**Clark, J** and Minton, J. Driving Segregation: Age, gender and emerging inequalities. Chapter for *Geographies of Transport and Ageing.*Palgrave.

**6-8000 words including references. End of April**

***Q: is the issue word count or space (ie a word equivalent per table or image)***

***Q: is there any online appendix we could link to? Would it be ok to include in image a link to colour versions***

**Mobility [inequality by age, class - implications]**

**Gender**

**Generation**

**Cohort (increasing equality followed by increasing inequality (moving equal high to equal low by gender….implications; convergence on lower mobility cohort, for the future?)**

**- sub-issue of conversion of license holding to driving**

1. **Schematic table?  (cohort,  gender, broad characterisation)**
2. **Numeric table proportion of driving licence by age…also conversion**

**Add urban space issue transport poverty/ forced car ownership/ pushed to the periphery**

**[rethink the ‘public’ aspect of public transport?] – implications of the sharing economy? Resource managed more efficiently used by more people**

**INTRO:**

**Establish mobility and inclusion, multiple conceptualization of ‘age’ and car as ultimate mobility**

**LIT:**

1. **Proxy for intergenerational disadvantage**

**RQs: key importance of mobility and accessibility in social exclusion; amplified in later years. Young people as old people in waiting and recursive relationship between urban space and transport implications. Infrastructure changes have long term implications**

**CORE DATA:**

1. **Schematic table?  (cohort,  gender, broad characterisation)**
2. **Numeric table proportion of driving licence by age…also conversion**

**DISCUSSION:**

* **Urban space and transport**
* **Q of Age and physical isolation**
* **£££ Funding of transport and spatial dispersion of amenities**

**THE FUTURE:**

* **Platform economics (blur of private and public) and sharing economy as potential cures (Under-utilisation of assets relative to full capacity; more self-driving cars?). Active travel and greater longevity**

# Acronyms

BHPS British Household Panel Survey

UKHLS United Kingdom Household Longitudinal Survey

ISCED International Standard Classification of Education

# Introduction [300-600 words]

Many preferences, attitudes, skills, competencies, propensities, proclivities, vulnerabilities and behaviours become established at a particular age or stage in the life course, then are largely maintained without substantial modification throughout later life. Stages in the life course in which these sustained patterns of being are particularly likely to be established, and then subsequently maintained, have been called ‘critical periods’ in life course epidemiology, in which the first few days, weeks, months and years of life are often considered of particular importance. The transition from childhood to adulthood should also be considered a critical period for adoption of a great many social skills and habits, including both the acquisition of a vehicle driving licence, and the propensity, amongst those licenced to drive, to own a car and drive on a daily basis.

The concept of critical periods in a life course perspective highlights the importance of understanding the conditions which people are exposed to at key life course stages. Exposure to favourable conditions during a critical period can help ensure a positive transition leading to better outcomes at all subsequent stages in the lifecourse; conversely poor conditions during a critical period can lead to individuals setting off on a much less favourable lifecourse trajectory. The concept of critical period within the life course can therefore provide important insights into two related substantive issues: firstly, the many differences in behaviour and outcomes that are often observed to operate across generational lines; and secondly, the persistence and apparent transmission of relative advantage or disadvantage from one generation to the next. Thinking about critical periods is therefore vital for helping to understand both large scale patterns of persistent differences, and persistent continuity, which exist when comparing generations.

In the UK, as in much of the rest of the affluent world, the acts of learning to drive, acquiring a driving licence, and subsequently owning a car and adopting a car-dependent lifestyle, all tend to begin around the critical period of the transition from childhood to adulthood, with the 17 the age at which people can first apply for, take, and potentially pass, a driving licence test. At this age both one’s peers and one’s parents comprise much of the ‘environment’ within which the critical period occurs, with both peers and parents likely exerting strong influence on the habits and preferences of young adults, and parents – through additional intermingling paths of genetic and economic transmission – likely a key influence on whether these preferences can be acted upon. In the case of learning to drive, a key factor is therefore affordability, and whether, regardless of the level of mobility preference in those making the transition from childhood to adulthood, the level of opportunity to act on such mobility preferences, to afford the increasing and increasingly expensive number of lessons required to pass a UK driving test, is equally available to all wishing to acquire this skill, and if not whether these inequalities of opportunity at a critical period have changed over time.

We also argue that placing an emphasis on childhood-to-adulthood as a key critical period for the acquisition of a driving licence, and subsequently to drive, is important for thinking about the kinds of mobility challenges and opportunity that may emerge over subsequent decades. From a critical-period focused life course perspective, the young adult is the parent of the middle aged adult and the grandparent of the pensioner. If vehicle-related mobility is not acquired by someone as a young adult, therefore, what might the implications be for mobility at older ages?

# Methods

### Data

The British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) was a large longitudinal panel survey first carried out in 1991, and then in every subsequent year up until 2009. In the first year, known as a ‘wave’, a representative series of over 5 000 households were selected for interview from the postcode address file, producing a total sample size for individuals of over 10 000. In each subsequent wave attempts were made to interview all adult (16+) members of the initially selected household; if original sample members moved to form new households then attempts were made to interview them and all members of their new households. Additionally, from wave 9 (1999) a ‘booster’ sample was conducted of additional households living in Scotland and Wales; and in wave 11 (2001) a booster sample was collected for households living in Northern Ireland.1

Because a different set of questions was used to elicit information from individuals about driving licence ownership and car access in the first two waves compared with all subsequent waves, all results and analyses presented begin with the third wave (1993). The questions used are discussed below.

### Questions used

The BHPS variables DRIVER and CARUSE were used to establish firstly whether an individual possessed a driving licence, and subsequently whether they had access to a car. From the third wave of the survey onwards adults are first asked “Do you have a full driving licence” (the DRIVER variable), and subsequently asked “Do you normally have access to a car or van whenever you want to use it” (the CARUSE variable) only if they respond to the DRIVER question in the affirmative. Within the first two waves respondents were first asked “Do you have a full driving licence?”, and then “Have you got a car or van, or is there one you have use of?”. This slightly different phrasing, along perhaps with a paper-based rather than computer-based interview system, meaning more individuals may have been asked the second question even if they answered ‘no’ to the question on licence ownership, led to very notable differences in the proportions of people who reported both owning a licence and having car or van access.[[1]](#footnote-1) Because of this inconsistency only data from the third wave onwards were used.

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) classifications were used to produce a three-fold grouping of populations by highest educational qualifications. Being an international classification system, this allowed people who had not received their education within the UK to be included in the analyses. Throughout the period in which the BHPS was run, ISCED used a seven-tier grouping of educational classifications, with the following designations: 0: pre-primary education; 1: primary education or first stage of basic education; 2: lower secondary education or second stage of basic education; 3: upper secondary education; 4: post-secondary non-tertiary education; 5: first stage of tertiary education; 6: second stage of tertiary education.[[2]](#footnote-2) The seven-fold ISCED groups were categorized into the following three groups for the purposes of this analysis: groups 0, 1 and 2 were collapsed into the category ‘no further’ education (‘Low’); groups 3, 4, and 5 were grouped into the ‘further vocational’ education group (‘Med’); and 6 and 7 were grouped into the category ‘further non-vocational’ (‘High’).

## Method of Analysis: Lexis Surfaces

Within our paper we explore the data descriptively using a visual tool known as a Lexis surface. Within Lexis surface many complex and subtle patterns, relating to age, period and cohort effects and interactions, can be identified. Though we use quantitative data, our interpretation of these trends is in effect qualitative and subjective. Further analysis of this and other data can develop models and formal hypothesis tests for our interpretations, but for now what we present is necessarily somewhat impressionistic.

In a Lexis surface, a variable (‘Z’) is arranged visually on a data surface comprising age (‘relative time’) on one axis and year (‘absolute time’) on the other axis. Conceptually, a Lexis surface can be thought of as visual representation of a temporal surface much as a topographic map is a visual representation of a spatial surface, with age substituted for latitude, year (or period) for longitude, and the variable Z substituted for the surface’s ‘height’. Within the Lexis surfaces presented here, the variable Z is either: the proportion of the BHPS sample, of a given year and age, who have a driving licence; or the proportion of those BHPS sample members who have driving licences, who also report having access to a car or van. Substantively, the former may be considered a measure of *potential* auto-mobility, and the latter a measure of *realized* auto-mobility.

# Results

Figure 1 shows Lexis surface level plots for both the proportion of BHPS sample members who have a driving licence (subfigures A, B and C); and the proportion of those BHPS sample members with a driving licence who also have access to a car or van (Subfigures D, E and F). Subfigures A and E show levelplots separately for each gender (females on the left and males on the right), whereas subfigures B and E show the levelplots further subdivided by highest educational qualification. Subfigures C and F contain a number of simple labels and divisions, indicating different regions within the Lexis surfaces, which will be referred to in this discussion of the results. Within each levelplot the shade of a cell indicates the proportion, with black indicating 100% and white cells indicating less than 50%.

## Driving Licence Ownership by gender and generation

Figure 1A shows the proportion of the adult BHPS sample who report having a driving licence, from 1993 to 2008, and for all ages from 17 to 80 years of age. It is clear from the difference in the shade of the right sub-panel (males) compared with the left sub-panel (females) that, historically, a larger proportion of adult males tend to have driving licences than females. A more subtle pattern in this figure is suggested by noting that in both panels, and in particular for the female panel, the cell shades tend to be darker near the bottom of the panels than at the top, when looking at both panels from the top to around one third of the way from the bottom. This indicates that, above around the age of thirty years, younger adults tend to be more likely to have a driving licence than older adults. As largely the same panel of individuals are being followed each year, and only a very small proportion of people possessing driving licences then have these licences revoked and have to take the test again, this difference in shades is suggestive of changes in driving licence ownership rate by cohort, with successive cohorts being more likely by a given age to possess a driving licence than earlier cohorts at the same age. By comparing similar regions (combinations of age and year) in the male and female panels it is also apparent that levels of driving licence ownership between males and females have tended to converge over successive generations. To look at this further, consider the region indicated by the letter A in figure 1C, and above the first diagonal dashed line in the figure; this broadly demarks cohorts born before around 1940. Within this broadly defined region of the Lexis surfaces, the cells are much darker for males than for females, with the proportions of males with driving licences around 90%, and the proportions of females with driving licences from similar cohorts ranging from around 55% to 70%. Next consider the region indicated by B in figure 1C, demarcated by the first dashed line above and another parallel diagonal dashed line below. This broadly indicates cohorts born between around the early 1940s and the late 1950s. The figures. The difference in the cell shade in this region between the male and female panels has reduced, with the proportions of males with driving licences increasing slightly from around 90% to 95% and above, and the corresponding female driving licence ownership rates increasing from around 70% to over 80%. The region indicated by the letter C in the Figure 1C indicates cohorts born from around the early 1960s to around 1975. For these cohorts the proportion of males with driving licences has remained high, at around 95% or above, whereas the proportion of females with driving licences has increased further, from around 80% to around 90%. Finally, we can consider the bottom right corners of the panels, indicated by letter D on figure 1C. This shows driving licence rates for people born after around 1975. What is striking about these younger cohorts is that driving licence rates have fallen for both genders compared with earlier generations, reversing a trend towards higher driving licence ownership which had been continuing for many generations. It is also noteworthy that these falls in licence rates have been in both genders, reaching around 75-80 for some of the newer cohorts within this Lexis surface region.

The complex patterns can to an extent be simplified into a series of broad generational ‘pen portraits’, each differing in terms of auto-mobility and gender equality. From the BHPS sample it appears that generations born before the Second World War (the region A in Figure 1C) tended to have mixed mobility and high gender inequality, with around 90% of males from this generation possessing a driving licence but only around 70% or so of females likely to have a driving licence; put another way, by the time this generation had reached old age, women were around three or more times more likely not to be able to drive than men of the same age, with important implications for how reliant both older women and older men are on either public transport or friends and relatives with access to a car to travel substantive distances from their homes. The implications of this historically high disparity in auto-mobility by gender are likely to have been felt both during working life, with women less able to travel without (in many cases) the support of their husbands, and in old age, where the shorter life expectancy of men means many elderly women from this generation would have outlived their husbands, and because of this experienced not just profound personal bereavement, but also a sharp fall in their capacity to travel far from home. Differential auto-mobility and differential longevity therefore created the conditions for the loss of a husband to be both a primary and a secondary cause of isolation for elderly women from this generation.

For generations born after the Second World War, and up until the start of the 1960s (region B in Figure 1C), there was a catch-up in auto-mobility between the genders, with both genders more likely to own a licence by the time they reached middle age, but with greater increases in women’s auto-mobility than men’s. The decades after the Second World War can, from the perspective of UK households, be considered an extended period of inclusive economic growth, with successive governments committed to broadly Keynesian economic programmes of investment in people and places, with relatively high levels of economic growth per capita, increasing median wages, and falling income inequality. Though the 1950s are considered by contemporary standards to have high levels of structural and cultural inflexibility regarding gender norms and female participation in the workplace, increasing affordability of car ownership at household level, due both to rising household incomes and falling vehicle costs through greater industrialization, led to both ‘two licence’ households and then ‘two car’ households becoming increasingly common. With increasing rates of female auto-mobility, as well as higher social mobility more generally, the costs of moving to the car dependent suburbs from denser and less car dependent urban core fell, and opportunities for increasing female participation in the labour force increased, leading to both less female dependence on males for auto-mobility and economic security. Within the household there was a movement away from conditions of gendered dependence in the fields of mobility and earnings, and towards equality and interdependence.

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| A) The proportion of BHPS sample respondents with a driving licence, by gender | B ) Driving licence ownership, by gender and highest qualilfication. | C) Driving licence ownership. Annotated. | D) The proportion of driving licence owners with access to a car or van, by gender | E) The proportion of driving licence owners with access to a car or van, by sex and highest educational qualification. | F) Drivers who drive. Annotated. |

Figure 1 Lexis surfaces showing the proportion of BHPS sample members who have driving licences (A-C); and, of those sample members with driving licences, who also have access to a car or van (D-F). In all figures year runs horizontally from left to right, and age runs vertically from bottom to top. Within each levelplot the shade of a cell indicates the proportion, with black indicating 100% and white cells indicating less than 50% or missing values.

If the generation born from after the Second World War to the start of the 1960s can be characterized by both increasing mobility and increasing equalization of auto-mobility between genders, the generation born from around 1960 to the mid 1970s (area C in figure 1C) may be thought of representing an end point in this journey towards a high mobility and high auto-equality society. Within this high mobility, high auto-equality generation both males and females were highly likely to possess driving licences, though the proportion of females with licences still remained somewhat lower than for males. This high mobility, high auto-equality generation experienced both the tail end of a decades’ long social democratic commitment to high quality while being educated in primary and secondary school as children, then the transition and embedding of neoliberalism under Thatcher and Major while of working age; put another way, this generation (or at least the start of this generation) both gained from the relatively high tax and high social investment policies of the post-War post-Keynesians while economically dependent children, and to some extent from the low tax and low regulation policies of Thatcherism while income-generating and tax-paying adults. Increasing job insecurity, or ‘flexibilisation’, after Thatcher therefore made traditional single-earner households less economically stable, and so less common, so creating both the opportunity and the necessity for dual-earner households to proliferate. This was both enabled by and helped consolidate the previous generation’s progress towards high female auto-mobility rates, as both the ability to work, as well as to balance work with other commitments, can depend on auto-mobility, and so on possessing a driving licence.

For the generation born after 1975 (Region D in figure 1C), the trend towards increased auto-mobility seems to have gone into reverse, more quickly than it rose for either gender over previous generations. Although we cannot know the proportions with driving licences in old age, the proportion of both genders with driving licences around the age of 20-25 years is falling, and does not appear to be increasing as this generation enters their thirties. Interestingly, though the fall in driving licence rates occurred in both genders, and from levels that were around 5% points higher for males than females, it appears they may be falling to similar levels for both genders, of around 80%. This nascent generation therefore appear from the BHPS data to be characterized by both low auto-mobility and high gender equality in this domain.

## Driving licence ownership by gender, generation, and highest educational qualification

Figure 1B shows how rates of driving licence ownership vary by year and age, and further by both gender and highest educational qualification class. The top row shows rates for those with the highest educational grouping (‘Further non-vocational’, labelled ‘High’); the middle for intermediate qualifications (‘Further vocational’, labelled ‘Med’) and the bottom row for those with ‘no further’ education (labelled ‘Low’). As before, the left panels show the rates for females and the right panel shows the rates for males. Though each panel is smaller than before, and so it is harder to make out the details of each panel, a number of broad trends and differences between panels are clear, revealing important information about the complex relationship between gender, generation and income.

To learn more about the moderating influence that higher qualifications appear to have on gender differences in auto-mobility, we can compare the overall shade of the left and right hand panels in each row. For the top row, for those whose highest educational qualification is a degree, there is very little difference in shades between these two panels, indicating very little difference in auto-mobility by gender within this high educational subpopulation. The overall shade also tends to be uniformly darker than in any of the other panels, indicating higher driving licence rates overall, which are close to 100% for either gender, at almost all ages, and in almost all years. There are, however, notably more missing values (blank, white cells) for older females than older males, because historically fewer females than males attended university, and so for particular combinations of age, year, gender and educational qualification there were simply no observations in the sample.

By contrast, within the lowest educational qualification group (bottom row panels), there is both a lower proportion of people with driving licences overall than in the other panels, as well as the greatest difference between male and female rates of driving licence ownership. Historically, male levels of driving licence ownership tended to be at around 90%, increasing steadily up to around 95% or above for those cohorts born up to around 1970-75; by contrast female rates in the earliest cohorts were only slightly above 50%, rising to around 80% by the end of the ‘Catch up’ generation (bottom of region B in figure 1C).

Within the intermediate qualifications group (middle row panels), there is both an intermediate level of overall disparity in gender mobility (difference in shade between left and right panels) as well as perhaps clearer diagonal ‘striation’ then in the other panels, suggesting that cohort effects are particularly important in explaining mobility in people with intermediate level qualifications, and that the generational patterns and changes described above for the whole BHPS sample are particularly the case for the intermediate qualification sub-population.

It is worth noting that the fall in auto-mobility seen for post-1975 cohorts (triangle D in figure 1C) is very clear for both the Low and Med qualification panels, but not very pronounced for the High qualification panels. This could partly be because this trend covers younger ages, and the time taken to complete university degrees mean almost no one in the High group is under 20 years of age, so there are fewer observations with which to try to discern this pattern in High educational groups than in the other groups. A more substantively important implication, however, is that whatever changes have occurred that have led to less auto-mobility overall have had less of an impact on those with degrees or above. By comparing the shades of the bottom right triangles for males and females in the Med panels, with males and females in the Low panels, it also appears that gender differences in auto-mobility have further equalized for those in the former, whereas they have remained or become exacerbated for the latter, with a fall to lower levels for females with the lowest qualifications compared with males.

## Drivers with access to a car or van

We will now look at trends and patterns in the proportion of the BHPS sample with a driving licence who also state they have access to a car or van (‘Drivers who drive’). For the whole of the relevant BHPS subsample this is shown in figure 1D, with the female panel on the left and the male panel on the right. Figure 1E labels some of the regions within the panels, A to E, which will be referred to in the discussion of Figure 1D and figure 1E. As with Figures 1A-1C, the shade of cells within the panels indicates proportions, with proportions below 0.5 represented by white cells, and higher proportions ranging from 0.5 to 1.0 by successively darker shades.

We will begin by considering the region A, representing those (now elderly) cohorts who were around 50 years old or older in 1993, and therefore cohorts born either before or during the Second World War; the very earliest cohorts visible in region A are persons aged 80 years in 1993, and so region A includes some cohorts born from the 1910s to the 1940s. Region A in figures 1D-F therefore covers a similar range of cohorts to region A figures 1A-C, and a somewhat similar pattern of change is seen.

For women and within region A there is evidence of successively higher proportions of those with driving licences also having access to a car or van, but with higher proportions of males than females of the same age and in the same cohort. For cohorts born in the 1910s, around 20% of women with driving licences, and around 50% of men with driving licences, had access to a car or van. For cohorts born in the 1920s, the proportion of licenced females with car or van access rose from slightly under 30% to around 60%; the corresponding change for men in these cohorts was between around 55% and about 80%. For cohorts born in the 1930s the proportion of licenced females with car or van increased to around 80%, whereas for licenced males it increased to around 90%. Within region A, therefore, the proportion of female drivers with car or van access increased from around 20% to 80%, and for males from around 50% to 90%.

It is important to note that, within the age range 60 to 80 years, an age effect is not observed, i.e. the proportion of people with licences with car access does not diminish between ages 60 to 70 or 70 to 80. Within the UK, drivers aged 70 or older need to renew their driving licences every three years, as well as to state if they have developed any medical conditions which may affect their driving, but are not required to retake a driving test.[[3]](#footnote-3) Even though rates of impairment which may affect driving can be expected to increase with old age, there is no indication, at least up to age 80 years, that this substantively affects auto-mobility.

We now consider changes in the proportion of drivers with car or van access aged between around 30 and 55 years of age, how this proportion has changed from the early 1990s to 2008, and how this change has differs from males and females. This particular pattern of change is represented by the letters B and C in figure 1F, along with the arrow going left to right. We can see a notable increase in the proportion of licenced women in this age bracket with car or van access, from around 80% to around 90%. Most of this increase appears to occur fairly suddenly, around 2001-2002, rather than being a gradual change. For men in the same age-bracket there is no equivalent change, with rates between remaining around 90-95% throughout the period of observation.

Finally, we can look at how the proportion of people with licences with access to a car or van changes with age from around the age of 17 to 30 years, as indicated by the letters D and E in figure 1F, and the vertical arrow pointing upwards. We can see that, within this age range, there is very little difference between genders, and instead age effects dominate. At around 20 years of age, around 55% of those with driving licences also have access to a car or van. By the age of 25, this has increased to around 75-80%, and by the age of 30 to around 90-95% for men throughout the period 1993-2008; for women, rates increased to around 80% by age 30 up to around 2001, and to around 90% from around 2004 to 2008, due to the period-driven change represented by the vector from B to C.

The age-based pattern of increasing car or van access in young adulthood is important for understanding that rates of gender inequality in *realized* auto-mobility (‘drivers who drive’) only tends to emerge after the age of 30, and that up until this age, age tends to be a much stronger determinant than gender. Since the early 2000s, it is also apparent that rates *realized* auto-mobility from the age of 30 to 55 years tend to be very similar between the genders, although we saw some persistent though diminishing gender differences in rates of *potential* auto-mobility (proportions of sample with a driving licence) within Figures 1A-C.

## Drivers with access to a car or van, by highest educational qualification

Figure 1E shows how the proportion of registered drivers with access to a car or van varies by highest educational qualification as well as by gender, age and year. As with figure 1B, Figure 1E allows the mediating and moderating role of educational qualification on auto-mobility patterns to be better understood. As with Figure 1B, we can see, by comparing the shade of cells in the top left with the top right panels, that gender differences in this auto-mobility outcome (*realised* auto-mobility) are very low amongst those with a degree or higher qualification, with car or van access levels typically above 90% at all ages above around 30 years for both genders. There is also no apparent historic cohort pattern (region A in figure 1F) whereby *realised* auto-mobility increases over successive cohorts born from the 1910s to the 1940s; instead, rates of car or van ownership amongst both males and females with degrees from these cohorts tended to be close to 100%, though with fewer observations for females, leadings to a larger number of missing cells. If anything, amongst those with degrees and driving licences, rates of car or van ownership decreased slightly for cohorts born after World War 2, from around 95-100% for pre-War cohorts, to around 90-95% for cohorts born after 1945.

Both the subpopulations with lower and intermediate highest educational qualification (middle panel and low panel), differ from the ‘high’ qualification group in a number of ways. Firstly, the progressive increases in realized auto-mobility in the oldest cohorts with each successive cohort (region A, covering cohorts born from the 1910s to the mid 1940s), which are seen in the population overall, are clearly evident through the diagonal striation within this region. Comparing equivalent cohorts (for example looking at the very top left corners of each panel to compare the 1915 cohorts), we can see both that realized auto-mobility tended to be lower for females than for males, and for the low education compared with intermediate educational qualification group. For example, rates of realized auto-mobility amongst the oldest cohorts were around 20% for females with ‘low’ qualification, around 50% for males with ‘low’ qualifications, around 40% for females with intermediate qualifications, and around 70% for males with intermediate qualifications. For each of these groups, with the exception of females with low qualifications, rates of realized automobility reached around 90% or higher for those born after World War 2 (bottom of region A); for females with low qualifications levels reached levels of between 60 and 80% instead.

A second way in which the two bottom rows of panels differ from the top row is that there tends to be more of a difference between females and males in realized auto-mobility rates, with these disparities greatest in the lowest educational group, and smaller in the intermediate educational group. A third observation to note is that the rapid rise in auto-mobility rates seen for females overall after around 2001, characterized by the vector B to C in figure 1F, is clearest to see in the panel for females with intermediate qualifications, though to some extent also evident for females with ‘low’ qualifications.

Finally, it is important to note that the increasing levels of realized auto-mobility seen between around the age of 20 and 30, as characterized by the vector D to E, is seen for all educational subgroups, and does not appear to differ strongly by gender.

# Discussion

Highest educational qualification is both an indicator of both the earnings potential of households that form as people form as they enter adulthood and the workplace, and also of the types of households they were part of as children. Though there have been large-scale structural changes in both the levels of qualification, and proportion of the UK population possessing degrees, over the many generations included in the BHPS sample, children from households where one or both parents had a degree are often likely to go to university themselves, and those from backgrounds where parents left school at an early age less likely to get a degree. Also, like gender, a highest educational qualification tends to remain fixed throughout most of adulthood. In earlier explorations of the data, we also looked at occupation and household earnings as a means of stratifying the overall population, and found highest educational qualification to be a more informative way of subdividing the population with regards to auto-mobility outcomes. This makes sense when we consider how average household earnings are likely to vary over the life course, with those going to university likely to earn less in early adulthood than those who leave full time education at an earlier age; occupation, similarly, is highly fluid over the life course, has become more so, and is arguably less hierarchical than highest qualification.

Interestingly, we found highest educational qualification to better explain, and more strongly moderate, both gender differences and differences in auto-mobility between the generations, than urban-rural classification. Whereas urban-rural classification to some extent characterizes the differential *need* of individuals to have their own form of transport, highest educational qualification, as a stable proxy for both future household and parental household earning potential and economic stratification, characterizes the differential *means* with which people can afford both to learn to drive, and then to own a car. The importance of age on differential *need* is clearly seen by looking at how the proportion of ‘drivers driving’ (Figure 1D) changes from the twenties to the thirties (as indicated in the arrow from label D to E in figure 1F), and this differential need does not appear to vary substantively between educational strata (Figure 1E).

Thinking about differential *means*, however, may go far to explaining both persistent and emerging differences between educational strata, and within each strata differences by gender. For example, we can expect that both the costs of learning to drive and owning a car will be more unaffordable for lower income households, with the former cost more likely to be borne (at least initially) by parents, and the latter costs by newly formed young adult households. Highest qualification, as we have suggested, can be a proxy for both parental and new household income, and the relatively constrained budgets of such households may explain both why the relatively low level of auto-mobility, its further decline, and also the large gender differences in auto-mobility within this educational strata. Like eyes per person, cars per household have diminishing marginal returns: the difference in geographic accessibility and opportunity for a household going from no cars to one car likely to be much greater than the additional opportunity made available from one car to two cars. In households that are only just able to afford one car, it is often the (male) main earner of the household who tends to be the car owner and driver.

## The concept of mobility

Mobility is a multi-faceted concept that can be considered along socioeconomic, geographic and temporal dimensions, and within these latter two dimensions at a range of distinct scales. At a broad geographic scale the concept of mobility is linked to processes and preferences towards both international and intra-national (‘internal’) migration, the willingness or need for individuals to relocate to new countries or regions; long-distance movements are known to be more likely in early adulthood than at other stages in the life course, with further education at university often both forming a need for individuals to leave their familial household in the first instance, and then further incentives to relocate longer distances in search of appropriate graduate employment.2 Socioeconomic and geographic mobilities are therefore intimately linked and mutually reinforcing concepts. If migration is mobility at the macro-scale of geography and time, concerning hundreds of kilometres and geographic transitions at the scale of years or decades, then auto-mobility represents the micro-scale, concerning quotidian movements at the scale of kilometres or tens of kilometres. Whether people choose to move to a new region, and where within this region people choose to live, is both affected by and affects everyday mobility, with access to a car a vital factor in such decisions. As we have seen in the BHPS data, auto-mobility is itself strongly determined by educational background, as well as decreasingly by gender, and persistently, though with differential force, by generation.

Auto-mobility is a paradoxical form of mobility, as it both greatly decreases the friction of physical distance, while also competing for other modes of self-conveyance – walking, cycling, and using public transport – that necessarily involve greater levels of physical activity, and so potentially confer greater health benefits. Auto-mobility is therefore both the most mobile, and the most sedentary, of travel modes encountered on a daily basis. The trends we saw in region DE of figure 1D-E, showing that rates of realized auto-mobility (‘drivers driving’) increase from the start of adulthood until the early thirties, suggests that rates of active travel decrease throughout young adulthood due to increasing car use. Rates of physical activity tend to decrease with age,3 and increased car dependency is likely an important contributory factor in this trend.

## Choice or constraint?

The fact that most rich nations, including the UK, have already passed ‘peak car’ is well established, as is the role of generational differences in emerging auto-mobility and the identification of the ‘Millennials’ as a distinct cohort in their licence and car ownership trends. The reasons for these trends, and the implications for the health, social and economic opportunity, and wellbeing of future generations, are still being debated. One interpretation of these trends is that they reflect active and positive choices made by new generations, away from car use and towards reduced travel in daily life as a result of reduced need for travel; a common reason given for this reduced need is the increasing ubiquity of information and communication technologies (ICTs), meaning that people no longer need to be physically proximate to communicate, collaborate and affiliate with one another. In addition to reducing the need for travel, ICTs and related electronic devices are a form of entertainment in their own right, which cannot be engaged with while in charge of a vehicle; from this perspective, the opportunity cost of vehicular travel is therefore increased, and the appeal of this travel modality, compared either with not travelling or travelling by public transport, is reduced. We will refer to this optimistic interpretation of the trends as the ‘Choice’ model of reduced auto-mobility.

An alternative explanatory model for the trends is what we call the ‘Constraint’ model of reduced auto-mobility. This posits that a variety of socioeconomic factors have simply made first learning to drive, then having access to a car, a more distant and unaffordable prospect for newer generations. Such economic factors include increasing fuel costs, costs of insuring younger drivers, increasing costs associated with passing driving tests, and more insecure forms of employment with stagnant wages, each of which have affected Millennials more so than previous generations, and we could also posit have particularly adversely affected those without further education due to falling demands, relative to supply, for manual labour occupations.

Of these two types of explanation, we believe the data from the BHPS broadly supports the ‘Constraint’ explanation more so than the ‘Choice’ explanation, although the two are not mutually exclusive.

## Limitations

The BHPS was superceded in 2008 by the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS), also known as Understanding Society. From the second wave onwards, original sample members from the BHPS were incorporated into the UKHLS, meaning the same households and individuals who first joined the BHPS in 1991 can be followed for a number of additional years. Unfortunately, many of the questions and classifications of responses are inconsistent between BHPS and UKHLS, meaning it has proved problematic to ‘extend’ the observations shown above beyond 2009 using the UKHLS. This is particularly the case when seeking consistent categorization of highest educational qualification, which we found to be a powerful means of distinguishing between sub-populations in terms of APC trends; the ISCED categorisations used in the BHPS were asked only in wave F of the UKHLS, and only as part of an immigrant and ethnic minority booster sample, with regards to qualifications obtained abroad.[[4]](#footnote-4) In principle, however, the period of observation can be extended to more recent years using UKHLS. This could be particularly informative as the UKHLS covers the period after the 2008 Global Financial Crisis and subsequent UK-wide recession; this recession is notable for its sluggish recovery, including a continued stagnation in wages and living conditions for much of UK society. We expect the trends towards decreasing mobility amongst those with lower educational qualifications to have worsened as a result of these changes, and so it should be a priority to explore this further.

The complex sampling and questionnaire design of the BHPS has both advantages and disadvantages, with the main advantage being that individuals can be tracked through time and so the effect of changes in individual circumstances on other outcomes estimated. A disadvantage is that, though the BHPS was initially drawn from a representative sample of the UK population, both selective attrition and the booster samples mean it can become somewhat less representative of the UK population over time.4 Within the analyses presented here, the BHPS is presented ‘as is’, without attempts to explicitly follow the same individuals over time or to analyse the influence of specific changes in household or individual circumstance on mobility outcomes; however the BHPS has been used to allow these analyses to be explored in subsequent research.

CHUNK 10

WORDS AT START 7390

THE AIM OF THIS CHUNK OF TIME, AND THE NEXT CHUNK OF TIME, WILL BE TO SUMMARISE RELEVANT LITERATURE RELATING TO A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT ISSUES. THESE ISSUES ARE

1 PEAK CAR – WHAT HAVE BEEN THE TRENDS IN CAR OWNERSHIP OVER THE LAST FEW DECADES, IN THE UK AND INTERNATIONALLY? WHAT EXPLANATIONS HAVE BEEN GIVEN FOR THESE TRENDS? WHAT IMPLICATIONS HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED FOR IMPORTANT SOCIOECONOMIC AND HEALTH OUTCOMES

2 PLATFORM ECONOMICS AND DRIVERLESS CARS – WHAT DISCUSSION HAS THERE BEEN ABOUT CARS AS A RESOURCE THAT CAN POTENTIALLY BE SHARED BETWEEN MORE THAN JUST A SINGLE HOUSEHOLD? WHAT PROJECTIONS HAVE THERE BEEN ABOUT FUTURE TRENDS AND THE POSSIBLITY THAT CAR ACCESS BECOMES MORE AFFORDABLE FOR CURRENT HOUSEHOLDS IN LATER GENERATIONS?

3 ACTIVE TRAVEL AND HEALTH – WHAT DEBATES HAVE BEEN HAD ABOUT THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF MULTIMODALITY

4 CAR USE AND AGEING – WHAT DOES THE LITERATURE SAY ABOUT CAR USE AND CAR DEPENDENCY IN OLDER AGE? TO WHAT EXTENT ARE PROCESSES OF HABITUATION AND LIFE COURSE APPROACHES CONSIDERED WHEN UNDERSTANDING EXISTING TRENDS AND POSSIBLE FUTURE TRENDS?

5 DECENTRALISATION OF POVERTY AND CAR DEPENDENCY – HAVE CHANGES IN CAR USE BEEN LINKED TO PROCESSES OF DECENTRALISATION OF POVERTY? (SUMMARISE JULIE’S AND ANGELA’S PAPER ON THIS IN GLASGOW)

6 LIFE COURSE APPROACHES TO HABITS AND HEALTH – WHAT DISCUSSION HAS THERE BEEN ABOUT YOUNG ADULTHOOD AS A CRITICAL PERIOD IN WHICH PARTICULAR HABITS BECOME ESTABLISHED AND EMBEDDED, AND SO THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING THE CONDITIONS FACED IN YOUNG ADULTHOOD WHEN CONSIDERING HOW PEOPLE AGE

7 CAR DEPENDENCY AND ISOLATION IN OLD AGE – WHAT DOES THE LITERATURE SAY ABOUT THE FACT MEN HISTORICALLY WERE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE DRIVING LICENCES, AND ALSO TO DIE BEFORE WOMEN, IN TERMS OF A POTENTIAL DOUBLE-DISADVANTAGE FACED BY ELDERLY WOMEN IN OLD AGE WHEN THEIR (MALE) PARTNER DIES

FOR EACH OF THESE CHUNKS, I WILL PRODUCE A SPREADSHEET MARKING OUT THE PROGRESS THROUGH THE LITERATURE I HAVE MADE. THE STEPS WILL BE:

* 1. WIDE NET SEARCH INCLUDING SEARCH TERMS
* 2. IDENTIFICATION OF ONE OR TWO MOST PROMISING CLUSTERS
* 3. COPYING OUT OF RELEVANT ABSTRACTS FROM MOST PROMISING CLUSTERS
* 4. HIGHLIGHTING OF RELEVANT TEXT
* 5. IDENTIFICATION OF TEXTS TO READ IN FULL, PRINTING THESE OUT AND READING THEM FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
* 6. ADDING OF REFERENCES TO RELEVANT TEXT TO MENDELEY
* 7. PRODUCTION OF DECLARATIVE STATEMENTS BASED ON RELEVANT TEXTS, INCLUDING REFERNECES
* 8. CONSOLODATION OF RELEVANT STATEMENTS INTO DECLARATIVE STATEMENT CLUSTERS

# Declarative referenced statements (unordered)

1. A comparison between Germany and the USA, both countries with very high vehicle ownership, shows that Germans travel less by car and much more by other modes, and that American preferences to drive persist even for those living in dense, mixed use areas with close public transport.5
2. England and Wales remains car dependent, with 67% of commuters using cars or vans as their main commute mode in 2011. 6
3. In England and Wales, poorer socioeconomic groups tend to walk, but not cycle, more than richer socioeconomic groups.6
4. In Montreal, Canada, use of public transport tends to fall as people enter their early thirties, consistent with patterns of realized auto-mobility in the UK. 7
5. ICTs may both reduce the need for motor travel, and also allow for better organization and utilization of private vehicle stock through apps and information sharing platforms like Uber, enabling what’s sometimes referred to as ‘collaborative consumption’.8
6. Automated vehicles offer not just the possibility for replacing or blurring the public/private distinction in car ownership, but for augmenting train and coach use as well.9
7. Preferences for cycling can be influenced by substantial changes in life circumstances or environments.10
8. Disabilities and impairments, which can adversely affect educational outcomes, can also adversely affect the ease of learning to drive.11

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1. Authors’ analysis [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://uis.unesco.org/en/isced-mappings> Accessed 18 April 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.gov.uk/renew-driving-licence-at-70> - IMPORTANT TO KNOW IF THERE HAVE BEEN ANY CHANGES IN THE LAW BETWEEN 1993 ONWARDS. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/dataset-documentation/wave/6/datafile/f_indresp/variable/f_isced11_dv> Accessed 18 April 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)