

- automotive journalist's manifesto
 - I want to write for *myself* in a way that can reify the identities of others - detail makes relatability and all that...
 - The identities and viewpoints I want to share or emphasize: that of a young person, that of a student (especially an un-pragmatic one in a pragmatic field), that of a queer person, the gentle side of cars, cars as they appear to non-car-people, how I relate cars to non-car-people, the things that inspired me to become a “car person”
 - I want to recognize the importance of *careful* writing and of lyricism to technical writing. This is something that I think is often all too absent from automotive writing, and this makes it, I think, less approachable to many people. It's rarely *intriguing*, it simply is.
 - I want to braid essays about cars into stories that are more personal and impactful, to try and bring a larger emotional or cultural message into my writing.
- non-car-people's personal relationships to their cars - anthropomorphism and names
 - Many people I know name their cars, personalize their cars, and treat their cars as friends or family. This fascinates me because none of these people know a damn thing about cars, nor do they drive anything that I would consider remotely interesting. I want to interview these people, or get little samples of writing from them, as well as collect snippets of music, art, or writing by non-car-people about cars, and assemble them into a cohesive narrative about how people process their relationships to “the car”.
- CMR culture and the ego of Car Man
 - I haven't had the greatest experience on Carnegie Mellon Racing, for entirely one reason: egotism. I plan to examine my interactions with all these incredibly talented engineers and craftspeople, and how they use cars as a crutch for their identities. In my view (one that is shared with a few others, whom I may ask to contribute), many of them are so desperately pragmatic that they must be successful agents of a real, tangible project to feel like accomplished, realized people. This is not a fault, except that it quickly dismantles any interpersonal culture the team might have, especially when senior members take agency away from newer ones in the name of efficiency and performance. To give you a better idea of who these people are, many of them idealize (and act like) Elon Musk.
 - Capitalism-related apprehensions about automotive journalism?
- music for cars - the coevolution of cars and the radio, or what would brian eno make the roads sound like
 - To me, and to many others, cars and music are inseparable. I remember one of Elizabeth Blackstock's earlier contributions to Jalopnik was crowd-sourcing the “ultimate driving playlist”. Things like this have been done before, like Top Gear's old best driving songs bit, but I haven't found much insight on *why* this connection arose. I am not sure if this piece will be a historical examination of cars and music playback (or of cultural interplay between cars and radio), or if it will be a philosophical exploration of cars, sound, and passive experiences like listening to music while driving.
- driving and forced presence
 - This is an idea that has been written about many times before, but one that I would like to express for myself, to garner some personal understanding. The gist of the idea is that

people will drive quickly or ride motorcycles or participate in other adrenaline junkie behavior. When I do these things, though, I try to be an active participant. I want to be present, to not let anything mediate the path between my intentions and their effects. Motorcycles are excellent at this, and that is a mindset and a passion that I think warrants externalizing.

- zen and the art of miata maintenance - gumption, focus and reward
 - I am someone who, existentially speaking, gets bored easily. I don't struggle with attention in the short term, but I will abandon passions after a few months and give up on projects if I don't find meaning or self reflection easily enough. One of the few exceptions to this trend of mine is wrenching. I have stuck with my problematic, impractical, frustrating, poorly tolerated, surprisingly unreliable, stubborn, rebellious Miata for far longer than I ever thought I would. I imagine this relationship stems from a need to focus with skilled manual labor, and from a way to exercise gumption in a Pirsig-esque way. There is also, I feel, a mutual respect that floats around between this car and me, so I feel obliged to never let it down.
- inspiring obsession - growing up in an automotive culture (detroit, material appreciation, and aria's dad)
 - Where do car people come from? What does *place* mean to a car person? What do objects mean to a personality? Why are my friend Aria and I so nearly the same but from such different backgrounds? What does *Herbie: Fully Loaded* mean? All these things and more, tonight at 6 on CNBC.
- feature creep and the death of the qualitative car/review
 - This one, and all the ones hereafter, seem a little less promising. Still. It has probably been explained before, but I want to delve into feature creep. Cars, their sales, and their reviews seem, for the most part, driven by *features*. I want to explore whether this is affecting the engineering ethos behind each one, as well as whether consumer interest is actually driving this change.
- boasting, excess, suaveness, and focus groups - the car as clothing
- boasting, excess, suaveness, and focus groups - gatekeeping, toxicity, and antisocialism in car culture
 - These two are one and the same, and would involve some pretty extensive research to help illustrate societal trends that influence car culture, design, and marketing, and promote profit. Expect anticapitalism.
- cars as a social ("third") space
 - I imagine this to be a short, innocent, emotive piece about that universal Midwestern experience: hanging out in friends' cars in high school.
- the bumper sticker
 - My dad had a bumper sticker on his stick shift B5 A4 Avant that read "onwards thru the fog". He took it off because he claimed it inspired the fog to follow him everywhere he went. Expect this and other little vignettes on bumper stickers. Honestly might make a good podcast episode, but that's not what we're here for.

- automotive pareidolia
- automotive synesthesia
 - An examination of my subconscious relationships to cars, involving pattern-matching, anthropomorphism, and assignment of feelings, emotions, and characters to cars I've never even driven.
- cars and digital marxism
 - A research contribution following up on some of my work regarding surveillance capitalism/digital marxism, identity dispossession, and the attention economy as it affects modern, digitally networked cars.
- cars and policing (historical research contribution? history of the traffic stop?)
 - This one is pretty self explanatory, but originates from a desire to discover where my own disdain for traffic policing comes from.
- flaws endearing character - why personal concessions to your car can make you a better driver
 - A short piece, the kind you could sell to R&T, about why having a car that is obtrusive to use makes you pay more attention to the process of driving.
- cars as art - relatability, empathy, and universality
 - Probably not a piece in and of itself, but a theme to weave into others.
- Life and death on two wheels - meditation, rebellion, and responsibility; how motorcycles changed me
 - This summer, I had a run-in with the law on a motorcycle, and it promptly triggered an avalanche of self-discovery, unearthed long-earthed family dynamics, and inspired huge changes in my life. I wanna write about it in detail.
- iconography and my experience (never actually) photographing cars
 - I always fancied myself an automotive photographer one day, but I never had the exposure to the right cars, the right people, or the right equipment. There's a story somewhere in why that fancy occurred, in what cars can inspire, visually and emotionally, and in the interplay between photographic narrative and automotive iconography.
- daily-ing a project na miata in the snow
 - I daily my BP6D-swapped NA6 year-round, and it is almost becoming a character trait. I can see this piece being a braided essay, about tenacity, discomfort, meditation, and social escapism, revolving around the more concrete story of driving it from Ann Arbor to Minneapolis and back the week after Christmas.
- walking - what you lose in a car (think 99%I and Zen)
 - I recently listened to an excellent episode of 99% Invisible about the classic design exercise of placing: walking around, and considering your relationship to your surroundings. Following a thread that is very briefly touched on in *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, I want to question American car culture and its relationship to place, and how car-centrism has dismantled a lot of location identities in the name of infrastructural serviceability. This could incorporate (or just be, instead) a more

philosophical take on observing place through car windows, as opposed to walking like Roman Mars or riding a motorcycle like Robert Pirsig.

- small (cars) in time, or what it means, characterfully, to buy/sell a used car
 - I've just read "Small Rooms in Time", a short story by Ted Kooser about how he relates to a house he's sold, all the moments, people, fantasies, pasts, and futures that were lived out in and around it. Although it may be a little too lyrical to call an essay, I'd love to write something like this about a car I've sold.
- Shadyside Detail:
 - Idea 1: "The Finer Details", a running series of bite-sized car reviews, focused on the thoughtful (or thoughtless) engineering touches that I discover in my daily work as a detailer.
 - Idea 2: An essay about detailing as a new way of relating to cars, and the ethics/emotions of keeping a car clean.
 - Idea 3: A narrative essay about Shadyside Detail itself, and the characters involved.
- REVIEWS!
- Nomadism - how cars enable my relationships to place