the street-claimers were in fact very pragmatic. As they said: 'Traffic should

flow somewhere, if it just were the case that we didn't have so much of it.' They were not arguing for having their streets transformed back to gravel roads, but they considerably called for distributional justice when regulating side-effects from the flows of traffic.

Strategies of reclamation can also be turned upside-down and be concerned with articulating the claimers own rights to get away and use the streets for motorized mobilities. This can be the case in excluded and remote areas in the countryside and on the urban fringes, where the public transport coverage are minimal. Here citizens reclaim their rights, not to less, but to more mobility and better accessibility to the city centres, public services and the like (Fotel 2007). Living in such areas with no car availability is almost synonymous with aspects of exclusion from the rest of society. Research on social exclusion and transport elaborates on the notion of having a basic right to mobility: While it is theoretically possible to reach most destinations by walking or public transport, it 'may be at the price of human dignity; it can take an hour and a half for a public transport user, standing in the cold, hanging around waiting for connections, to make a journey that a car user could do in ten or fifteen minutes' (Solomon 2000: 7). Furthermore, defining a basic right to mobility includes answering questions like: 'How much [transport] are which groups or individuals entitled to, who should provide it, and who should pay for it? This debate is familiar in the policy areas of housing, education, health etc, but not in the transport policy area' (Solomon 2000: 7). The discussion on transport and social exclusion is widespread in the English context, but fundamental to many other national contexts as well (Cass et al. 2005; Donaghy et al. 2005; Farrington 2007; Hine 2008; Lucas 2004).

The argument of liveable streets without motorized transport is also found in quite another type of theory; namely, that concerned with economic entrepreneurial growth and urban creativity. Theorists like Florida (2004) and Porter (1998) argue that having numerous areas for recreation in public space, cafés, parks and the like, including a restriction of automobility, increase the human potential for innovation and economic growth. However, when transferred into public policy and planning, such theories can lead to focusing mainly on the elite and the inner-city areas. Excluded and marginal areas on the outskirts are potentially left out of such policies.

The above dimensions of street reclamation are all, potentially at least, relevant to public policies and planning. The processes of mobilization in urban regeneration, the questioning of accessibility and the argument for creating good conditions for the growth of human capital are all dimensions that could be included in participatory, collaborative and communicative planning schemes (Friedman 1987; Healey 2007). The social and environmental implications of transport are recognized at the European Union level, and implemented in, for example, the European mobility week, including a car-free day. Still, a radical stagnation in motorized transport faces many barriers (European Union 2001, 2002).

There are several other interesting dimensions relating to the politics of street reclamation. The right to mobility and the right to be shielded off from too much mobility intersect with other policy areas, such as health, safety and the general quality of life (Hillman 1993; Hillman et al. 1990; Fotel 2007). An open case is the one of gender; while transport and auto-mobility have been factors of empowerment to women, enabling their entry into the labour market, the contemporary structures of everyday travels reveal how women are primarily using public transport, which is related to social exclusion (Sheller and Urry 2000). Children's practices also provide a unique perspective on power relations and appropriation strategies in urban mobilities. These qualitative dynamics are illustrated in the following.

### *Children's (In)visibility in City Streets*

Children are often portrayed as the invisible and disempowered actors in urban mobilities (Hillman 1993; Hillman et al. 1990). While children's experience of mobility is culturally contingent and subject to individual characteristics, they often share the same mobility-related structural conditions. Like many pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, children are 'confined to small slivers of the urban public [...] relatively disenfranchised and excluded from full citizenship' (Sheller and Urry 2000: 754). On the other hand, well-off adults increasingly chauffeur children by car (European Union 2002). This car driving often empowers the children *in* the cars because they get pleasant access to various facilities. At the same time, it unfortunately enhances the exclusion and disempowerment of those children *without* a car in which they can be transported, simply because these children cannot access the same status-related activities (Fotel 2007).

A Danish case study illustrates how children, moving about by foot or bike, appropriate their own space and reclaim their right to be mobile. The material is based on forty 11- to 12-year-old children living in two different urban areas. The children have been interviewed, and they have taken photographs and drawn sketches about their experience with urban mobilities. The two urban areas offer very different mobility-related conditions. The first photograph illustrates how children in area A are able to bike around in the whole neighbourhood on separate cycle paths. The children only meet cars on a few specified roads. The second photograph illustrates how children in area B are confined to small slivers of public space (i.e. narrow footpaths with almost no spaces for play). The neighbourhood is dominated by motorized traffic. The same situation is reflected in the two drawings, which provide a phenomenological gaze into the two neighbourhoods. The first drawing illustrates bicycles driving on a path with trees and a lake at the side. The atmosphere is relatively quite and 'free'. The other drawing illustrates a rather strict and regulated space, including a pedestrian crossing, cars, vertical lines and sharp corners.



Figure 1: Photograph taken by Julie, 12 years old



Figure 2: Photograph taken by Cecilie, 12 years old

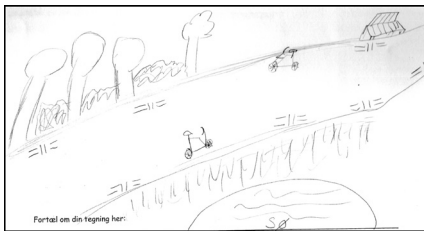


Figure 3: Drawing made by Sanat, 11 years old

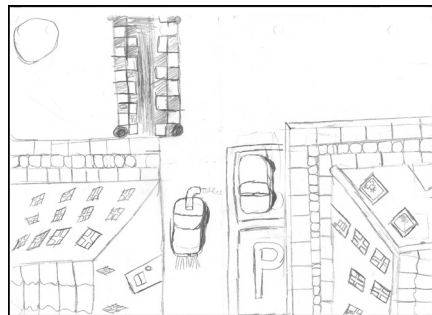


Figure 4: Drawing made by Anne, 12 years old

Children claim their right to produce city-space in various ways and the two areas offer different possibilities for non-motorized mobilities. Interestingly though, the children shared many of the same experiences. One of the most striking one was their feeling of marginalization meeting cars. While the children in general observed and followed the formal rules of traffic, several children had an explicit opinion about the car drivers not respecting children in general. They reflected in detail about the traffic regulations, and stated that even when they had the law on their side, they were often not respected. As one boy stated: ‘When I go home I cross the road at some “give way signs”, and the cars always ignore those! Sometimes you just have to walk out onto the street. Then they have to stop – and that is also what they are supposed to do. I hate those that do not respect the signs; you are just standing there, and then they think “Oh, he will let us drive first.”’ Another boy tells the same kind of story: ‘There are many stupid drivers. When they turn in here, they have to stop for me. But they just turn. They do not have the patience. I don’t know why, but it is always old men.’ The theme of respecting the rules of traffic while being an ignored bystander was widespread amongst the children in both areas.

Through such reflexive criticisms children express their experiences of power relations in everyday mobilities. Despite the dominance of motorized traffic, they experienced themselves as being capable of handling their own mobilities. They interpret the flows of traffic in competent ways, they cross large roads, play alongside the roads and they hang out and socialize in the



streets. Hanging out and strolling around in the streets forms a collective practice of appropriating the streets. It also forms an excellent 'liminal space', which can be used for socializing amongst peers in the transition to adulthood (Matthews 2003). In this way, it is possible to find elements of empowerment in the children's reflections and practices; when they insist and succeed in appropriating their own spaces, they have feelings of deliberation and emancipation.

On the other hand, this seeming control of their own situation is supplemented by a widespread acknowledgement of being subordinated to the adult world and, consequently, to adult automobility. The material produced by the children provides several examples of minor accidents in traffic, where the fault was on the adult car-driver, but with the children being very humble. A boy who experienced such an accident, for example, described the car driver as being very nice indeed, because she asked afterwards about his condition. The discourse of adulthood and automobility is internalized in children's behaviour to such a degree that children are very respectful and servile in their interaction with car drivers. They often show 'respect' for the car drivers to such an extent that they encourage cars to proceed even though the cars have formal duty to give way to the children. As this boy reflects when the cars do not respect their duty to give way to pedestrians: 'Well, I watch out carefully and then I give a little respect to those cars, like saying "Okay, just drive ahead, I don't care, just do it." I make a little sign with my hand to signal "Just go" ... I am not in a hurry.' Of course there is nothing wrong with being polite and sensible to others in the streets, but as other analyses also illustrates, it seems that the attentive considerations are primarily something that the children practise (Hillman 1993; Hillman et al. 1990).

To redress the situation of subordination and to become part of the dominant mobile group, most children relate their future adult life to having a car. The car stands out as an icon of future success (Fotel 2007). This leads to the question of whether we are socializing our children into future car drivers or whether it is possible to preserve and retain the joys that children experience with their own motion and outlet of energy? The answer is not easy. As automobility is the dominant mode of transport in the Western world, placing the responsibility and the hope of changing that situation on today's children does seem a little naive. But emphasizing the values of liveable streets and creating good conditions for other modes of transport in the streets will ensure a certain focus on the pleasures of own corporal motions and non-automobile mobilities.

The interesting theoretical benefit from examining children's perspectives is that attention is brought to the multiple ways of producing the city. Through various temporally informal practices, like playing, hanging out and reading the flows of traffic, children develop their own reflections on the powers and rationalities forming urban mobilities. Following the line of critical urban theories, these multiple, alternative everyday experiences

contribute to strengthening the lived city spaces. Going back to Lefebvre's thoughts on the right to the city, children's practices represent aspects of the lived space and their practices contribute to the production of space as use-value. To strengthen the spatial use-value helps diminishing the dominant urban logic of space as a commodity of abstract capital exchange. Various other alternative, expressive and humanist practices could be examined as contributing to increasing the lived space in contemporary cities. In line with the critical Marxist-oriented urban scholars like Harvey and Lefebvre, it is argued here that the important point is to keep the dialectic dynamically *open*; to continuously reflect about the multiple practices and rationalities that form the production of urban spaces.

### *Mobility-related Rights and Reclaiming the Just City*

This article has discussed the dynamic production of urban space. I have emphasized different street reclaiming practices, including both formal mobilizations related to planning and regeneration, as well as more informal situated politics, such as street appropriation through temporal practices like playing and hanging out in the city streets. The latter being what Engwicht (1999) described as psychological and behavioural street reclaiming. Examining the notion of street reclamation and mobility-related rights points to both sides of the coin: the right to enjoy the pleasures of mobilities and the right to be shielded off from the side-effects generated by, in particular, automobility. The city is a contested zone with multiple rationalities of what the just city is. Increasing automobility is accelerating some of these conflicts because '... the politics of automobility is generating new forms of public protest and changing civil society's repertoires of contestation. [...] new styles of direct action are both against and *in favor* of automobility' (Sheller and Urry 2000). Mobilities, and especially automobility, are discursively related to freedom, empowerment and liberation; but at the same time, it produces everyday burdens and negative side-effects which, amongst other things, create processes of social marginalization.

Thus, the processes of marginalization and empowerment are complicated dimensions along a continuum with no fixed ends. Driving the car will often be empowering (perhaps besides being stuck in a traffic jam), while being outside the cars, dependent purely on public transportation, often entails aspects of marginalization. Street reclaiming practices often seek to balance this situation by minimizing the negative side-effects of automobility and enhance the value of non-motorized streets and non-motorized lifestyles. Such initiatives and mobilizations should be respected as part of urban democracies.

Integrating children's perspectives in city planning would not radicalize or turn contemporary traffic regulation upside down. In the Danish study (Fotel 2007), 11- to 12-year-old children were asked 'what they would

do, if they became a mayor'. Most children pragmatically wanted 'more or better bicycle lanes', 'more or better footpaths' and 'less cars'. In general the children argued in favour of improving the conditions for non-motorized mobility. The large international project 'Growing up in Cities' also found a remarkable consensus in the children's judgement of 'goods and bads' in public space (Chawla 2002: 17). This consensus may illustrate that the children are influenced by the same general discourses, but it also points to the fact that asking children about their everyday conditions, does not produce answers which 'blows in the wind'. Asking children and adolescents often produce relatively reasonable opinions that can enrich the democratic dialogue in contemporary cities.

Many cities already enjoy participatory planning schemes that, in theory, increase the democratic production of space. The ways that participatory planners and politicians anticipate the voices of citizens in such governance networks intentionally make the planners function as the citizens allied. With ideals of inclusion and democracy, these networks and schemes slightly modifies the rather bleak picture of urban 'space wars' that, for example, Harvey and Lefebvre present. On the other hand, evaluations of such schemes illustrate that participation is often based on a 'rounding up of the usual suspects'; that is, it is often the same few and relatively strong, consensus-seeking citizens that are included (Agger and Löfgren 2008; Healey 2007). Broadening out the perspective to include the voices of children or other traditionally excluded citizens, or thinking street designs completely anew, is a more complex task requiring many economic, cultural and generational resources.

In general, street reclaiming practices address the issue of responsibility. Who has the responsibility to create liveable streets? And who has the responsibility to seriously anticipate the reclaiming initiatives of children and other citizens? Which rights should children of various ages, alongside other citizens, actually enjoy in the production of urban space? The regulation of automobility is an institutional system with many different subjects, spaces and places involved (Jain 2004). It seems reasonable to follow Doreen Massey's argument of developing a global sense of responsibility that goes beyond the particular places (2007). Balancing the character of accessibility, mobility and mobility-related side-effects surely involves both local and global considerations. Local and individual street reclaiming activities are strengthened by being coordinated in global networks such as Reclaim the Streets or Critical Mass (<http://www.rts.gn.apc.org/>; <http://www.critical-mass.info/>). Children's situated appropriation of space and the integration of their perspectives in city planning is also to some extent improved through initiatives, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Child Friendly Cities initiative (<http://www.childfriendlycities.org/>). Supplemented by the global political awareness of environmental issues, future generations might find a solution to the Faustian bargain that we currently face: the car is often unwanted but at the same time the entire society is dependent on it (Whitelegg 1997).

The argument made in this article is not against automobility *per se*. It is rather an argument in favour of keeping the dialectic production of urban space *open* and continuously acknowledge various types of street reclaiming activities as democratic contributions to the production of just cities. As illustrated in this article, street reclaiming has many faces. Informal reclaiming, like children's psychological and behavioural appropriation of space, and formal reclaiming initiatives integrated in planning schemes, all deal with the central question of how the negative and positive effects of urban mobilities should be distributed and regulated. This problematic continues to be a major challenge in contemporary cities.

### *Short Biography*

Trine Fotel is assistant professor at the Centre for Democratic Network Governance, Department of Society and Globalisation, Roskilde University, Roskilde, Denmark. She obtained her master's degree in Geography and Social Theory (2002) and PhD in Social Sciences (2007) from Roskilde University. She was also a visiting researcher at the Centre for Mobilities Research, Lancaster University, in 2002–2003, and at the Department of Geography, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, in 1998. She is a member of international networks such as the network on Nordic Network Governance and a network on children's mobilities. She has written largely on issues of urban policies, empowerment and mobilities (e.g. 'Space, power and mobility: Car traffic as a controversial issue in neighbourhood regeneration', *Environment & Planning, A*, 2006, 38, 733–748), as well as various aspects of everyday mobile practices in contemporary families (e.g. 'The surveillance of Children's Mobility', with T. U. Thomsen, *Surveillance & Society*, 2004, 1, 535–554). Current research projects include an investigation of regional policies and a survey of Nordic governance networks focusing on dynamics of fixities and flows in rescaling public policies. Forthcoming publications include 'Democratic Anchorage of Infrastructural Governance Networks: the case of the Fernern Belt Forum' (with Eva Sorensen and Jacob Torfing) in *Planning Theory*, and 'Meta-Governance of Regional Governance Networks in Nordic Countries' (with Gro Sandkjaer Hanssen) in *Local Government Studies*.

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