Men and cars
An exploration into the strange relationship between older men and their cars

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An exploration into the strange relationship between older men and their cars

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Summary

- The Research Study
- The importance of travel
- Driving Behaviour
- Giving-up driving
- Gender differences
- The future
The Research Study
Methodology
Prolonging the safe driving of older people through technology

Wave 1 focus group
Understanding older people’s driving needs

Driver Diary
Reflecting on driving needs in practice

Telephone Interviews
Re-visiting driving needs and assessing attitudes to technology

Wave 2 focus group
Understanding how driving needs might be met with modern technology

PHASE ONE - 25 driving (3 groups)

PHASE TWO - 31 no longer driving

Interviews
Why people gave up driving and assessing the feasibility of technologies

PHASE THREE - 18 users/experts

E-Discussion
To examine the generalisability and feasibility of developing the new technologies
The importance of travel for older people
Travel Needs

**TERTIARY TRAVEL NEEDS**
Aesthetic Needs
The need for relaxation, visit nature, test cognitive skills

**SECONDARY TRAVEL NEEDS**
Social Needs
The need for independence, control, status, roles

**PRIMARY TRAVEL NEEDS**
Practical Needs
Make appointments, access shops and services, work

Least awareness

Most awareness
PRIMARY TRAVEL NEEDS
Practical Needs
Make appointments, access shops and services, work

“Well Dorothy and David from number 3 take me shopping every week, we all go, we have a bit of a time of it you know, it’s a kind of outing. I never expected that. (Female, gave-up driving at 80)”

On giving-up driving – this level of need is usually met
- friends
- accessible transport
- public transport
- teleshopping?

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SECONDARY TRAVEL NEEDS
Social Needs
The need for independence, control, status, roles

On giving-up driving this level of needs is adversely affected.
Isolation, no longer part of society, no longer normal.

“It’s hard to explain I suppose. You just don’t seem like you belong. I suppose yes there are feelings that you might be ready for the scrapheap now. The first step to it, you know”
(Male, given-up driving at 76)
TERTIARY NEEDS
Aesthetic Needs
The need for relaxation, visit nature, test cognitive skills

On giving up driving this level of need is adversely affected

“You can’t ask other people to take you out for “a drive”. They’d think you’d lost their senses. Anyway they have got better things to be doing with their time, then ferrying me about just for the sake, like”

(female, gave-up driving at 80)

“The bus doesn’t really go where you would want. The route isn’t pretty. It just does the houses and the shops. The views are ordinary”

(female, gave-up driving at 80)
Driving Behaviour
Background: How Safe are Older Drivers?

- Older drivers are the safest drivers but...

- Taking into account miles driven, there is a slight increase for over 60s age group, which increases for 70+ age group and again for over 80s age group

- Distractions

- Junctions
Reasons for Increase in Accidents

- **Physiological** - eye-sight and hearing problems, restricted physical mobility

- **Cognitive** - working memory problems, decrease in information processing capacity, decision making under pressure

- **Psychological** - Lack of confidence, anxiety, social norms, stereotypes, labelling
Driver Needs

TIREDNESS

REACTIONS

EXTERNAL DISTRACTIONS

MAINTAIN A CONSTANT SPEED

GLARE AND LUMINANCE

Compensatory Behaviour
Giving-up driving
Giving-up driving

• Average age of giving-up driving is 74
  – But large variation

• Gradual reduction
  – Deliberate vs non-deliberate
  – Compensatory behaviour – not going out at night; no right-hand turns; avoid rush-hour.

• Voluntarily vs Told-to
Giving-up Driving

• 4 motivations

- Self-diagnosis
- Influence of friends / family
- Specific incident / event
- Medical professional

Most common → Least common
Giving-up Driving

Self-diagnosis

- Decision taken over long period of time
- Linked to deteriorating health
- Female acknowledged deterioration of skills
- Males likened this to external factors
- Overall much happier than others at giving-up. Locus of control remains with themselves.

“I can’t concentrate for the length of time I used to” (Female, gave-up driving at 74)

“Driver aren’t looked after on the roads anymore. The government doesn’t do anything to keep them safe. It’s all your responsibility. No one is the motorist’s friend anymore. Well! I am too old and tired to survive on my own!” (Male, gave-up driving at 72)
Giving-up driving

Influence of friends / family

“I kind of thought it might happen one day and then it came. ‘Look mym, I think we ought to have a talk’. I knew it was going to be about driving” (Female, gave-up driving at 77)

“My husband told me to give-up. He said I wasn’t any good. But then he’s always said that since I could drive at 21” (Female, gave-up driving at 78)

- Often prolonged pressure over many years
- Expectation of “the talk”
- Usually from children or grandchildren
- Sometimes from spouse but usually dismissed
- More powerful when from a variety of sources.
- More likely to be male than female

• Mixed happiness from the group about being “told” to give-up.
• Some reluctantly complied. Others pleased to be told.
Giving-up driving

Specific incident / event

• Often linked to a specific incident or event
  • Near miss or actual accident
  • Sudden health problem e.g. heart attack
  • Unable to perform a manoeuvre
  • Slightly more females than males

• Overall, quite happy with decision – locus of control remains with person themselves.

“I hadn’t even noticed I was that far over the line. I nearly hit him. I knew then it was time to give-up driving!”
(Female, gave-up driving at 84)”
Giving-up driving

Medical professional

- Actually quite rare.
- Sometimes a great shock to the individual.
- Mostly males

- Overall, mostly upset with the decision and finding it difficult to come to terms with life without the car.

“"The doc gave his diagnosis, right, I agree that I’m not as good as I used to be, but I’m not as bad as some of the youngsters on the road. It’s not fair!” (Male, gave-up driving at 78)"
Giving-up Driving

• Males much more likely to need to be told to give-up driving

• Females give-up more voluntarily

• Much more angst and upset amongst those told to give-up driving compared to those who decided and planned to.
Male and female differences and love of the car
Male and female relationships with the car

- Safety and driving

- Extension of themselves

- Emotional aspects of the car

- Implications:
  - Planning for the car will override planning for other transport and movement requirements
Safety, driving and gender

male drivers are particularly more likely than female drivers:

• to speed

• to drive with shorter headway

• to deliberately take more risks when driving
Safety, driving and gender

Female drivers are more likely than male drivers to

• Display slips and lapses while driving

• Be negatively influenced by being late

• Be negatively influenced by emotions (except anger and aggression)

• Drive safely in areas with traffic calming

• Show more empathy for non vehicle road users
The car as an extension of the self

Men love cars 'because they're part of them'

By Ben Quinn
Last Updated: 2:13am BST 13/07/2007

• Men talk about their cars as if talking about themselves," said one of its authors, Iain MacRury, of the University of East London.

• "Women are more comfortable expressing their feelings directly and see the car as separate. That's why women give cars names."

• His co-author, Peter Marsh, added that the attachment of men to their cars was often translated into feelings of annoyance at the threat, or potential threat, of someone damaging the vehicles.

• They were also likely to indulge in the type of shows of affection towards cars that one usually associates with loved ones or pets, such as patting the roof or dashboard.
The car as an extension of the self

Men 'love cars more than partners'
24 September 2007

• One third of British men spend more cash on their car than on their loved one, a new survey reveals.

According to fish4cars, one in three men spends a staggering £20,000 on spoilers, alloys and car accessories during their lifetime, but when it comes to their partners it is a struggle for them to open their wallets, buying their partners a present just once per month.
Male drivers ‘more likely to remember their first car than their first kiss‘

By TOM KELLY –

Last updated at 23:03pm on 24th February 2008

• Many young men will readily admit that they bought their first car to impress the opposite sex.

• But it seems most end up with fonder memories of the motor than the girl.

• A survey reveals that the majority of Britons remember their first car more readily than their first kiss.
Emotion, gender and driving

- Males compared to females are
  - More attached to their car
  - Less willing to give-up driving when they have to
  - Feel the car enables them to show off their skills
  - Feel the car defines who they are as a person
  - Feel the car shows off their status
Emotion, gender and driving

• Females compared to males are
  – More likely to see the car in terms of a practical vessel
  – Relate driving to parental roles and responsibility
  – More open towards the concept of demand management especially road pricing
The Future
Reducing negative affects of mobility deprivation

- Infrastructure
- Information
- Self-awareness
  - Technology
  - Virtual Mobility
THE FUTURE - IN-VEHICLE TECHNOLOGIES
EXTERNAL DISTRACTIONS

Dashboard sign display (with user prioritisation)
Head-up sign display (with user prioritisation)

MAINTAINING A CONSTANT SPEED

Head-up display of current vehicle speed
Audible speed cue (driving speed)
Audible warning when reach actual speed limit
Intelligent Speed Adaptation

GLARE AND LUMINANCE

Night vision enhancement
Head-up display
Dashboard display
THE FUTURE - VIRTUAL MOBILITY
Virtual Mobility

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Webcams
Virtual Environments
Social networking
Shopping online
E-health
Tele-working
Virtual Mobility

Potential
• Increase in technology and networking
• Increased accessibility
• Increased use – buying, talking, making friends, “visiting”, watching, interacting
• Own time

Challenges
• What is missing from the “virtual” world compared to “reality”?
  – Touch, smell, sense, continuity, impression managed, staged
• Equal access?
CONCLUSION
Conclusions (1)

• Older drivers view car as important to their lives
  – Good for physical and mental health
  – Functional: Day-to-day activities, services, A to B
  – Psychological: personality, prestige, self-esteem, mastery, identity
  – Aesthetic: need to see nature, relax, and test cognitive skills

• Key driving issues for older drivers are
  – Distraction
  – Keeping to the speed limit
  – Fatigue/tiredness
  – Reactions
  – Glare and luminance

• Older men have particular problems when giving up driving
  – More likely to need to be told
  – Less planning
  – Less likely to cope
  – Maybe linked to status and special relationship
Conclusions (2)

• Keeping people on the road or replacing movement
  – Offer new technology
    • Complexity
    • Re-learning of the driving task
    • Technophobia
  – Virtual Mobility or movement
    • What is lost?
    • Accessibility for all?
    • Technophobia
  – Maybe need for a variety of interventions – not just but including technology
    • Self-awareness
    • Information provision
  – Who will co-ordinate? Where will funding come from?
  – A need for more research
  – Policy shaping – a need for transport to link to health, community etc.
Thanks for listening

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