

## A Lot of Thought: The space of car parks and shopping centres in Australian cities

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*This paper explores the rise and significance of car parking in Australian cities, focusing on suburban shopping centres. The suburban shopping centre – mall – was meant by its creator Victor Gruen to recreate the pedestrian feel of European town centres, with cars kept outside. Suburban shopping malls are thus characterised by vast seas of parking dwarfing their destination buildings. This paper argues that the relationship between car parks and their urban surroundings appears deceptively simple, but closer inspection reveals complex interactions between car use, public policy and urban landscapes. Car parks are contradictory spaces, simultaneously of fundamental importance to enabling car travel, and widely neglected in terms of both planning and of thinking. Parking tends to be forgotten as soon as it is found, yet it is a significant feature of urban landscapes. In “Rethinking a Lot” Ben-Joseph observed that we “demand convenient parking everywhere we go, and then learn not to see the vast, unsightly spaces that result.”*

*Using Melbourne shopping centre car parks as a case study, the paper illustrates how ubiquitous parking landscapes have arisen both from the demands of rising car ownership, and from deliberate urban policy. This paper then reads car parks as having more than a simple spatial relationship. It views car parks through the lens of Foucault: as heterotopic spaces that link together the seemingly incompatible issues of safety and surveillance, hostility and convenience. Parking is used to contain cars even as it shapes urban spaces for them. As competition for parking space increases, along with critical views of 20<sup>th</sup> century parking policy, the paper points to the conflict and anxiety often coalescing around car parking as further reflection of the critical function of parking in car-oriented cities.*

## Car parking and the urban landscape

In *Car Wars*, Davison points out that *Mad Max (1979)* creator George Miller was inspired by working in road trauma in a hospital casualty ward during the 1970s peak of road fatalities - a period “when Melbourne’s roads were truly killing fields”<sup>1</sup>. The *Mad Max* film (as with other violent Australian depictions of cars from the era, such as 1974 film *The Cars that Ate Paris*) alternates the freedom and chaotic vulnerability brought by motor vehicles. The autonomy afforded Max and his Interceptor contrasts with several confronting scenes of road carnage, among them one where the protagonist’s wife and child are mown down on a road when suddenly exposed on foot.

The same promise and peril of the car that inspired *Mad Max* (which was shot around Melbourne’s western fringe and inner city, with recognisable scenes including the Melbourne University South Lawn car park) also underscored the spatial reconfiguration of cities that provided the dystopian sets for the film. Since the early 20th century, urban planners and policy makers have integrated vehicular transport and storage into the urban fabric. A strategic plan prepared for Melbourne in 1967 noted that behind changes to traffic and employment, “indeed, in almost every other activity in the city lies the influence of the motor vehicle”<sup>2</sup>. Hagman<sup>3</sup> discusses the importance of parking in the context of how cars have come to represent, and have been successfully marketed as, embodying freedom and control.

For all its association with freedom and movement, cars are stationary 95% of the time<sup>4</sup>, making car parking – at origin and destination – fundamental to car travel. Ease of parking is a promise fundamental to automobility, but it is a promise dependent on having no other cars around, or on cities built around ample parking. Indeed, one of the few push factors away from car ownership and use is the availability and price of parking: ample free car parking is understood to be a significant factor in transport mode choice even with access to alternatives<sup>5</sup>. In Sweden<sup>6</sup> and as recent events in Melbourne have highlighted<sup>7</sup>, difficulty finding parking evokes anger and sometimes overt violence. Drawing on automobilities literature, Hagman wonders whether parking evokes such strong reactions because it frustrates the dream of the car as extension and liberation - a hybridisation of human and machine becomes that burdensome in the search for parking.

Despite its extent and significance, the car park tends to be quickly forgotten, and to be left out of imaginations of urban landscapes. In “Rethinking a Lot” Eran Ben-Joseph observed that we “demand convenient parking everywhere we go, and then learn not to see the vast,

unsightly spaces that result”<sup>8</sup>. This is borne out by aerial photography, showing land for surface car parking occupying as much or more than 30 per cent of ground space in some city centres and in Albuquerque New Mexico, for example, more than all other land uses combined. Parking accounts for half the downtown area of Buffalo New York<sup>9</sup>, and for 15% of the entire Los Angeles County<sup>10</sup>. Rowley meanwhile suggests that Disneyland was created as a pedestrianised model small town - to which Americans escaped to ride on public transport (‘rides’), encircled by the forgotten but necessary giant car park outside<sup>11</sup>. Parking landscapes were created in part through planning system requirements for set amounts of off-street parking. The idea of off-street parking requirements is to reduce pressure on on-street parking. They also have the effect, Shoup<sup>12</sup> argues, of creating more parking and disguising it as ‘free’. Yet, as with the spaces themselves, the significance of parking policies has tended to go unseen. Only more recently has critical literature questioned the effects of minimum parking ratios, arguing they over-supply parking and subsidise car use<sup>13</sup>.

This paper now overviews the rise and significance of car parking in Australian cities, using a case study of Melbourne shopping centres (or ‘malls’) as a 20th century development closely tied to car parking. It firstly examines the effects changes in parking policy have had on the landscapes of suburban centres and the impact of statutory planning and zoning requirements including in the US and Australia; one of a suite of responses to rapid increases in car ownership over the 20th century. It then considers the cultural impact of car parks via Foucault’s concepts of heterotopias and the Panopticon – reading them as spaces that link together the seemingly incompatible issues of safety and surveillance, hostility and convenience: as spaces of apparently neutral order juxtaposed against the mess of human lives and aggressive drivers.

This paper seeks to show that the relationship of the car park to the shopping centre is less transparent than it first appears to be and that as competition for parking space increases, along with critical views of 20<sup>th</sup> century parking policy, the conflict and anxiety that often coalesces around parking issues means it warrants a re-examination of the humble car park.

### **Planning for shopping centre parking in Melbourne: 1950s**

Possibly no destination better captures the way car parks bound spaces for humans in urban spaces designed for cars than does the shopping centre. The physical layout of a ‘mall’ is striking: as originally conceived by Victor Gruen, the shopping mall sought to recreate a European town centre designed for pedestrians, with cars kept outside. Suburban shopping malls are thus characterised by seas of parking dwarfing their destination buildings.

Alongside corporate ownership, the physical form of a pedestrian mall amid parking was one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century shopping centre's more defining features, and is a constant even as variations on the mall emerge<sup>14</sup>.

The shopping mall as an addition to urban form over the 20<sup>th</sup> century dovetailed from car use and urban policy. The first implemented planning scheme for Melbourne, the *Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme (1954)* was concerned to a significant extent with trying to adapt the city to rapidly increasing car use. Car parking was explicitly named as a challenge for planning and for retailing –with reference to parking as “one of the greatest challenges to city administrations the world over” and to the “formidable problem of finding accommodation for parked cars” in older strip shopping<sup>15</sup>.

A striking feature of the 1954 plan for Melbourne is its proposed redevelopments for existing centres. Diagrams show how to reconfigure these places to accommodate car parking lots<sup>16</sup> and so be made more attractive to shoppers in cars. A three-stage redesign of the district centre of Preston, for example (Figure 1), integrated four major parking lots and a final recommended layout that comprised at least 20% of the ground area as parking<sup>17</sup>. Major mixed-use centres such as Footscray were also urged to accommodate more parking by demolishing buildings. The need for centres to attract customers through “adequate in number” and conveniently located parking spaces, was stressed, as:

It is becoming generally recognised that no matter how attractive a shop or a shopping centre may be, it will not attract the customer who uses a motor car for shopping unless adequate parking facilities are provided. With the growing use of cars, this problem is becoming increasingly acute, and in future must have a great influence on the prosperity of shopping centres and as a consequence on their planning. Parking spaces should not only be adequate in number, but if they are to fulfil their purpose properly, they must also be located convenient to the shops because shoppers do not want to carry their purchases a long way to their cars<sup>18</sup>.

Parking was given as a planning policy problem around which other uses – shops and business centres, for example – needed to be reconfigured, in order to stay attractive. The 1954 plan also introduced minimum parking ratios for all new developments across the city. Ordinance documentation showed a required rate of parking provision of 4-5 spaces per 100 square metres of shop<sup>19</sup>. It was not clear where these ratios were derived from, but there is at least one reference to “American standards”, and a picture of Farringdale Mall surrounded by parking lots, captioned “Modern American shopping centre”<sup>20</sup>. The plan discussed

“minimum standards for car parking in suburban shopping centres”, citing two possible measures (including the one implemented), and noting that:

By contemporary American standards this provision would be inadequate, but it is much in advance of what is available today in Melbourne. If necessary, it can be augmented in any redevelopment scheme by providing for car parking on roofs and in basements, or in multi-storey car parks. In new shopping centres more liberal provision should be made<sup>21</sup>.

This approach to parking was quickly borne out in Melbourne shopping centres, with car parking integral to the reconfiguration of older areas, and to the creation of new ones.

### **Planning for shopping centre parking in Melbourne: into the 21st century**

In the decades following the 1954 plan, explicit interest in car parking disappeared from Melbourne planning strategy. The 1960s and 1970s saw huge peaks in road deaths – inspiring, for example, *Mad Max* - and conflicts over freeways<sup>22</sup>, but parking was not an explicit feature of policy or public debate around impacts from car use. Minimum parking ratios remained embedded in policy, with a 1977 report<sup>23</sup> finding standard ratios for shops of 3-5 spaces per 100 square metres across the city.

The 1981 plan for Melbourne - the *Metropolitan Strategy Implementation*<sup>24</sup> document – introduced some changes to parking policy. The changes differentiated parking in the CBD of Melbourne (a “generation area”) from the rest of the city. They also introduced two possible required rates of parking provision, with an element of discretion. In 1985, a shop in Melbourne required 4.5 spaces per 100 square metres of floor area, which could be reduced to 2.5 on application<sup>25</sup>. This style of ‘reduced’ parking requirements simultaneously implied a critical view of car-based development, while also retaining a basic requirement for substantial amounts of parking. The default role of the higher level signalled how embedded parking and minimum car parking requirements had become. This continued even through planning reforms of the 1990s widely characterised as neoliberal.

Skipping to 2002, the *Melbourne 2030* planning strategy for Melbourne was based on urban containment principles. Albeit phrased in vague terms seeking to “encourage”, the plan sought a more compact urban form, with development “directed” to strategic sites and areas

with established services. The strategy explicitly sought a more compact city and to reduce car transport, aiming to “reduce the number of private motorised vehicle trips by concentrating activities”<sup>26</sup>.

A parking feature of the 2002 strategy regards activity (shopping) centres. Two illustrations show a “typical car-based centre” with a caption “large land areas allocated to car parking waste land”<sup>27</sup>. The “typical car-based centre” illustration closely mirrors the Preston plan advocated in the 1954 plan for Melbourne. The second illustration is captioned “the same centre as it could be”, and shows buildings and trees in place of car parking – noting that there is “car parking underneath development” (although the amount appears smaller). Figure 1 compares the 1954 plan for Preston, with Preston today (2016) in aerial photography, with car parking areas in orange. The location and extent of parking today closely matches, but exceeds, that planned for in 1954.

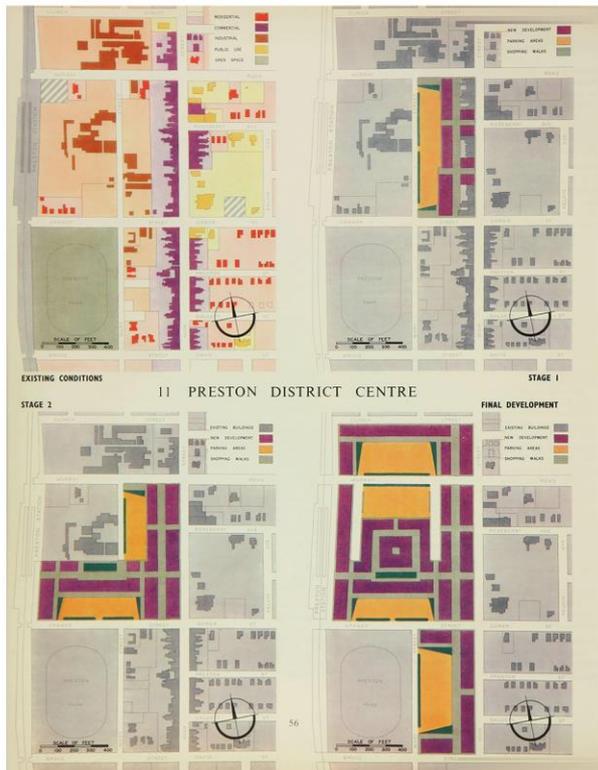
The urban design effects of car parking - in shopping centres specifically - might have been viewed critically in the 2000s, but the minimum parking policies that helped create them remained embedded. Significantly, an audit<sup>28</sup> was critical of the omission of car parking from Melbourne 2030 as a specific planning instrument.

The 2014 document *Plan Melbourne* is the current (as at 2016) planning strategy for Melbourne, although the government has “committed to refreshing” the document. “A more connected Melbourne” is a running theme, as is liveability, and “congestion” is listed as a challenge. Car parking is only mentioned as a small sideline in the context of the need for more car parking at train stations<sup>29</sup>. A number of case studies of developments with easy car parking are also given as examples of positive outcomes<sup>30</sup>: with Point Cook described as having “convenient access by bike or car, easy parking...”<sup>31</sup>.

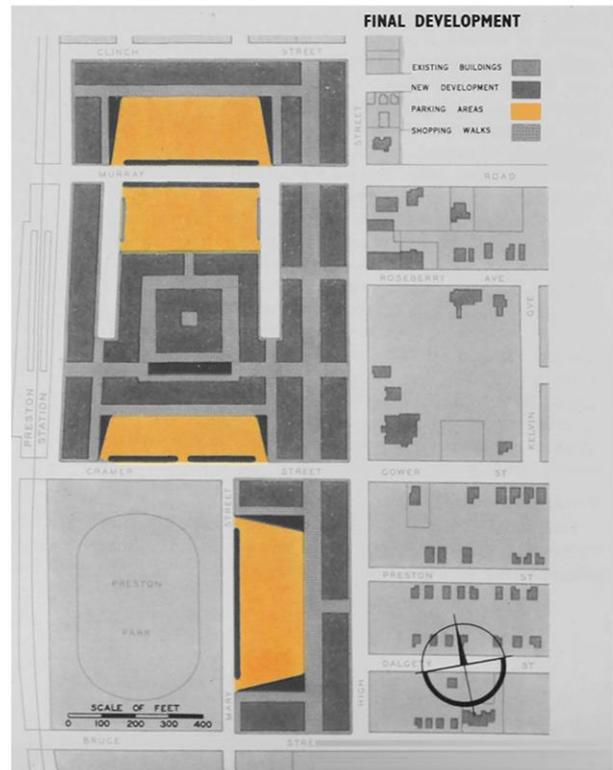
Since the 1950s, car parking has been largely demoted as a strategic focus for Melbourne, but remains an essential element in how shopping is imagined and planned for. The statutory basis for car parking requirements is contained in the state-wide Victoria Planning Provisions (VPPs) introduced from 1996. Section 52.06 of the VPPs gives a standard list of minimum car parking requirements for different land uses. Some minor changes have been made to the policy over time, including an optional ‘parking overlay’ introduced in 2012, but essentially the minimum requirements for parking across Victoria have been consistent between 1996 and 2016.

In the 1954 plan for Melbourne, dispersed car-based transport was the goal and within this, free and convenient car parking at shopping centres was advocated as a key facilitative planning tool. More recent planning strategies have put forward an aspiration to change land use and transport patterns in the other direction. By 2002 the same style of parking-based shopping centres aspired to in the 1950s were given as something to move away from. Parking ratios, however, remain embedded for shopping as for other uses. As space in the city becomes more valuable, sporadic pressures on car parking space are emerging. Reducing parking requirements triggers additional notification and objection rights, and is a focus of contestation<sup>32</sup>. This renegotiation of parking space moving into the 21st century Melbourne is fought out on a site-by-site basis.

These fights reveal something of the underlying ordering of conflict and power embodied in 20th century approaches to parking. They also reveal how the VPP's parking policy contains two somewhat contradictory elements: one a policy statement seeking to reduce car use, but to provide adequate car parking; the other a list of minimum parking requirements, but a provision to reduce these in special circumstances. In the next sections we consider more closely these other contradictions to what the car park is and represents.



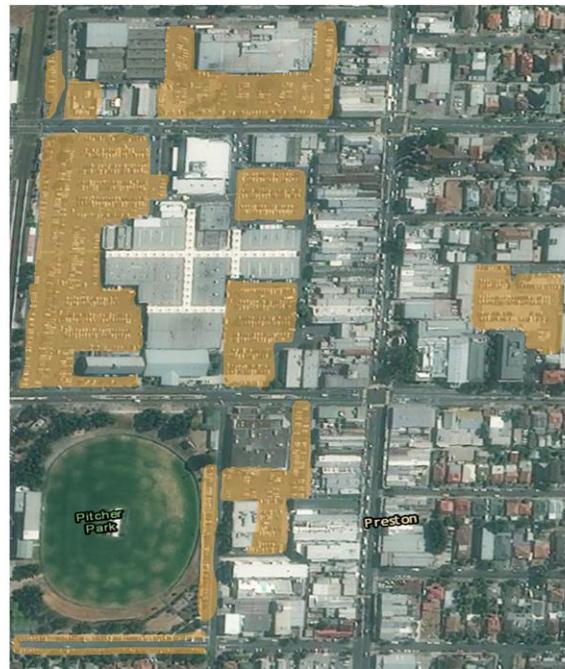
1954 Planning Scheme - 3 Stage Plan for Preston



1954 Planning Scheme - Final Development for Preston - Highlighting Car Parking Areas



Preston 2016



Preston 2016  
Highlighting Parking Areas

Figure 1: A comparison of Preston 1954 – 2016 with parking highlighted in orange

## The space of the Shopping Centre

The car park is predicated entirely on other, adjoining spaces: be it outside a venue such as a sports stadium, a shopping centre, or even the humble carport adjoining a house. Without these other adjoining spaces, there is no need for car parks. As Zuzana Blazekova explains: “Every functional vehicle requires not one but two parking places. One is devoted to stocking the car when it is normally not in use and the other one functions when it is temporarily not in use while shopping, working or enjoying leisure activities”<sup>33</sup>. This relationship is *prima facie* not a mutual one; the spaces of the stadium, shopping centre etc. are independent of the parking function, with parking in subordination to these spaces. The car park without purpose is seen in the phenomena of ‘dead malls’. The vast car park of the abandoned Dixie Mall in Harvey, Illinois, remained for decades, sprouting vegetation, an invitation for easy parking to nowhere.

The shopping centre presents an interesting case. As discussed, perhaps no space better captures the way car parks bound spaces for humans in urban environments. The shopping centre can still exist without car parking - but it does call into question what doing so might look like. Public and private forces have applied considerable effort to supplying these adjoining, forgotten spaces. In Australia the activity of shopping has for some time been largely predicated on the ability to put whatever you have purchased in the boot of your car and drive it home. As shown in the 1954 Melbourne planning scheme; if shoppers “do not want to carry their purchases a long way to their cars”, then they are even less likely to want to carry them all the way home.

The relationship of the car park to the shopping centre then is less transparent than it first appears to be. It forms a node in a network of relations (of capital), yet its utilitarianism, its purely functional form, causes it to dissolve from consciousness. The space of exchange within the shopping centre mirrors the exchange of cars between places in the adjoining car park spaces. From a seemingly simple determined spatial relationship and underwhelming physical form, the car park unfolds as a complex space that eludes the programmatic constructs on which it is

predicated. This elusive behaviour invites an alternative approach and this paper now turns to Foucault as a means of exploring such an alternative.

## **Heterotopias**

Shopping Centre car parks can be read as one of Foucault's Heterotopic spaces. As Foucault says, he is interested in Heterotopic sites "that have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralise, or invent the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect"<sup>34</sup>. The car park mirrors the shopping centre, and also our own interaction with it. It brings forth the very act of movement, of the car as a vehicle of enabling, and delimits that movement by forcing this freedom into a receptacle at the end of the journey - the parking space. Car parks then, are an intersection of a myriad of relations including the shopper's hybrid relation with their car, and the relation between the journey and its conclusion. As this intersection of relations, they form a heterotopia.

Heterotopias are likewise spaces of order. Their role, as Foucault says, "is to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled"<sup>35</sup>. This is the very definition of a car park. Each space conforms to specific regulations from its dimensions (in this case 13 square metres plus surrounding egress space), number of spaces required per square metre of floor area, to the required number of disabled parking spaces (for a car park in Victoria, 1 space for every 100 car parking spaces or part thereof). Their linear presentation - neat rows of regulated square metreage carved out by crisp painted lines - is an attempt to impose order and uniformity on an interaction. Even the paint type is regulated - it must be non-slip and use of the space itself is typically legally delimited to the parking of cars. This linear regularity and functional uniformity also performs a liminal function as the car park creates a border space of order that is 'other' to our own messy lives as well as the jumbled exchange of commerce that awaits within the shopping centre itself. The order and structure of the physical car park is also juxtaposed against our disordered and chaotic interaction with it, as shoppers circle aggressively, cutting each other off and jostling for the closest free

space. The thin veneer of civility is quickly stripped away by the encounter with the car park, with desire and chaos thinly contained by the order presented.

Foucault's fifth Principle of Heterotopias raises further points relevant to car parking:

Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable. In general, the heterotopic site is not freely accessible like a public place. Either the entry is compulsory, as in the case of entering a barracks or a prison, or else the individual has to submit to rites and purifications<sup>36</sup>.

The shopping centre car park is nothing if not a space of isolation and penetrability. Its whole *raison d'être* is predicated on a liminal function and a series of inter-relations that isolates it from its connected spaces, the home, the shopping centre. Yet, this isolation is tempered with the penetrability that its function necessitates.

The shopping centre car park is not a public space, but not entirely a private one. As discussed, the ownership is a corporate one - predicated on profit. Yet vast amounts of parking that is free - or close to being free - frames it almost as a necessary public good given how vital it is in the urban context. Shoup's concern about off-street parking being 'disguised' as free by the planning system's heavy involvement with it could also extend to parking being disguised as public. The promise of free parking, on what is private land, is belied by the car park being open to the public (at least during trading hours); creating a space that is public but not freely accessible.

The carpark is also a space subject to rituals and rites. Entry is compulsory for almost anyone wishing to visit the site of the Shopping Centre - it forms part of the ritual of visiting the centre; either of traversing the labyrinthine structure, anxiety about parking, or surprise when there is a space freely available. Likewise, entry is compulsory for anyone wishing to leave and the all-too familiar rituals of finding your parking space weighed down by bags and by anxiety about leaving quickly enough for the waiting would-be parkers. The car park is 'public', but only for cars and those entering or leaving them, and only temporarily. Those outside of cars quickly attract

suspicion. Hence, alongside Heterotopias, another characteristic of car parks of interest for Foucault is surveillance.

## **Surveillance**

The theme of visibility as a condition of security (and the order that follows it) is a common element within car parks. The absence of cars creates a layer of safety and freedom inside the Centre. Young adults can 'hang out' without fear of being knocked down, and shoppers move freely throughout the space. Foucault's concept of the Panopticon provides a useful lens when examining the car park. As David Lyon suggests, "(w)hile the panopticon has been invoked in analyses of prisons, workplaces and government departments, it may also throw light on zones of consumption and entertainment"<sup>37</sup>. Foucault himself writes: "The panoptic mechanism arranges spatial unities that make it possible to see constantly and to recognise immediately"<sup>38</sup>. The shopping centre is an immediately recognisable spatial unity. Rising out of the surrounding area, the sea of car parking strongly demarcates the shopping centre from its surroundings.

The utility of this line of enquiry continues: as well as structurally mimicking the elements of Foucault's panopticon (the shopping centre forming the tower in the centre with the parking spaces forming the 'cells' that surround it), the orderly lines of the parking spaces create a sense of order. Like the panopticon in which: "The crowd, a compact mass, a locus of multiple exchanges, individualities merging together, a collective effect, is abolished and replaced by a collection of separated individualities" (1995, p200), the car park attempts to create a sense of order in that border space between the chaotic lives of the individuals and their cars, and the shopping centre itself.

Aside from the spatial constructs, the safety of the car park is based on a panopticon security of surveillance. Davis'<sup>39</sup> descriptions of "mall-as-panopticon" car parks in militarised 1990s Los Angeles, razor-wired and flood lit spaces delineated from the surrounding threats, illustrate this point starkly. Amongst the formal elements of security, CCTV features prominently and Lyon notes that CCTV is "a surveillance

system that is often observed to be an electronic panopticon"<sup>40</sup>. Rachel Armitage conducted a review of the effectiveness of CCTV in six car parks and found that:

(O)verall, there was a significant and positive effect of CCTV. Crime was reduced by 45 per cent in CCTV car park compared to control areas. The review suggests that CCTV appears to have no effect on violent crimes, a significant effect on vehicle crimes and it is most effective when used in car parks<sup>41</sup>.

Alongside Armitage's enthusiasm for CCTV as a formal deterrent of crime, there is another informal aspect to security - the car park users themselves. Recalling the idea that car parks are heterotopias of order juxtaposed against the mess of human lives and aggressive drivers, the element of danger is a trope often associated with poorly lit car parks. This sense of danger is played out in Umberto Eco's novel *Foucault's Pendulum* where we follow the protagonist through a car park chase scene: "I abandon the square, almost running. I'm followed by a car. But maybe it's only looking for a parking place. I trip on a plastic garbage bag. The car parks. It didn't want me."<sup>42</sup>

The car here forms the aggressor, yet is seemingly mollified by the discovery of a free parking space. What is interesting is that once that parking space is secured (spatially, once the car is placed in the order of the parking space), behavioural patterns shift back to a fixed order and regularity that belies the chaos that preceded it. Those same drivers - so keen to cut one another off - become placid shoppers the moment the car becomes stationary; the moment the hybrid of human and machine is split. They shift to a collection of separated individualities - shoppers whose mindset shifts from the teleological practice of parking, to a state of indetermination that shopping represents. As shoppers, they disembark from their cars and the threats they embodied, and calmly walk into the centre, returning perhaps with bags or boxes signifying their cultural/commercial exchange with the site.

This transformative behaviour emphasises the idea of car parks as transitional spaces. Drivers eye up returning shoppers as representing potential free parking spaces. This, in turn, places an expectation of behaviour on that shopper to vacate the parking space in a timely manner upon returning to their vehicle. Any delay in

leaving the parking space once this hybrid persona is re-assumed, represents a deviation from behavioural norms, arousing feelings of suspicion and anger. Thus, the behaviour of the car park is self-regulating - as Blazeckova reports of her observations while conducting ethnographic observations within car parks: "I appeared to be even more suspicious because of my behaviour. I was not undertaking casual activities that are linked with car parks. These activities include parking a motor vehicle, getting out of the car, locking, leaving or waiting, coming back or loading/unloading...I was a stranger that initiated curiosity regarding my behaviour, connoting a threat of crime."<sup>43</sup>

Blazeckova here reports of the suspicion her deviation from normative car park behaviour generated. This element of danger and deviation from normative behaviour links back to the trope of danger within the car park. It is predicated on the negation of visibility against a homogenising, heterotopic space.

### **Conclusions: On the renegotiation of car parking**

The same promise and peril of the car that inspired dystopian films like *Mad Max* has also underscored the spatial reconfiguration of cities of the 20th century for cars, including the neatly delineated parking lots of the car-oriented shopping centre. Despite often being forgotten, car parks form a vital function in car-oriented cities and warrant a more nuanced interrogation.

If car parks serve to contain the disordered potential of the car (or the car-human hybrid that is the shopper), recent shifts in the urban policies that create parking spaces have an additional significance. Car parks are under pressure, from both economic and policy shifts toward the inner city and higher density locations into which a high rate of car ownership and use is still wedged awkwardly.

Reading car parks as Heterotopias, which coalesce around points of crisis reflecting attempts to impose an apparently neutral spatial order, brings the car park back into focus. Car parks are a locus of interconnected themes concealed behind a seemingly straightforward space. Shopping centre car parks are neither fully private nor public: inviting the shopper's car in, they appear free but are subject to

conditions; and form contradictory spaces of aggression and surveillance. They have also, in large part, been created through purposeful urban policy seeking both to contain and to facilitate the impacts of the car.

The anxiety and contradictions of the shopping centre car park mirrors how policies for 'free' car parking are increasingly contested. In the contest for valuable urban space, the prospect of scaled back parking requirements underscores anxiety over parking competition, and accounts for a significant portion of the thousands of annual planning appeals in Victoria<sup>44</sup>. Shifts away from mandatory 'free' parking unsettle established norms around entitlement to parking. The potential of paying even a nominal fee for parking is read as a threat to the autonomy of the shopper, and can unleash underlying chaos. This is a threat reflected in popular culture voiced, for example, through the character George Costanza from *Seinfeld*: "My father didn't pay for parking, my mother, my brother, nobody. It's like going to a prostitute. Why should I pay when, if I apply myself, maybe I can get it for free?"<sup>45</sup> In Victoria, the introduction of \$1.80 per hour parking meters in the suburban shopping strip of Yarraville culminated in street protests, vandalism, and the public assault of a local councillor<sup>46</sup>. Local traders compared frustration over the imposition of the fees to the Arab Spring. Elsewhere, the anger and chaos associated with a brief reduction in a shopping centre's parking was "dubbed Brisbane's answer to *Mad Max: Fury Road*"<sup>47</sup>.

Set against the backdrop of power struggles and uprising, the reconfiguration of cities might be traced in the progression from the desolate but available car parks featured in the first *Mad Max* film; to the endless road chase (the endless search for parking) of the most recent *Mad Max* instalment: *Fury Road*. In *Fury Road* the search for increasingly scarce resources creates a need for constant movement. Such are the pressures on land-use that play out around parking and the renegotiation of parking and parking policies.

The dystopic future Miller paints with the latest instalment shows the tension over such scarce resources, played out to the extreme. It also shows the autonomy that the 1977 "Interceptor" afforded Mel Gibson, replaced by the concentration of resources into Charlize Theoron's "War Rig". The imperative to keep moving - to preserve the resources contained within the rig - is clear. Perhaps the parking battles

of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century now signal the dissolution, as a chimera in the desert, of the suburban parking lot that only briefly contained the future of human, car, and human-car hybrid. One can almost imagine a location alongside Miller's Bullet Town and Gas Town called Parking Town, where the relics of planning decisions coalesce together in a conglomeration of cultural reference and immaculate non-slip painted lines.

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- <sup>3</sup> Hagman, Olle. "Morning queues and parking problems. On the broken promises of the automobile." *Mobilities* 1, no. 1 (2006): 63-74.
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- <sup>6</sup> Hagman, Olle. "Morning queues and parking problems. On the broken promises of the automobile." *Mobilities* 1, no. 1 (2006): 63-74. 69
- <sup>7</sup> ABC Online, "Yarraville paid parking meters suspended by Maribyrnong Council after violent meeting", ABC online December 4th 2015.
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- <sup>9</sup> Shoup, Donald C. *The high cost of free parking*. Chicago: Planners Press, (2005). 131
- <sup>10</sup> Chester, Mikhail, Andrew Fraser, Juan Matute, Carolyn Flower, and Ram Pendyala. "Parking Infrastructure: A Constraint on or Opportunity for Urban Redevelopment? A Study of Los Angeles County Parking Supply and Growth." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 81, no. 4 (2015): 268-286.
- <sup>11</sup> Rowley, Stephen. *Movie Towns and Sitcom Suburbs: Building Hollywood's Ideal Communities*. (Springer, 2015), 121
- <sup>12</sup> Shoup, Donald C. *The high cost of free parking*. Chicago (Planners Press, 2005).
- <sup>13</sup> E.g. McCahill, Christopher, and Norman Garrick. "Influence of parking policy on built environment and travel behavior in two New England cities, 1960 to 2007." *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board* 2187 (2010): 123-130.
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- <sup>15</sup> Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW), *Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme*, Melbourne: MMBW, (1954), 11.
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- <sup>18</sup> Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW), *Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme*, Melbourne: MMBW, (1954), 62
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<sup>30</sup> State Government of Victoria: Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure, Plan Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Strategy, Melbourne, 2014, 104.

<sup>31</sup> State Government of Victoria: Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure, Plan Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Strategy, Melbourne, 2014, 124.

<sup>32</sup> Taylor, Elizabeth. "'Fight the towers! Or kiss your car park goodbye": How often do residents assert car parking rights in Melbourne planning appeals?." *Planning Theory & Practice* 15, no. 3 (2014): 328-348.

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<sup>35</sup> Foucault, M. "Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias", 27.

<sup>36</sup> Foucault, M. "Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias", 26.

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<sup>41</sup> Rachel Armitage, (2002) *To CCTV or not to CCTV? A review of current research into the effectiveness of CCTV systems in reducing crime*, NacroCrime and Social Policy Section, <https://epic.org/privacy/surveillance/spotlight/0505/nacro02.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2016), 5.

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