

Visualising everyday geographies: practices of vision through travel-time

David Bissell

Responding to recent debates in human geography on the need to explore more complex renderings of everyday visibility, this paper explores some of the fluid relationships between everyday visibility, materiality and mobility through practices of contemporary railway travel in Britain. Based on extensive empirical research, this paper explores three different but related visual practices experienced during the course of a railway journey. First, it looks at how sublime forms of vision emerge to produce a variety of passive embodied effects. Second, it looks at how more attentive visual practices are implicated in the temporal organisation of the journey and have the capacity to activate changes to routine. Third, it looks at how the physical materiality of the carriage interior serves to mediate the visual field in particular ways and gives rise to a series of freedoms and constraints. Whilst the visual consumption of landscapes viewed through a window is often taken to be an axiomatic part of the travelling experience, this paper demonstrates the importance of apprehending how a multiplicity of visual practices affect how perceptions of time, space and location unfold over the course of a journey.

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School of Environment and Technology, University of Brighton, Brighton BN2 4GJ
email: d.j.bissell@brighton.ac.uk

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Introduction

Since the advent of railway travel in nineteenth-century Britain, geographical literature on railway travel has been inextricably bound up with visual sensibilities. Travel by train facilitated new ways of experiencing landscape that many have argued gave rise to particularly modern ways of seeing (Kirby 1997; Schivelbusch 1980; Stilgoe 1983). The train is often invoked as one of the principal technologies that contributed to these changing modes of perception. Moving through landscapes by train at speeds previously unimaginable reconfigured the relationship between people and landscape (Danius 2002). Through this time-space compression and the annihilation of space, people could travel further distances in ever shorter times, thus changing passengers' routine perceptions of time and space (Stein 2001). The significant increases in speed engendered through these technologies gave rise to a novel way of experiencing landscape through new modes of visual perception. Passengers

perceived the landscape as it was filtered through the machinic ensemble of the train (Schivelbusch 1980). The train window accentuated the processual and mobile qualities of landscape perception, where the depths and folds of landscapes were animated by the motion of the train. These new panoramic forms of experiencing landscape were not limited to changing modes of perception emergent from increased speed, but this 'public mobilisation' (Urry 2007, 91) also increased the diversity of landscapes that people could visually experience (Freeman 1999). Indeed visual sensibilities have always been bound up with travel and the experience of journeying. Echoing the significance of the visual within geography (Gregory 1994; Daniels 1993; Rose 2000 2003a), from the viewing of specific sights on the eighteenth-century Grand Tour (Van den Abbeele 1991), to the sightseeing practices implicated in more contemporary tourist practices (Crang 1997; Urry 2002), the visual has been a central – and perhaps even axiomatic – way of comprehending the experience of travel.

Fast-forward to the present day, the speeds that gave rise to new modes of visual perception during the nineteenth century have since been superseded by other, faster technologies of transit, perhaps most notably air travel. Accounts of shock, wonder and excitement (Harrington 1999) emergent from these new visual experiences may, to regular passengers today, seem almost inconceivable, perhaps even comical. Indeed, as Rosler points out,

after a century of fascination with ever-increasing speeds of transportation and information, we find speed alone not especially discomfiting, indeed possibly reassuring. Motion parallax, no longer confusing is simply another special effect of travel. We have learned to cope with the rapid passage. (1994, 64)

Whilst the experience of travelling on high-speed railways in Europe might to some extent imitate the visual excitements experienced by the first railway passengers during the nineteenth century, contemporary railway travel in Britain is often chastised, particularly in the popular press, for being too slow (Hamilton 2003; Webster 2005).

This raises a number of significant questions about the relationship between contemporary practices of mobility and the visual experience of technologies of transit. Specifically, if as Rosler suggests, we are *desensitised* to speed and the visual experience of speeding through the landscape is just part of the routine texture of everyday life, what does this do to the relationship between vision and mobility? Rather than an infrequent and celebrated experience, for many people, railway travel is intimately woven into everyday routine. This is reflected in much of the current exciting interdisciplinary research on everyday mobility that has looked at how travel-time is used and organised into wider temporal frameworks. Much research on contemporary railway travel has focused on some of the everyday, prosaic, practical activities that passengers engage with during their journey (Holley *et al.* 2008; Lyons and Urry 2005; Lyons *et al.* 2007; Watts 2008). These have looked at how, rather than a wasted duration, passengers make practical use of their journey for a variety of working and leisure practices (see also Laurier 2004; Laurier *et al.* 2008 for similar debates on automobility).

Nevertheless, considerably less has been said about how vision and visualising practices feature in contemporary experiences of these mobilities and the extent to which they are important dimensions of *different* styles of journeying. Indeed, one

of the difficulties that emerges in the process of historicising the relationship between vision and mobility is that there is a tendency to regard contemporary experiences of railway travel as humdrum and banal, relegating more 'sublime' experiences to the nineteenth century. This rather problematically serves to erode and obscure the multiplicity of connections and similarities that might ensue. From this, it is important to consider how the visual experience for a regular business commuter might be significantly different to that of a one-off tourist traveller. Larsen argues that the train's 'sensuous economy' privileges seeing over other senses (2001, 81) where mobility machines are simultaneously *vision machines*, to use Virilio's (1994) terminology. However, does the familiarity of more habitual travel *denigrate* the visual dimension, rendering it less important, or does it serve to *reconfigure* the visual sensorium to bring about new relationships between vision and mobility? To what extent is the visual privileged in the sensual economy of the railway journey, as Larsen (2001) contends?

Within human geography, questions of the 'complexity and complicity of vision' (Cosgrove 2008, 4) are currently high on the agenda. Complementing a rich and exciting body of work that explores the discursive, symbolic and imaginative dimensions of visibility (Pocock 1981; Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Duncan 1990; Harley 1992; Mitchell 1994), many geographers have become interested in the relationship between visibility and more practice-based ontologies (see Harrison 2000; Thrift 2007) which seek to expand the realm of the visual beyond their important role in the production of meaning and signification. This work also, in part, responds to postcolonial (Poole 1997; Karp and Levine 1991) and feminist work (Nash 1996; Rose 1993) that seeks to critique assumptions of the universality of vision to demonstrate the *partiality* of vision. As such, more questions are being asked about visibility, knowledge production and the complexities involved in visual ways of knowing. In this vein, geographers have been increasingly interested in charting the timespaces, practices and objects implicated in the production, circulation and reception of images (Crang 1997; Rose 2003b; Edensor 2005; Tolia-Kelly 2006), the geo-political knowledges emergent from these visualities (Campbell 2007; Amoore 2007) together with the affective and non-reflective dimensions of visibility (Edensor and Holloway 2008; Wylie 2006; Doel and Clarke 2007). Whilst the empirical subjects and

ontological commitments of these differ, taken together they generate two prevailing trends. First, they suggest an increased emphasis on exploring the relations between visibility and materiality; and second, they point towards a necessity for a greater appreciation of embodied and everyday practices of vision, or the 'everyday practices of seeing and showing' as Mitchell (2002, 170) puts it.

In response to these provocations and invitations, and through extensive empirical research,¹ this paper explores the complex relationship between everyday visual practices and mobility by investigating some of the visualising practices that emerge through the contemporary experience of railway travel in Britain. This is by no means an attempt to *reify* the visual as the dominant mode of experiencing the railway journey. Indeed, such a critique of ocularcentrism has long been issued by social scientists (Jay 1993; Lefebvre 1991). Travel as an embodied practice is always already a multisensual experience, involving more than just sight alone. Indeed, many have argued that the visual is inextricably bound up with other embodied senses (Degen *et al.* 2008; Cooley 2004; Mitchell 2005; Crary 1999; Pallasma 2005; Macpherson 2008) to the point where it appears too ontologically problematic, not to mention tedious, to arbitrarily prise apart, sequentially analyse and describe what we might have traditionally conceptualised as 'discrete' senses. Therefore, rather than holding it above other corporeal experiences, the aim of this paper is to develop a 'more complex understanding of visibility' (Degen *et al.* 2008, 2), through an empirically rich, qualitative approach that uses a montage of photographs, interview and autoethnographic quotes that together convey a sense of the complexity and multiplicity of everyday visualising practices whilst on the move.

Conceptually, rather than structured around the visualisation of particular objects or locations, this paper is organised around three different but related styles of visual engagement with the railway journey for four reasons. First, it takes seriously the embodied experience of vision and how visual practices implicate other sensory modalities. Whilst they are not discrete, different sensory experiences might be intensified at different times. As such, this paper explores how different visual practices of the mobile experience can rise to prominence through particular forms of visual attentiveness, but it can also fade to become more mesmeric, or 'thinner' as Degen *et al.* (2008, 10) put it. Second, and related to the notion of practice, it examines the temporally differentiated

experiences of visibility, since active and attentive or passive and disengaged visual practices might emerge at *different stages* of the railway journey. As such, this paper explores the different rhythms (Crang 2001) of visual practices at different times during the duration of the journey. Third, it takes seriously the various *materialities* that are implicated in practices of vision (see also Dubow 2001; Tolia-Kelly 2004 2006). In contrast to the oft-critiqued detached and omniscient spectator, this paper illuminates how practices of vision whilst on the move are bound up with the material, corporeal being-in-the-world of the railway passenger. Visual practices are mediated not only by the window (Schivelbusch 1980; Sheller and Urry 2000), but also by the material configuration of seats, passengers, luggage and so on which comprise the carriage interior. Fourth, it examines how these visual practices *spatialise* the everyday experience of railway travel, not only in terms of the construction of locational knowledges of particular landscapes, but also how vision is bound up in sensing the space of the carriage itself.

Heeding these conceptual commitments, the first section explores *sublime* vision. This is perhaps the most familiar territory at the interstices of mobility and visibility and builds on the work of others who have looked at how the train constitutes a cinematic vision-machine. This section focuses on the relationship between a cinematic style of visibility and the embodied experiences of passivity that emerge. In contrast, the second section of the paper looks at forms of *attentive* vision, exploring a variety of practices where vision is enlisted in order to achieve specific ends. These visual practices are not only highly engaged, requiring both effort and concentration, but also have the capacity to prompt changes to routine. Following this, the final section investigates the *mediation* of vision, focusing on the relationship between visibility and the materiality of the carriage. Focus here is how visual sensibilities are intensified or quiesced by the presence of other passengers and the spatiality of the carriage itself. These three styles of visualising are certainly not bounded or exhaustive; each implicating and folding through a multitude of other visual practices. But focusing in greater depth on three styles of visual practice seeks to demonstrate not only the complexities inherent in everyday visualising, but also how seeing on the train is not a uniform experience. Different practices emerge in different situations since 'vision is always a situated accomplishment realized in singular contexts' (Doel and Clarke 2007, 893).

Sublime vision: visceral transformations

The changing vistas viewed through the train window have long been acknowledged to be a central attraction of railway travel. Following Bishop, the phenomenology of the carriage window 'demands careful attention because it plays a critical role in mediating between inside and outside' (2002, 309). As de Certeau reminds us, there is a chasm 'produced by the windowpane and the rail. The windowpane is what allows us to see and the rail, what allows us to move through' (2002, 112). Wolfgang Schivelbusch's (1980) reflections through the window that explore the relationship between visibility and mobility are now relatively familiar geographical terrain. Schivelbusch emphasises how railway travel during the nineteenth century gave rise to a distinctly novel visual experience premised on the relationship between the passenger and external landscape. Central to his thesis is how the 'panorama' served to induce particularly sublime ways of experiencing landscape: sublime in the sense that these visual experiences overwhelmed the senses and pushed the limits of comprehension. Whilst some have argued that the familiarity of contemporary railway travel has effectively quiesced such experiences (see Rosler 1994), in this section I want to suggest that sublime visual experiences still remain an integral dimension of the journey for many passengers.

Many long-distance Train Operating Companies² explicitly extol the virtues of the scenery along their particular routes in order to attract customers and make railway travel a more desirable product relative to competing modes of transport. For example, the ticket offices of one long-distance train operator display the strapline 'the scenery comes free', with accompanying images depicting sublime landscapes enticing passengers with the promise of visual excitement. Landscapes moved through are visually experienced temporarily relative to the speed of the train. New objects in the landscape constantly come to the fore, whilst others recede into the distance. This diary extract demonstrates how moving objects at different speeds results in different affective responses; the horizon inducing a more relaxed sensibility than the rapidly moving foreground:

I am staring out of the window. My face is turned towards the window and my eyes are fixed on the window. Objects through the window are being constantly refreshed, my gaze is remodelled and reconfigured. These objects are moving at relative speeds to the foreground

and distance which I in turn process at different speeds. It is difficult to focus on the trackside whereas gazing at the horizon is much more relaxing. (Participant observation between Berwick upon Tweed and York 05.12.05 1343)

This is echoed by Schivelbusch, who describes how

perception no longer belongs to the same spaces as the perceived object: the traveller sees ... through the apparatus which moves him through the world. That machine and the motion it creates become integrated into his visual perception: thus he can only see things in motion. (1980, 63)

As Schivelbusch notes, the railway journey helped to develop a new way of looking at the landscape based on the appreciation of the panorama where one's gaze is compelled to follow the passage of what lies in the distance or middle ground. As Larsen comments, 'this provides a visual cinematic-like experience of moving landscape images' (2001, 82) and disrupts Urry's more static notion of the travel gaze (2002). Yet rather less has been said about how the precise comportment of passengers relative to the motion of the train affects this sensory experience. Apprehensions of these moving landscapes are not uniform and can be experienced in different ways, perhaps depending on the direction of travel. As this passenger notes, seating facing or backwards from the direction of travel can significantly alter the experience of this panorama; travelling backwards for some being more relaxing than travelling facing the direction of travel:

David: ... do you find that your visual gaze is directed towards ... where do you find your gazing drawn towards? Outside or inside?

Richard: Both. Nowhere specific. I will, and I will always prefer travelling backwards because I find that if you are looking outside, I find it more relaxing for the scenery to be going away from you rather than coming at you at ninety miles an hour.

David: Yes, that's a very interesting point, almost bullet-like.

Richard: Yes, attacking, rather than flowing away from you all the time, that's the only reason I travel backwards.

This description of viscerally experienced, bullet-like vision parallels Schivelbusch's illustration of early train travel being experienced as a projectile, being shot through the landscape and 'losing control of one's senses' (1980, 58). Visuality therefore has the capacity to effect differential bodily sensibilities



Plate 1 Facing the direction of travel between Crewe and Carlisle 10.09.05 1827–1841

Source: Author's own photographs

influenced in part by the direction of travel. Sitting facing the direction of travel thrusts the body at the landscape as opposed to backward travelling, which is perhaps less aggressive and more reflective. Yet many other passengers harboured strong reservations about sitting facing backwards to the direction of travel on account that it induces sensations of nausea. Whilst it is difficult to gain a sense of speed from still images, Plate 1 demonstrates how the body is flung through the landscape when travelling facing the direction of travel.

Rather than a visual 'gaze', Larsen (2001) notes how the effect of looking at fleeting landscapes through the window of a fast-moving train constitutes a travel 'glance'. Similarly, the images captured in Plate 1 parallel Augé's (1995) notion of how 'glimpses' of the landscape at speed produce the effect of snapshot images where, as Larsen comments, 'the sheer speed of these machines undermines the possibility of a fixing or penetrative look' (2001, 80). Indeed these images concur with Schivelbusch (1980) that visual impressions from the train window become like a blurred painting.

The framing of these landscapes by the window itself produces a particular cinematic effect (see Gibson 2006), which may serve to accentuate these sublime visual experiences. This effect is enhanced by the juxtaposition of the relative sedentarism of the body, or 'armchair traveller' to use de Botton's (2002) words, with the movement of the landscape.

Similar to the framing effect of the camera, the spatial configuration of the train and the particular positioning and shape of windows relative to seats delimits the field of vision. The window delimits the changing visual spectacle to a particular segment of landscape, reducing the high and low angles of vision and resulting in a widescreen visual presentation as illustrated in Plate 2.³

This type of cinematic vision, however, is silent, particularly since windows cannot be opened and therefore the olfactory and audio dimensions of the landscape are quiesced. The insulating capacity of the train carriage renders a form of landscape quietude that sedates the passing landscape. Rather than corporeally dwelling as a multi-sensual being in the landscape (Ingold 2001), this echoes Schivelbusch's (1980) point that the passenger's perception becomes detached from the landscape since they are sealed-off from the outside world. The speed of the moving train is effectively juxtaposed with a slower-speed or even stilled landscape. This induces the oft-mentioned power dynamic where the movement of the train masters the landscape (see Mills 1991). However, passengers have little power to control this visual spectacle. As Larsen suggests, the technology of the train as a particular vision machine 'destabilises the gazing traveller's accustomed place of mastery' (2001, 90). The window engenders a particular form of detachment from the landscape where the body is shielded. As such, the relationality between body and landscape is



Plate 2 Widescreen presentation between Carlisle and Crewe 10.09.05 1250–1321

Source: Author's own photographs

perhaps surficial rather than enfolded, paralleling Urry's assertion that the car windscreen reduces the 'sights, sounds, tastes, temperatures and smells to a two-dimensional view' (2000, 63). As Plate 3 illustrates, this depth is sealed off, visually apprehended through the rectangular window.

Vision afforded by the window also promotes the apprehension of more kinaesthetic sensibilities where the body can *sense* speed through the movement of passing objects, juxtaposed with the noise of accelerating engines and wheels, together with the bodily sensations of being thrust back or forward into a seat. Indeed, as Larsen comments, when compared with the visual tedium of flying, train travel is 'the most pleasurable and rewarding way of travelling as it allows you to sense the landscape you are passing through and the distance you are actually travelling' (2001, 84). This filmic, kinaesthetic dynamism (Cresswell and Dixon 2002) of moving at speed through a landscape can induce effects of excitement through the body, perhaps effecting a 'hallucinatory ecstasy' to use Larsen's words (2001, 84). This sensing of speed moves

beyond a solely visual perspective and can be felt as a sublime sensation throughout the whole body, sensed through ripples of excitement as described by this passenger as he remembers his first journey along the East Coast Mainline:

Albert: I remember the first time I travelled along this route, we'd joined at Peterborough and you accelerate out of the station and bullet through the Lincolnshire countryside, kind of where we are now I suppose, and I just remember all the hairs on my arms stood on edge because I'd never experienced this type of speed before where the countryside is rushing past you so incredibly fast . . .

Whilst this might not constitute the sensory overload and 'intensification of nervous stimulation' of Simmel's *flâneur*, this description parallels early accounts of railway travel where 'for people with a lust for velocity . . . the train became an object of passionate allure' (Larsen 2001, 83). Where other technologies are enlisted, such as personal audio devices, these additional layers of sensory phenomena provide a soundtrack to these more-than-visually apprehended landscapes which add to this cinematic effect (Bull

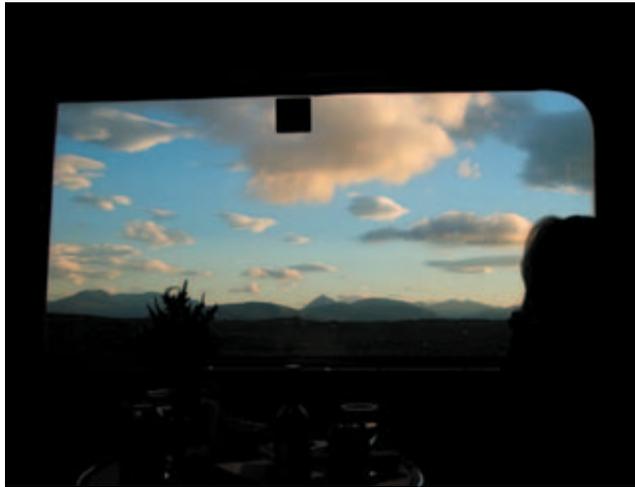


Plate 3 Sublime vision over Rannoch Moor on the Fort William to London Euston Sleeper 02.08.06 2054

Source: Author's own photograph

2004). This sensing of speed is assisted by the visual apprehension of objects close to the train. In addition to the lateral and transverse jerkiness of the carriage itself, particular objects perceived through the window have the capacity to effect speed, such as the overhead wire masts in this diary entry:

We are moving fast now, gliding through the landscape. The overhead masts are hypnotic: they encompass and swallow you as you pass through them. They act like a framing device, forming a passage to travel through. Our speed can almost be sensed from the frequency of the passing masts. (Participant observation between Berwick upon Tweed and York 05.12.05 1343)

In this case, the overhead line masts act as a metronome, where the rate of acceleration can be sensed from their frequency. This sense of rhythm, itself a significant experience of railway travel (Jarrett 2001), parallels Schivelbusch's description of these 'calligraphic instruments with which the new perception inscribes the panoramic landscape upon the real one' (1980, 40). This visual sensing of speed, reminiscent of what the Futurists came to call the 'beauty of speed' (Löfgren 1999), also emerges from the inability to focus on objects in the foreground. Travelling at speed distorts and blurs the foreground, which adds to this sense of experiential sublime. In the words of Benjamin, 'images cannot be arrested, since they are subject to constant, sudden change[s]' (1973, 231). Each of these dimensions that assist in sensing speed are reliant on the juxtaposition of the speed of the train

and the sedentarism of the body. Indeed, it is this juxtaposition of speed and stillness that is perhaps crucial to comprehending the relation between landscape and body (see Kirby 1997).

Such sublime, visceral experiences of visuality reminiscent of Schivelbusch's descriptions of nineteenth-century railway travel therefore remain an integral part of railway travel for many. The implicit suggestion here is that certain histories of visual culture that exaggerate and caricature changing visual experiences are perhaps not sufficiently attuned to the durability of particular ways of seeing. For many passengers these sublime visualities are one of the central appeals of railway travel. Whilst one-off tourist travellers might be enchanted by the mesmeric capacities of the passing landscape, weary commuters and contemplative business travellers may be equally susceptible.⁴ Indeed for them, disengaged, sublime vision has the capacity to soothe and recharge the body. Subjected to what Morris terms a 'high-speed empiricism' (1988, 35), sublime vision has the capacity to enchant and mesmerise. Echoing Degen *et al.*'s (2008, 10) description of a 'thinner, unfocused gaze', this passive sense of visuality has the capacity to transform the travelling body, inducing a variety of embodied effects which are at times soporific and at other times enlivening. In doing so, whilst the landscape panorama and kinaesthesia of motion are brought to the fore, the space of the carriage interior recedes from focus, as illustrated symbolically in Plate 3, and the presence and practices of other passengers is quiesced. Through

a visual experience characterised by disengagement and reverie, the perceived duration of the journey is transformed; the journey compresses as the body relaxes and drifts into and out of wakefulness. Yet stressing these sublime and impressionistic visual experiences conceals a range of other visualising practices which are equally integral to the experience of mobility.

Attentive vision: securing the journey

The embodied experience of being transported in a technology of transit has often been described in ways that accentuate the *physical* immobility and stasis of the passenger (Scanlan 2004). Indeed, experiences of sublime vision are premised on the mobility of the train affecting a relatively sedentary passenger. Yet these more passive, disengaged visual experiences obscure a range of other, more attentive ways of seeing that are required in order to travel successfully. Echoing Crary's assertion that 'attention as a constellation of texts and practices, is much *more* than a question of the gaze, of looking, of the subject only as a spectator' (1999, 2), this section explores how, in contrast to sublime vision, more attentive practices of vision constitute an active and perceptually engaged set of experiences that can take hold during the journey. Building on work that has accentuated the active dimension of observation as a particular mode of seeing (Bruno 1992; Crang 1997 2002), here I illustrate a series of practices where vision is structured in ways that require concentration and attention.

Passengers can engage in forms of watchfulness where visual attention is drawn to the landscape through the carriage window in a rather different way. Attentive forms of vision might involve the practice of searching for objects in the landscape that have the potential to act as markers of geographical and temporal position. In contrast to the hypnotic visual practices of sublime vision, particularly for tourist travellers, searching for specific sights through the window might characterise the visual experience of journeying. Echoing Black's (1854) popular railway guide of the nineteenth century, one long-distance train company has produced a series of complimentary 'windowgazer' guides (Virgin Trains 2006), which assist passengers in structuring the journey around a series of monuments, buildings and landmarks. These linear diagrams of sights enact a very similar rhythm to Edensor and Holloway's (2008) discussion of visualising specific

sights during a coach tour. Furthermore, these visualising practices might be further augmented by the use of visual technologies such as cameras and video cameras that capture these sights more durably.

For other travellers, these experiences of visual attentiveness have the capacity to alter and shift during the course of a journey. For example, when nearing the end of the journey, a more significant engagement with the external landscape might occur, where visibility is sharpened (Lagerkvist 2004). As this passenger, who travels infrequently between Newcastle and Manchester, illustrates, stations rather than landmarks in-between provide him with positioning points in order to evaluate how long he has left before arriving:

Will: No, I'm really bad at it. Oh actually yeah, I think it's about two and a half hours, but I'm constantly looking out of the window to try and see where the next station is, or looking at the screen that says the next stop will be . . .

David: So do you use the stations as points rather than say, landmarks?

Will: Yes, I think so. Cos there's not really a lot to see on the way down there. So you just go past Meadowhall and you're like 'oh, I'm near Sheffield so I know that in another 40 minutes or however ridiculously long it takes . . .'

The idea of 'constantly looking' points to the intensity of visual concentration that is required in order to structure his use of travel-time. Similarly, this passenger, who travels between Newcastle and Leeds every fortnight, describes how he looks for Leeds as an indicator that the journey is almost at an end:

Brian: I think as we get closer to Leeds, then yeah, there are things that I look out for – I mean Leeds is quite nice – as you come in, it's almost like you can see the city, not quite like Durham where you've got it below you, but it's, there is a way that you can see something happening. You've been in countryside for two hours and then suddenly something appears and so, perhaps 5–10 minutes before-hand I'm looking out for that.

Rather than being attentive to the landscape throughout the entire journey, practices of landscape vigilance here occur at particular moments during the journey. The practice of sighting a specific set of objects within the landscape, particularly through the repetition of journeys, has the effect of waymarking. Here, a particular landmark surges to prominence; a process that Bishop (2002) following

Friedberg (1994) parallels with the activity of window-shopping. Even during more habitual journeys, visual engagement with the landscape might be unpredictable and precarious. Commonly viewed markers intersect with, and are woven through, the procession of newly sighted objects, perhaps previously unappreciated. As this passenger describes, these markers help to locate the body geographically:

Amy: It's funny because when I think I've probably done hundreds and hundreds of trips backwards and forwards to London, and I can still see things and think 'ohh, I've never noticed that before'. But there's little things like there's free-range pigs on the way to London so you see some markers. And that funny little bridge at Newark when the road goes over – so there's the odd little things that act like sort of markers.

Echoing Edensor's (2003) delight in the regular commute to work by car, through repeated journeys along the same route, objects in the landscape become inscribed into memory through the body (Casey 1987; Weiss 1999), resurfacing unexpectedly through repeat sightings of those objects (see also Binnie *et al.* 2007). This assists in developing an enhanced spatial geographic awareness of a particular route, a visual sensibility that intersects with the temporal knowledge of that specific route. Notice how this passenger describes how he can place himself geographically through his knowledge of how far places are apart, temporally:

Edward: Well I know where I am through the stations I've been through so I have a good idea of how long is to go when you're at York and Peterborough and Stevenage, you know how long there is to go. You can usually tell where you are on a journey by looking at your watch. So you've got a bit of a time-space thing going on there, you know that by one hour, you're in York. If it's two hours, then you're near Peterborough so . . . I don't make the same journey that regularly to know landscapes really well but if you can start to see a town sprawling up in front of you then you can have a good idea of where you are. So like landmarks and stuff.

In these examples, attentive visualising practices form a central part of structuring travel-time. Whilst these visual sensibilities are inevitably bound up with the wider corporeal sensorium (Crary 1999), such as sensing the slowing of the carriage, visual attention concentrated on the passing landscape becomes a tool with which travel-time can be organised and managed. In contrast with sublime, disengaged practices of 'looking-at' landscapes,

this practice therefore constitutes a more engaged 'looking-for' specific objects within landscapes.

Attentiveness to the landscape through the window can also be folded through attentive visual engagements with objects *within* the carriage. More specifically, a visual attentiveness to personal possessions has the potential to bring the object of vision back into the spatiality of the carriage. Passengers might be watchful over their personal possessions, especially when luggage and baggage is stowed in a luggage rack away from their seat. Drawing on the notion of the 'distributed passenger' (Watts 2008), many passengers commented on how luggage formed an extension of their own body, and as such wanted to keep it within easy reach. This not only provides passengers with a sense of security over possessions but also enables items to be accessed with relative ease. As this passenger describes, keeping his bag close to him is safer than leaving it on a distant luggage rack:

Omar: I would normally put, if I'm travelling with overnight luggage, I put my overnight luggage in the rack and even though I've got a really small overnight bag, all these new trains have a stupidly small overhead thingy and it only just goes in that. I'm certainly – I would never put my bag on a distant luggage rack you have no control over it. People could just nick it, you know, they could just walk up to it in broad daylight, pick it up and get off the train and they've gone. It's just ludicrous. You know, it's not possible to even sit where you can see those luggage racks. So I would always keep my luggage with me. If I bring my briefcase, I normally just stick it under, you know, stick it between my legs.

Where it is not possible to keep personal possessions close to the body, perhaps due to a lack of space, passengers can enlist visual strategies of surveillance over their possessions at a distance. Contrary to Rosler's (1994) assertion that passengers tend to be folded into a *narrow* space, where a passenger is effectively distributed over a wider spatial area, attentive visual strategies can be developed between the seat and luggage in order to retain control over possessions. This passenger, for example, describes how she maintains visual contact with her luggage throughout the journey to ensure that it does not get moved:

Jenny: Yet if you've got a big case and you can't fit it in there, you've got to stand with it. Either that or you can sit in your seat but you need to keep checking that it's still there after each stop, you know, just make sure someone hasn't run off with it. If that happens I just sit

in the seat closest to the aisle so I've got a decent view down to where my bags are at the end of the carriage.

She describes how separation from her luggage alters where she sits in the carriage in order for her to maintain surveillance. These surveillance strategies involve changing bodily comportment, such as craning the head around the back of the chair to verify the presence of possessions. Further disrupting the notion of the static observer, this visual practice *requires* bodily movement. Indeed, she describes how these micro-gestures form part of the rhythm of the journey as they take place regularly.

A further form of attentive vision emerges through practices of watchfulness over other passengers. Here, an active sense of watchfulness develops from various modes of active assessment of other bodies in the proximate environment. Attentive forms of vision may be carried out at certain moments in the journey, through particular events such as the boarding of new passengers at a station. These visualities are bound up in the assessment and evaluation of other passengers. This passenger illustrates how attentive vision of other passengers can mediate decisions about where to sit:

Scott: ... And one of them, there was this guy got on and I think he was a sports player because he was giving it on the phone about trials for some rugby league team. And then he starts writing a rap next to me and he starts asking me about this rap he's writing and he's practising and I'm like 'mate, I don't know what you want me to contribute to this work of art'. And pissed people on trains, that's another closely linked category. There was this bunch of boys from ... they came down from Scotland cos I got on at Durham and it was an Edinburgh train. And yeah, they were just drinking the cans of beer and just being loud and smelly. And then there's another time that comes to mind when I was on an underground train and yeah, there were just these guys drinking beer and pouring it all over the floor and everyone around them was just moved right up the carriage and again on the underground 'cos you kind of, it's the old cliché of don't make eye contact and don't acknowledge people, but I mean, even then kind of, that kind of prevailed when you're moving up the carriage.

Here, he illustrates how the behaviour of other passengers in the carriage is visually assessed, judged and valued, perhaps according to the perceived risk that they pose in jeopardising a pleasant journey. Although, as this passenger notes, judgements based on practices of watchfulness are actively made about both people *and* their entangled objects:

Helen: I know it's really daft but after the attacks in London you know if you see a guy a young Muslim guy with a beard and a rucksack, you do feel a bit uneasy about sitting in the same carriage as him. There was this one time I was really paranoid and I actually got off the train and waited for the next one 'cos he was looking really shifty.

This form of visual practice, often premised on visual stereotypes, is therefore bound up in the enactment of particular suspicions directed towards other passengers in the carriage (see Lyon 2003). This visual practice 'categorises and classifies people into images and imaginaries of many kinds' (Amoore 2007, 216).

What is important to appreciate here is that these visual practices emerge through, and are permitted by, the physical materiality and configuration of the carriage itself. Indeed, these forms of visual attentiveness are in part *structured* by the technology of transit. In the absence of any section dividers within the carriage, the now-standard arrangement of two or three seats either side of a central aisle *permits* these forms of attentive vision. As Adey argues, these 'particular arrangements of people, space and technology must be employed to allow spectatorship' (2007, 520). Whilst this configuration characterised by 'openness' arose from a multitude of different rationales – economic, political and aesthetic – following Foucault (1977) it could be argued that this openness reinforces a panoptic mode of surveillance, which encourages self-regulation of passenger behaviour within the carriage. Indeed, this is increasingly important considering that many Train Operating Companies, to cut operational costs, have removed guards from their trains. As such, passengers are increasingly being encouraged to sharpen their visual skills by remaining alert and attentive to the practices of other passengers.⁵ Previous to this design, many carriages were separated into walled compartments, each seating six to eight people and joined by an aisle running the length of one side of the carriage. Owing to their enclosed nature, these compartments were often places of danger (Bailey 2004). As such, the openness that characterises modern carriages provides a disciplining effect, which allows and indeed encourages passengers to watch each other. Although, as Scott describes above, this self-regulation is often inconsistent and liable to fracture. Indeed, when this happens, Goffman's (1963) assertion that passengers develop inattention to avoid embarrassment might be momentarily inverted. Here, the power of

the visual as a form of non-verbal communication is revealed through a penetrating stare, which, when aimed directly at the perpetrator, effectively registers disdain.

These three examples illustrate how various attentive forms of visual practice are central to the event of undertaking a journey. They are characterised by an anticipatory watchfulness where 'the act of seeing becomes an act of foreseeing, pre-empting or anticipating' (Amoore 2007, 221). These attentive visual practices, or 'vigilant visualities' as Amoore (2007, 223) puts it, where a particular set of people or objects become the subject of vision, have the capacity to activate changes to routine and practice. These changes emerge from reflective judgements made through visual assessment. During these durations, passengers actively perceive, evaluate and appropriate objects of vision, particularly in relation to corporeal risk and personal security and, as such, this parallels Degen *et al.*'s notion of a 'thicker and more engaged look' (2008, 10). However, what is also evident is that such attentive visual practices only rise to prominence at *certain moments* during the journey. They are 'pointillist' (see Doel 1999) in the sense that an attentive form of watchfulness is cultivated only through particular prompts, such as a stop at a station, a person walking through the carriage, the glance at a wristwatch and so on. However, as Crary (1999) notes, a visual attentiveness to *particular* objects implies a parallel disengagement from other stimuli. Following this we could consider how, during these durations where attention is directed, other objects in the proximate environment are excluded from the perceptual field.

Contingent vision: material transformations

Whilst modern railway carriages are engineered, in part, to provide a more expansive visual field by opening up space, for the seated passenger, vision is therefore structured and mediated by the materiality of the carriage itself. Not only is this structuring an effect of the configuration of windows and seats, but vision is also mediated by the presence and absence of other passengers together with the changing *role* of the window. As such, rather than the visual field being fixed and immobile throughout the duration of the journey, as is perhaps implied by Schivelbusch's (1980) relation between the passenger and the window, the field of visual perception for passengers is fluid and shifting. As

Crary comments, 'so much of what seems to constitute a domain of the visual is an effect of other kinds of forces and relations of power' (1999, 2–3). These other forces and relations that contribute to this fluidity have significant implications for the way in which the journey is experienced. Here, I consider some of the embodied effects that arise through this *partiality* of vision where passengers cannot maintain a 'total awareness' of their proximate environment. Here, constrictions of the visual field of perception give rise to particular sensations that affect the way that time and space are apprehended during the railway journey. I look at how vision is mediated first, by the window, second, by the seat, and third, by the presence of other passengers. Each of these things reveals how visual 'affordances' (Gibson 1986), the extent to which vision facilitates or encumbers particular experiences, are transformed over the course of a journey.

First, then, one of the principal ways in which vision is mediated is by the window. Indeed, many have eulogised the way in which windows provide passengers with privileged access to 'external' landscapes (Schivelbusch 1980; Bishop 2002). However, I want to suggest that windows can direct practices of vision in a myriad of different ways. In particular, through the diurnal changes of the day, the window has the capacity to direct lines of sight. During the day, the changing vistas of the external landscape, or as Adey puts it, the 'infectious pull of the view' (2007, 527), may serve to focus the visual gaze outside the space of the railway carriage. However, when travelling at night, particularly outside the sodiumpscape of urban areas, the attenuation of visual phenomena framed by the window focuses the visual gaze towards the interior of the carriage. Such an effect might also be enacted as the carriage passes through tunnels or deep cuttings in the landscape. Plate 4 demonstrates how, during the same journey, vision is focused more sharply into the carriage as night falls and the landscape is quiesced and fades from view.

When travelling at night, an experience that is often omitted in geographical narratives of travel, ways of visualising the landscape change. Landscapes perhaps familiar and recognisable by day are rendered strange and unfamiliar. In contrast to Wylie's daytime subject, the passenger cannot sense a depth, a 'world unfolding into the yonder' (2006, 522). The thickness and volume of the landscape lessens. Here there is nothing to gaze onto, save the otherworldly flashes, glows, sparks



Plate 4 Window mediation of vision between Newcastle and London King's Cross 22.10.05 1646 and 1919

Source: Author's own photographs



Plate 5 The unfamiliarity of night travel somewhere along the East Coast Mainline 21.08.06 2250

Source: Author's own photograph

and orbs that punctuate the dark of night (see Plate 5).

This diary entry written whilst on a route that I am very familiar with demonstrates not only how landscapes become less distinct, but how the experience of motion itself becomes confusing:

Since it is dark outside, my gaze is directed and confined within the carriage itself. Towns and villages pass by. How to respond to these geographically in the absence of clear vision? These places are visually indistinct. Outside the carriage is a motion sodiumscape of indistinct shapes, subtle contrasts and fleeting silhouettes. Directly outside the window are the magical green lights of trackside signals; a reassuring presence in the absence of other objects... In the absence of other visual referents it is difficult to determine whether my body is travelling backwards or forwards. (Participant observation between London Liverpool Street and Norwich 22.10.05 1930)

Here, the daytime coupling between the visual and kinaesthetic experiences of motion becomes undone. This is perhaps one of the most characteristic experiences of Augé's non-place (1995) where, in the absence of any geographical identifier outside, the body could be anywhere. Indeed, this ungraspability of location might also have a humbling effect, reducing the authority of passengers to locate themselves geographically, thereby devolving an even greater degree of trust to the train itself. Where the external landscape becomes less distinct, the internal environment might be accentuated. The reflective property of the window provides a reflective lens that reinforces this visual focus on the interior of the carriage, bringing to the fore that which is immediately proximate to the body. In Plate 6, the window acts like a mirror so that the body is met with a perpetual reflection of itself. This can serve to



Plate 6 Window as reflexive lens between Sheffield and London St Pancras 01.11.05 1154

Source: Author's own photograph, permission for publication granted from passenger

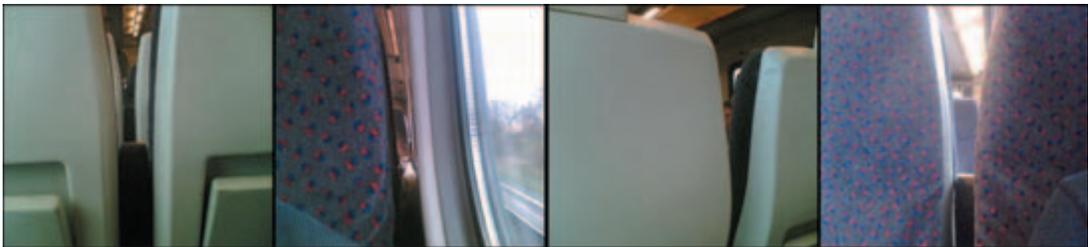


Plate 7 Gazing between seats between York and Hull 12.12.05 1400–1403

Source: Author's own photographs

heighten a sense of visual presence of the body, perhaps fostering increased self-awareness.

For some passengers, this narrowing of the visual field to the inside of the carriage is symptomatic of carriage design. Indeed, a criticism that has been made of many new and refurbished trains is that the seats do not always line up with windows (Walmsley 2007). As such, external landscapes are replaced by a plastic panel, with the capacity to induce sensations of claustrophobia.

The second object in the carriage that mediates visual practices is the seat. The relative positioning of seats and the resultant spatiality directs sight to certain parts of the carriage. Similar to windows, the spatial arrangement of seats has the capacity to structure the objects of vision. With the increasing prevalence of high-density, airline-style seating⁶ on long-distance trains to accommodate a greater number passengers, these high-backed seats often do not permit vision over their tops. Instead, vision

is directed through cracks between seats and between the window and the seat as illustrated in Plates 7 and 8.

The principal view for the sedentary body in an airline-style seat is the back of the seat in front. Unlike some tourist railways that have viewing cars, where seats are aligned towards the window (Lovegrove 2005), seats are not positioned with the aim of maximising the view through the window. The window is not the object of travel. Unlike the changing light levels that mediate vision through the window, the seat in front remains inert throughout the period of the journey. In order to benefit from the changing views through the window, this spatial configuration of seats necessitates that passengers must alter their posture, turning their necks to see both out of the window and through the visual pathways between seats. Whereas Adey remarks on how 'spectatorship encourages particular spatial positions of immobility' (2007,

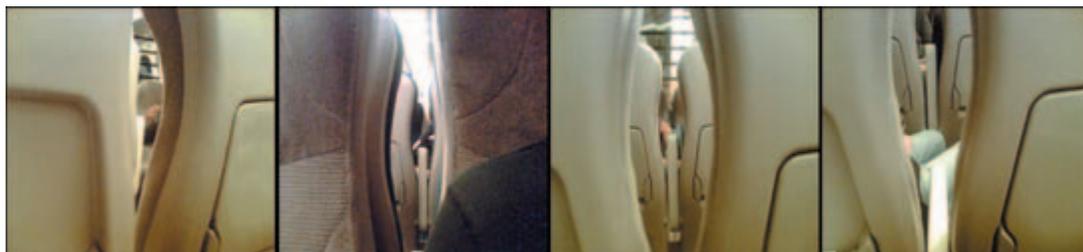


Plate 8 Gazing between seats between Doncaster and Newcastle 12.12.05 1615–1619

Source: Author's own photographs

519), in this case, visual practices *require* bodily movement. This spatial configuration results in a panoptic visuality, where passengers can surveil other bodies without them necessarily being aware of the visual presence of the surveyor. Paralleling Fujii's (1999) idea of 'intimate alienation', where the carriage provides an opportunity for people to fantasise about unacquainted others, such a voyeuristic form of vision where others are not aware of this visual intrusion may induce a particular form of gaze. For instance, this passenger describes his sense of unease through a sexualised gaze:

Scott: Yesterday there was this really stunningly attractive girl sitting in the seat in front of me. There was no way that I would have gone and sat next to her, you know it . . . it just would make me feel really uncomfortable – and her too. But sitting behind was probably even worse 'cos I couldn't stop looking at her. Like everything she did kind of captivated me but you know you feel kind of creepy watching but you just can't help it.

For him, rather than having the courage to sit next to her, the presence of seats permits a form of spectator practice, where the object of the gaze is

unaware of her surveillance, perhaps paralleling the strolling eye of the flâneur (Benjamin 1973).

A third form of visual mediation is through the presence of other passengers. This is particularly acute in peak times of day, such as during the morning and evening rush-hours when the carriage is busy and there is no space to sit. In this case vision is muted by the presence of other passengers that enclose and constrict the visual field. However, unlike mediation by seats, this form of contingent vision does not permit such immediate and explicit forms of spectator surveillance. In these cases, where carriages are extremely busy, the presence of passengers standing in the central aisle may obscure the view through the window. Instead, similar to mediation through seating configuration, vision may be directed through small cracks between bodies and seats as illustrated by Plate 9.

In this situation, the central aisle is full of standing passengers and my principal view is of a hand clutching the support handle of the seat in front. These events where there are more passengers than seats might mean that the comfort engineered into the design of the carriage (Walmsley 2007), where

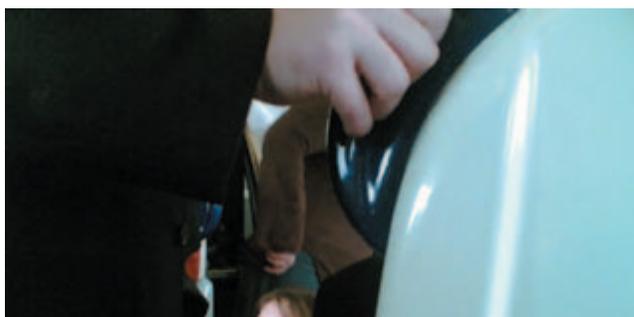


Plate 9 Obstructed visual pathways on a crowded train between Leeds and Sheffield 09.10.05 1705

Source: Author's own photograph

each passenger has a certain amount of personal space, disappears. Echoing Cray's notion of an 'overloaded field' (1999, 365), on crowded services, where passengers have reduced personal space, the visual field becomes constricted and even uncomfortable, since there is nowhere to look.

Whilst sometimes, such as in the example above, certain objects or bodies rise to prominence and lines of sight are actively directed, at other times there might be nowhere to look as illustrated by this diary entry:

I'm standing in the vestibule of the train surrounded by other passengers in dark suits. There is nowhere for me to look. I cannot see through the window since their bodies are obstructing my vision. I catch the eye of one of the guys standing next to me but this moment feels awkward: wholly uncomfortable. Where to look now? I am totally enclosed so I just gaze down at the floor; not really looking at anything but it is the only place where my eyes feel rested. I close my eyes. (Participant observation between Durham and Newcastle 15.06.05 1745)

This awkwardness of vision, reminiscent of Goffman's (1963) remarks of how individuals develop outward presentations of 'civil inattention', might mirror similar situations where the presence of unacquainted passengers sitting around a table prompts lines of sight to be directed elsewhere in order to avoid embarrassment, also illustrated in Plate 6. As Schivelbusch notes, the

face-to-face arrangement ... becomes unbearable because there is no longer a reason for such communication. The seating in the railroad compartment forces the travellers into a relationship that is no longer based on living need but has become an embarrassment. (1980, 80)

Whilst hinting at the intensity of a momentary visual encounter as eyes meet, this demonstrates how visual practices can be restricted and even quiesced by the presence of other passengers. In these situations, other immersive clusters of visual practice might provide an escape from this intimate alienation. As Urry comments, 'from its early beginnings, rail travel has been associated with reading books' (2006, 363). These books and newspapers, but increasingly other more sophisticated portable technologies of vision such as DVD players, laptops and internet-capable mobile phones, help to direct attention away from surrounding spatiality to these personalised windows on other worlds. Indeed, through the rise of personal screens, both the panorama through the train window and the presence of other passengers temporarily recede from view and become almost

incidental to the experience of the journey. Yet importantly, for others, particularly those travelling on business, railway travel-time is valuable precisely because it presents opportunities to continue a variety of work-based visual practices that could not be easily achieved through other modes of transport. Furthermore, the materiality of the carriage facilitates these visual practices in that the provision of tables affords papers and documents to be spread out, generating an effective visual overview.

Human geographers have moved away from vision being the 'affirmation of an autonomous, self-choosing, world-creating subject' (Cray 1999, 361). As such, all visual practices are, to some extent, mediated. Indeed, Wylie reminds us how the 'visual world always transcends its perception' (2006, 526). These examples illustrate some of the many ways in which visual practices are mediated and structured by the materiality of the carriage. But they also show how these materialities and their properties are fluid and unpredictable (Law and Mol 2001), the window transforming between a screen, mirror and wall. As a result of these material transformations, the perception of spatiality of the carriage changes. During the day the window becomes a screen and the space of the carriage becomes more expansive. However, at night, and on particularly busy trains, the spatiality of the carriage becomes more constricted as the visual field narrows and is focused on the carriage interior. Following this, attentive visual practices such as surveillance over personal possessions might, at times, be impeded, which potentially gives rise to a series of anxieties and fears.

Conclusion

Much research on the relationship between mobility and visibility has focused explicitly on the cultivation of particular travel gazes (Urry 2002) or glances (Larsen 2001). Taking this further, this paper highlights the necessity to go beyond the relationship that Schivelbusch (1980) privileges between the passenger and the external landscapes unproblematically 'viewed' through the window, to enhance our geographical understanding of how the visual is implicated in the everyday, prosaic process of journeying. Whilst the visual consumption of landscapes viewed through the window is often taken to be an axiomatic part of the travel experience, this paper demonstrates the importance of apprehending the multiplicity and mobility of different visualising practices in how

perceptions of travel-time, space and location unfold over the duration of a journey. Rather than unchanging and inert, visual practices are fluid and emergent. Indeed, the empirical emphasis of this paper has enabled attention to be focused on the complex microdynamics of these visual practices and how they emerge in a specific, everyday material setting. Yet the visual practices explored here are not exhaustive. Through the narration of three types of visual practice that privileges their distinctiveness, the countless other visual experiences that might emerge during the course of a journey (see Latham 1999, for example) are inevitably overlooked.⁷

Writing in 1883, Ernest Foxwell illuminates well the intensity of railway travel, noting that

[w]hirled with a magnificent ease through a panorama of life so generously presented, the worn man feels more than the atmospheric breeze that blows outside; he is strung by an altogether novel touch from the surrounding fact of existence. (1883, 269)

During the nineteenth century, the railway journey as a particular way of seeing was a relatively novel experience. Visuality and the novelty of the visual effect of moving at speed through the landscape sharpened and intensified the visual experience of early railway travellers. Juxtaposing rapidly changing landscapes with the kinaesthetic sensation of speed induced particular sensations that excited some and terrified others (Harrington 2003; Daly 1999). Whilst, for many, this sensory intensity of the overstimulated body contrasts with the rather more mundane and 'everyday' visual dynamics that are perhaps more characteristic of contemporary railway travel, this paper has sought to illustrate some of the continuities that have persisted from these early experiences of railway travel. For some, the visual experience of a railway journey remains bound up with a series of visceral excitements and fears.

Therefore rather than denigrating the visual experience, this paper has argued that contemporary railway travel constructs *different* relations between mobility and visibility. Indeed, for many regular railway passengers, these three visual practices will no doubt be achingly familiar. These relations are in part fostered by the evolving physical materiality of the carriage interior, and related to the form and arrangement of tables, windows, seats, luggage racks and so on. As such, it is important to recognise how the visual experience of a railway journey is geographically differentiated. This might be dependent

on the type of railway carriage travelled in. Owing to the multiplicity of rolling stock types used in Britain, the diversity of visual practices experienced is wholly bound up with the political economies of privatisation, train specification and the franchised system (Knowles 2004). But visual experiences are also influenced by the particularity of landscapes traversed, their aesthetic qualities, and the degree to which passengers are familiar with them. Indeed, for frequent travellers, following Bergson's (1988) assertion that routine perception becomes more passive and automatic, the very habituality of the railway journey might work to subdue attentive forms of vision.

These influences are further unsettled by the less predictable particularities of each railway journey, such as fellow passengers, the busyness of the train, and the extent to which personal belongings are distributed around the railway carriage. Additionally, we could consider how the more affective and intangible dimensions of the journey such as mood and atmosphere also impact on the particularities of vision. Sometimes the visual field might be *overloaded* (Crary 1999), fast-moving landscapes or the busyness of the carriage echoing the sensory overload of early railway travellers. At other times the visual field might be calmer or more *attenuated*. Each of these has the potential to bring about particular embodied effects; the former perhaps associated with tiredness and the latter with boredom.

Finally, this paper also draws attention to the temporally differentiated experience of vision and how different visualising practices surge to the fore at different times throughout the journey. Sometimes vision might be structured by a watchfulness over personal possessions, to the exclusion of other visualising practices (Crary 1999). At other times, vision may revolve around searching for a particular object in the landscape. These examples where vision is attentive and *in order to* achieve a particular aim such as securing luggage or organising the journey, contrasts with more sublime forms of vision. These disengaged visualising practices might be less intentional but no less integral to the enjoyment of the journey. Furthermore, for some, visual practices might be wholly tangential to their travel-time use. For passengers using the space of the carriage as a mobile office, for the majority of the journey, the visual panorama provided by the window might be incidental to the task at hand. Alternatively, for the tired passenger, these visualities might be quiesced altogether, with the hypnotic visuality of

the window gradually giving way to the somniferous visuality of dreams. As such, rather than a discrete temporally bounded activity (see Lyons *et al.* 2007), multiple visual practices are intimately woven through the processual enactment of travel-time use.

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Notes

1 The empirical material from this paper emerged from a broader research project that sought to speak to the neglected transient experience of journeying, acknowledging how railway travel is brought into being by passengers through practice rather than given a priori. Fieldwork was primarily based on the East Coast Mainline in Britain between London and Edinburgh between 2004 and 2007 and developed a multi-method approach to chart the multiple realities, knowledges and experiences encountered during the course of journeying. Diary excerpts used here are based on autoethnographic participant observation undertaken on a total of 116 journeys. These journeys were undertaken on services at different times of day in order to account for different practices that might be taking place. This involved making detailed notes on both my own experiences and descriptions of the practices of other passengers. On-the-go decisions were made as to what particular aspect of the journey to focus on as different themes emerged during each journey. These narratives were not formed of continuous prose but were rather disjointed, fragmented and reflected my shifting degree of engagement with the proximate environment. The photographs used here were selected from a total of 2075 images created over the course of the research project. Techniques involved photographic diaries, chronicling my experience of individual journeys, together with images sequences which document the changing character of particular locations. Passenger quotations are taken from a combination of semi-structured interviews and go-alongs (see Kusenbach 2003). A total of 46 semi-structured interviews were conducted with passengers, carried out in locations away from the railway journey. The selection of passengers reflect a range of age, gender, familiarity with railway travel and motivations for

travelling. Ten go-alongs were conducted where I accompanied individual informants on their journeys. During each go-along, I talked with participants about their journey, using objects and decisions as prompts for conversation.

- 2 Trains in Britain are currently run by 24 private companies, with each company providing services within defined geographical areas. Six of these companies operate long-distance 'intercity' services that cover distances upwards of approximately 100 miles.
- 3 This particular new train, the Virgin Pendolino, has been criticised for its windows being too small, resulting in claustrophobia.
- 4 To confirm this observation, Plate 3 was taken in the 'lounge car' of a night-time sleeper service between Scotland and London. The occupants comprised a mixture of tourists and people travelling for business, all of whom were captivated by the sublime dusky vistas across the moor to the mountains.
- 5 As illustrated in the strapline: 'If you see it, report it', utilised by many Train Operating Companies and Transport for London, the local governmental body responsible for most aspects of the transport system in Greater London. This complements more formal technologies of surveillance, such as CCTV, that are increasingly engineered into the space of the carriage to regulate and even automatically identify suspicious behaviour (Graham 2005).
- 6 Airline-style seats contrast with seats arranged around a table.
- 7 Indeed we might consider the complex visualities that are required during other parts of the railway journey, such as in the station.

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