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The Regulation of Urban Mobility Regimes:

A Conjunctural Approach

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in Geography

by

Samuel Laurence Nowak

2017

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

The Regulation of Urban Mobility Regimes:

A Conjunctural Approach

by

Samuel Laurence Nowak

Master of Arts in Geography

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Helga M. Leitner, Co-Chair

Professor Eric Stewart Sheppard, Co-Chair

This thesis examines the securitization of a light rail transit line in Los Angeles, California called the Blue Line, conceptualizing securitization as the disproportionate use of law, police, and socio-technical systems of security to regulate individuals as they move throughout the transit network. To understand this process, I develop a theoretical framework that integrates two largely divergent literatures, mobilities theory and urban political economy. I argue that together these literatures provide a productive framework for examining different modalities of regulating human mobility in the capitalist city, what a term a *mode of mobility regulation*. Methodologically, I extend the current limitations of mobilities research through a Gramscian-inspired *conjunctural approach* to the study of mobility and immobility. A conjunctural approach provides an historical analytic that analyzes the

mechanisms and relations by which urban mobility regimes attempt to secure dominance through complex articulations of ideology, economy, and race. Through this approach, I examine the socio-spatial forces that shaped the mode of mobility regulation within Los Angeles rail transit as one of securitization. Drawing on archival research into these ideological, economic, and racial relations of force, I show how everyday transit mobilities intersect with macro-scale relations and processes. Ultimately, I argue that different modalities of regulating human mobility in the capitalist city both draw on and reproduce various axes of social difference, and the ways in which mobilities are unevenly organized around such difference.

The thesis of Samuel Laurence Nowak is approved.

Ananya Roy

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Eric Stewart Sheppard, Committee Co-Chair

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CHAPTER 1. Introduction

"Transportation is important in itself, but is even more important as a perspective from which to view politics and power in our society." (Whitt 1982, 3)

On January 1ˢᵗ, 2009 Oscar Grant, a Black, unarmed resident of Oakland, California, was shot in the back by Johannes Mehserle, a white Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) police officer. Grant had been lying face down, his arms underneath him, when Mehserle stood and drew his firearm in fear of Grant reaching for a gun. Mehserle fired into Grant's back while another BART transit police officer kneeled on his neck, holding him down. During the court proceedings, Mehserle would later claim he had accidentally drawn his .40-caliber pistol instead of his Taser—despite being holstered on the opposite side of his body—unable to recognize the difference before he shot Grant (Manyak 2010). In the grainy, cell-phone-camera footage that would soon spread virally across the internet, you can hear the collective intake of breath from the gathered crowd after the gunshot and angry cries after the shocked silence fades. Grant would later die from the gunshot wound at age 22, survived by his four-year-old daughter and parents. Mehserle, meanwhile, was later convicted of involuntary manslaughter, serving only 11 months of a two-year sentence.

Though Mehserle's defense team claimed "this case is not about race" (The People of the State of California v. Johannes Mehserle 2010, 2), the shooting of Oscar Grant and its aftermath were riven with racial tensions. On the platform, the officer restraining Grant with his knee, Tony Pirone, yelled racial epithets at Grant while pinning him down. On the streets, the shooting sparked days of protest against police brutality and for racial justice. Protestors lay prone in the streets, telling the gathered police officers "I am Oscar Grant"; others barricaded BART turnstiles with banners reading "end police brutality," blocking traffic through the transit system (Mckinley 2009). In the courtroom, the trial was one of the first in the State of California to convict a white police officer for the shooting of an African American, yet it also has the dubious distinction of a jury without a single

African American (Anthony 2010). After the decision, there were more protests, with calling the two-year sentence of involuntary manslaughter unjust.

It is a surprisingly overlooked detail of the incident that Grant was on the move. Taking advantage of a BART policy that provided discounted rides and late-night service on the light rail system for New Year's Eve, Grant and his friends were in transit back to the East Bay after festivities ("New Year's Eve Flash Pass" 2008). After reports of a fight from central control, his train was stopped at Fruitvale to wait for responding officers, holding the passengers from moving onto the next station. Upon arrival, the transit police officers pulled Grant and several others from the train and onto the platform at Fruitvale Station. Immediately after the shooting, BART transit police ordered the train in motion—without questioning any potential witnesses—a move criticized by independent reports of the shooting. Incentivized by subsidies, managed by surveillance systems, regulated and permanently terminated by transit police, Oscar Grant's mobility was, in short, deeply shaped by the polices and police of the Bay Area Rapid Transit system. Thus, the shooting of Oscar Grant is a grave reminder that the ways in which transit agencies regulate and govern mobility are worthy of examination in their own right, not to be reduced to other processes, institutions, or relationships.

While some commentators attributed the incident to the historically brutal relationship between Black Oakland residents and the City of Oakland Police Department, the BART Transit Police is a completely separate, independent police force, replete with its own institutional governance structures, jurisdiction, and organizational mandates, goals, and concerns. In the years leading up to the Fruitvale station incident—and continuing to this day—the BART Police Department has been embroiled in controversy over its lack of oversight, accountability, as well as many reports of police brutality against Black passengers. Between 1992 and 2013, there were five officer-involved, fatal shootings, all people of color except for one white, homeless, mentally-ill man

(Klein 2015). Over this period, BART has steadily increased its funding to the BART Police, both in raw dollar amounts and as a percentage of its operating budget. Between 1999 and 2016, expenses on police services have nearly tripled (Bay Area Rapid Transit 1999, 2016). Concomitantly, BART and BART Police have become increasingly draconian in dealing with the homeless, rolling out new legal mechanisms to arrest anyone sleeping or lying down in train stations, and more frequently ejecting and harassing homeless individuals in a broader move to 'clean up' the system (Klein 2014; Knight 2014). The death of Oscar Grant is tragic extension of this trend towards expanded police presence, institutionalized racism, and lack of civilian oversight to its most unjust and unreasonable outcome—racism in its definition as the "state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death" (Gilmore 2007, 28).

The Securitization of Public Transit

I open this thesis with the case of Oscar Grant because his death is a rupture in the everyday governance of the BART system. Urban transportation systems, and socio-technical infrastructures more generally, rely upon an incredible array of technologies, people, capital, and expertise to make connections across the network, yet these connections appear naturalized in the everyday functioning of a system, every connection reinforcing its 'common sense.' We turn on the faucet and water comes out, thinking nothing of the politics, people, and processes making it possible (Björkman 2015). In this way, the socio-technical systems supporting material infrastructure become depoliticized, their normalization obscuring the ways in which power is exercised through governing those connections. The death of Oscar Grant is a moment of disruption in that process of normalization, re-politicizing what has become common sense. It lays bare the uneven and racialized politics of mobility in how transit infrastructures are regulated and policed, a moment of extra-ordinary violence that provokes the question of why and how this could occur. More broadly, his death also forces questioning the more mundane practices of regulating mobility on public transit

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systems—the often-overlooked, everyday techniques and mechanisms employed by the local state to normalize, manage, and secure mobilities in the city.

The shooting of Oscar Grant is, of course, an outlier, yet it is illustrative of a larger trend within transit systems in the United States that I call the *securitization of public transit*—the disproportionate use of law, police, and socio-technical systems of security to regulate individual mobilities as people move throughout the network. By securitization I mean the development and implementation of legal mechanisms, theories and practices of enforcement, and micro-technologies of social and spatial control aimed at ordering and securing the built environment and public spaces "so as to make the city over into a pleasant site of and for bourgeois consumption" and attract capital investment (Wacquant 2008, 199). As a form of governance and regulation, securitization relies on 'security' as an organizing concept for the exercise of police power, and the institutional, political, and economic prioritization of social control in the city, with unequal impacts across lines of social difference (Smith 1996). In public transit, this trend has manifested in a host of techniques of social control for regulating mobility, including expansion of fare enforcement officers and transit police, new legal mechanisms to banish 'undesirables' from buses and trains, the expansion of surveillance technologies, new laws criminalizing homelessness, and technologies of spatial control such as benches upon which one cannot lie down (Klein 2015).

In Seattle, for example, the public transit authority and the city have developed legal banishment orders prohibiting the use of the public transit system by individuals who have previously received citations for minor infractions such as sleeping on the bus, smelling offensively, or failing to pay fare. After they are issued an order, individuals found using Metro property (including bus stops), can be charged and arrested for criminal trespassing, effectively banishing them from the transit system and restricting their mobility throughout the city. As of 2011, the agency issued approximately 1,500 such banishment orders annually (In Transit - March 2011). In

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the Twin Cities, transit police have increased their citations for minor infractions as the city's light rail system has expanded, with uneven impacts for different riders. As of 2014, Black adults on the system were 26 percent more likely to be cited for fare evasion and 38 percent more likely to be arrested, and Native Americans were 152 percent more likely to be cited and 93 percent more likely to be arrested (Moore 2015). Similarly, in Portland, Oregon, Black riders of the system are significantly more likely to be banished from the system for fare evasion than their white counterparts (Njus 2016). In Los Angeles, Washington D.C., Seattle, and the Bay Area, transit authorities regularly receive large grants from the Department of Homeland Security for expanding their transit police forces, for renovations to 'harden' their systems such as Washington Metro's Urban Area Security Grant for surveillance equipment, or for new police units such as Seattle's Joint Transit Anti-Terrorism Task Force. In Los Angeles, the Chief of the Los Angeles County Sherriff's Department Transit Services Bureau publishes actively on 'third-generation warfare' (see Graham 2011) and utilizes the Sheriff's contract for policing the L.A. system to experiment with new technologies of securitization, such as algorithm-powered smartphones to coordinate fare inspections between roving Sheriff's deputies (Fave et al. 2014). In New York, William Bratton's second tenure as New York City Police Commissioner (2014 – 2016) began with implementing a zero-tolerance policy for vendors and panhandlers on the trains. Within the first two months of his tenure, arrests for these offenses tripled from 90 to 274 (Goldstein and Goodman 2014).

Together, these changes in fare enforcement, laws governing public transit, security funding, environmental design, surveillance, and transit policing indicate a change to the way in which public transit—particularly heavy and light rail—is governed, regulated, and policed. I describe this change as the securitization of public transit. As a crucial (quasi-) public space of the city, the securitization of public transit has the potential to impact millions of urban residents. Particularly for low-income individuals, public transit provides a means of getting to work, looking for work, social interaction,

access to healthcare, food, and public services: an essential facet of urban life. Without access, or with restrained access, many everyday urbanisms are simply unfeasible. The securitization of public transit—and concomitant production of uneven mobilities and access—provokes questions about the very nature and purpose of public transit in United States cities. Put simply, how *public* is public transit when the system excludes—explicitly or implicitly—certain groups of people? How is the experience and meaning of public transit shaped by securitization? Under what conditions does securitization produce differential mobilities within public transit systems? How has securitization become the dominant mode of regulating mobility on light and heavy rail systems in the United States? What social, spatial, and historical forces have shaped this mode of regulating public transit mobilities? More broadly, how and why are different systems of human mobility (rail transit, automobile, cycling, etc.) regulated in the capitalist city?

The Blue Line

I explore these questions surrounding securitization and the capitalist regulation of mobility through my case: a light rail line in Los Angeles, California called the Blue Line. The Blue Line is exceptional in the history of rail transit in Los Angeles. Originally the "Long Beach Line," it was the first line built by Pacific Electric after it was incorporated by Henry Huntington in 1902, serving as one of the highest volume routes in the system and a major hub of the network. In the 1950s, as the private system was turned over to public control—and subsequently dismantled to make way for the freeway and bus network—the Long Beach Line remained crucial, running until 1961 as the last of the Pacific Electric rail lines (Richmond 2005). Just 19 years later, when the regional transit authority won Los Angeles County voters' mandate to build a new regional light rail system, the Long Beach Line was again the top priority. Today, running along the original right-of-way acquired at the turn of the 20th century, the Blue Line is once again the highest volume route in the network, a workhorse of the ever-expanding system. Throughout these periods, the Blue Line has run through

some of the highest concentrations of Black populations in Los Angeles county. For the regional transportation agencies, this racial geography has been coded as one of both opportunity for 'community renewal' and risk posed by the racial Other.

Within this historical context, I investigate the Blue Line at a particular conjuncture: the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1980, the day California's former governor Ronald Reagan was elected president, Los Angeles County voters passed Measure A, a half-cent sales tax measure to fund mass transit. After a prolonged political battle, the transit agencies concluded that the former Long Beach Line would be revived as the first line in the modern era of rail transit in Los Angeles—the first step in returning to the former glory of the extensive Pacific Electric system (Elkind 2014). As the first line in the modern program, the success of the Blue Line was crucial for expanding the rail system and for pulling drivers away from the congested freeway network, a central promise of the sales tax measure passed by voters. For the city and the transit authorities, however, the racial geography of the line threatened its political and economic success. Subject to decades of political disenfranchisement, economic disinvestment, racialized policing, and poor transit access, the communities surrounding the Blue Line were the site of heightened racial tensions. Indeed, just two years after the opening of the Blue Line, South Los Angeles would erupt in the 1992 uprising, ignited by the acquittal of the police officers who beat Rodney King. For the city and the transit agencies, fear of this type of disorder and the racial Other posed a risk to the success of the Blue Line and threatened loss of passenger revenue.

In the months leading up to the completion of the Blue Line in July, 1990, these political, racial and economic geographies of the Blue Line motivated a remarkable response the regional transit authorities, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) and the Southern California Rapid Transit District (RTD). Concerned over crime and disorder, the agencies invested heavily in socio-technical systems of security for the Blue Line, including unprecedented amounts on

transit police officers, advanced security systems, and the implementation of zero-tolerance policing, a praxis of law enforcement centered on immediate and harsh punishment for even minor crimes such as fare evasion. In addition to the general conceptual questions listed above, this racialized panic around security and crime on the new transit system provokes the central empirical questions of this thesis: why did LACTC spend such an excessive amount of money securitizing the system? How were such security expenditures for the Blue Line legitimized? What can the panic around security—and more pointedly, the agency's response to that panic—tell us about the historical conjuncture in which their decisions on security were made (see Hall et al. 1978, xiv)?

Thus, I use case of the Blue Line to investigate the antecedents of the modern securitization of public transit, a geo-historical conjuncture when zero-tolerance policing was fringe, not paradigmatic, and when the development of rail transit infrastructure was newly emerging as a tool of entrepreneurial urban governance, not the dominant strategy it is today. Through shedding light on these antecedents, I work to illuminate how the modern trend towards securitization has become the dominant mode of regulating mobilities on rail transit in the United States, and to consider ways of moving beyond.

The Structure of the Argument

I approach the case of the Blue Line through an unlikely theoretical framework, which I outline in chapter two of this thesis. There, I explore the relationship between the development of rail infrastructure, urban governance, and mobility through two literatures: mobilities theory and the political economy of urban transit. While these literatures have often been depicted as theoretically divergent, I argue that together they provide a productive framework to examine the regulation of mobility in the capitalist city. Chapter two argues that a focus on such modalities of governing mobile subjects—what I term a *mode of mobility regulation*—can offer a deeper understanding of the

development of rail infrastructure as a strategy of capital accumulation, and the politics of mobility that emerge through governing and regulating transit infrastructure.

Chapter three builds on this theoretical argument, outlining the methodological challenges of integrating urban political economy and mobilities theory. I argue that, to date, mobilities methodologies are overwhelmingly presentist and over-emphasize the micro and experiential dimensions of movement. Working to extend these limitations, I incorporate archival research and historical-dialectical inquiry into mobilities studies through a Gramscian-inspired *conjunctural approach*, which seeks to examine the formation of local modes of mobility regulation. A conjunctural approach provides an historical analytic that works to understand the mechanisms and relations by which mobility regimes attempt to secure dominance through complex articulations of ideology, economy, and race.

Chapter four deploys this general theoretical and methodological approach, using the case of the Blue Line to examine the socio-spatial forces that gave shape to the mode of mobility regulation within Los Angeles rail transit—how the securitization of the Blue Line became dominant and legitimate. In particular, I explore the articulation of (1) bourgeoning ideologies of urban governance centered on 'reclamation,' order, and zero-tolerance; (2) the renewed importance of rail development as a strategy to facilitate capital accumulation; and (3) a localized project to organize and regulate transit mobilities according a racial logic. Through archival research into these ideological, economic, and racial relations of force, I demonstrate the ways in which everyday transit mobilities intersect with macro-scale relations and processes in ways that reflect a particular geo-historical conjuncture.

By way of conclusion, I argue that different modalities of regulating human mobility in the capitalist city engender and reproduce their own politics of mobility. As the case of Oscar Grant shows, these technologies of regulating mobility are informed by institutional and political interests, economic goals, ideologies of governance, societal and institutional racisms, and historical and

geographical contexts. As such, the regulation of mobility both draws on and reproduces various

axes of social difference, and the ways in which mobilities are organized around such difference. In

short, there is a politics to the ways in which mobility is regulated within a given historical and

geographical moment.

CHAPTER 2. The Regulation of Urban Mobility Regimes

"The city's rhythms are not free to roam where they will…Striating openness and flow are a whole series of rules, conventions and institutions of regulation and control." (Amin and Thrift 2002, 26)

This thesis seeks to put in conversation two literatures that are often depicted as epistemologically, methodologically, and politically divergent: mobilities theory and urban political economy. Mobilities theory has emerged out the turn towards post-structuralism to question the affective, discursive and embodied dimensions of movement that are often abstracted out in critical realist and positivist frameworks (Cresswell 2010a). Accordingly, mobilities research has primarily adopted phenomenological modes of inquiry, focusing on the everyday practices, cultures, and experiences of various mobile practices such as cycling (Spinney 2009, 2015), boating (Vannini 2012), or public transport (Bissell 2010b). Yet, in this embrace of post-structuralism more generally, the conceptual innovations in mobilities theory have remained relatively disconnected from debates in urban political economy examining how mobilities are situated within contexts of multi-scalar economic systems (Graham and Marvin 2001; Harvey 2001b). In short, political economic approaches to understanding the mobility of ideas, things and people have largely fallen by the wayside. A cursory examination of the flagship journals of mobilities studies, *Mobilities* and *Transfers*, illustrates this point: while Foucauldian approaches to understanding the production of mobile subjects, 'disciplined mobility' (Salter 2013), and mobile governmentalities are well represented (for review, see Manderscheid, Schwanen, and Tyfield 2014), political economy is largely absent from the analysis[1].

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[1] There are, of course, exceptions. Eugene McCann (2011a) and others have innovatively linked mobilities with neoliberal urban governance, examining the mobilities of urban policies as they transform and mutate from city-to-city. Deborah Cowen (2014) also has used a (geo) political economy approach to understand the securitization of logistics networks across global commodity chains. As McCann brings political economy to the mobile ideas, and Cowen to mobile commodities, I bring a political economy framework to examine the movement of people in the city (see also Minn 2013; Paterson 2014).

It seems, then, that the political economy baby has been thrown out with the structuralist bathwater. Yet, geographical political economy shares much conceptual terrain with mobilities theory—most centrally a relational understanding of mobility and immobility, fixity and flow (Harvey 2001b; Hannam, Sheller, and Urry 2006). This shared analytic can provide new lines of inquiry (see Ranganathan 2015) into the political economy of rail infrastructure, but also the mechanisms of social regulation which govern (im)mobilities within that infrastructure. While much of post-structuralist thought has tended to characterize political economic approaches as incongruent with concepts such as 'disciplined' mobility (Salter 2013), a non-reductionist reading of historical materialism (c.f. Althusser 1969; Gramsci 1971) can be generative in examining geographical concepts and, in fact, can have strong parallels with some post-structuralist logics (Sheppard 2008). In this vein, I suggest that geographical political economy can expand current approaches to understanding 'the politics of mobility' that emphasize the production of differential, relational mobilities across lines of social difference. In particular, I argue that a regulationist approach can situate the production of differential urban mobilities within institutional regimes of economic regulation and urban governance. In making this argument, I demonstrate the utility of geographical political economy for the theoretical refinement of mobilities theory. My aim is not an un-reflexive mash-up of these two literatures, but rather to suggest that that their productive tensions can open up new lines of theoretical inquiry. I agree with McCann (2011b, 145) that such divergent theories "must be brought together carefully, recognizing their provenance and situatedness, compatibilities and incompatibilities, and their capacities and limits" but that "[t]he tensions among different concepts, or differing uses of concepts, can be productive when they are assembled for specific analytical purposes." With heed, then, my specific purpose in bringing together literature on the political economy of urban transit with mobilities theory is to analyze the role of regulatory systems in the production of (im)mobilities in urban transit.

Placing Urban Political Economy in the Politics of Mobility

In order to understand how regulatory mechanisms shape, and are shaped by, mobility, I draw on scholarship from the 'mobilities turn,' a growing, interdisciplinary effort to re-assert the theoretical and empirical centrality of mobility and immobility in social inquiry. Scholars in anthropology, critical theory, sociology, and geography have embraced metaphors of mobility to critique supposedly 'sedentarist' epistemologies (see Cresswell 2006), as part of a broader move towards post-structuralist thought. Simultaneously, there has been a resurgence of interest in mobile 'things'—capital, technologies, people, commodities, and ideas at varying spatial scales. These twin interests have developed into a subfield in its own right with two journals (*Mobilities* and *Transfers*), a textbook (Adey 2009), a host of edited collections, and numerous special issues in prominent journals. Sheller and Urry (2006, 208) have dubbed this movement "the new mobilities paradigm[2]," criticizing much of social science as 'a-mobile,' with a limited understanding of mobility as "a neutral set of technologies and processes predominantly permitting forms of economic, social, and political life that are seen as explicable in terms of other, more causally powerful processes." In contrast, 'the new mobilities paradigm' argues that mobility must be taken on its own terms as a site of social scientific inquiry.

This maneuver hinges on a conceptual distinction between *movement* and *mobility* (Cresswell 2001a, 2006, 2010b). Movement describes the displacement of a thing or person from point A to point B. In classical studies of transport geography, it expresses the route taken by passengers from their origin to their destination along the network. This abstracts from affective structures of feeling,

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[2] As Cresswell (2010) quips, however, there are only three things wrong with the phrase "new mobilities paradigm"—the words 'new,' 'mobilities,' and 'paradigm.' To imply the 'newness' of an interest in mobility ignores longstanding scholarship in social science on migration, transportation, and political economy, among others. Similarly, a Kuhnian paradigmatic shift implies that geographic theories of fixity—borders, territory, place—are somehow limited in the face of this supposedly new, mobile world.

the power dynamics that shape that movement, encounters with social difference that occur along the way, cultural meanings, and representations describing that movement. In Cresswell's (2006, 3) terms, movement is the "dynamic equivalent of location in abstract space—contentless, apparently natural, and devoid of meaning, history, and ideology" (Cresswell 2006, 3). If movement is the dynamic corollary of location, then mobility is the dynamic corollary of place—it is in constant flux, both productive of, and produced through, social relations of power. It is a site where unequal relations of race, class, gender, ability, and other axes of social difference are relationally reproduced.

Indeed, one of the key insights of those studying mobility has been to explore how the movement of some is dependent upon, or productive of, the immobility of others (Massey 1993; Adey 2004; Sparke 2006). Rather than a universal condition of modern life, mobilities are interrelated and differently experienced. There is, in Doreen Massey's (1993, 62–63) words, a "power-geometry" to this mobile, modern world in that groups and individuals are placed in differential relation to flow and movement, giving rise to a 'politics of mobility.' In her trenchant critique of David Harvey's notion of space-time compression, she writes:

> There may be the possibility of developing a politics of mobility and access. For it does seem that mobility and control over mobility both reflects and reinforces power. It is not simply a question of unequal distribution, that some people move more than others, and that some have more control than others. It is that the mobility and control of some groups can actively weaken other people. Differential mobility can weaken the leverage of the already weak…[for example,] every time someone uses a car, and thereby increases their personal mobility, they reduce both the social rationale and the financial viability of the public transport system – and thereby also potentially reduce the mobility of those who rely on that system. (Massey 1993, 62–63)

The 'politics of mobility' enriches an understanding of mobilities as a conceptual frame because of its ontological assertion that mobilities are relational. To understand everything as mobile diminishes the theoretical purchase of the concept and can obscure the relationships between differential mobilities. In short, "if mobility is everything then it is nothing" (Adey 2006, 75). As an analytic,

then, the politics of mobility interrogates the production of mobility as differential, relational, and entwined with complimentary moorings and fixities.

The theoretical refinement and empirical investigation of the politics of mobility has emerged as a major research agenda for mobilities studies, serving as one "line of connection" that runs through this broad, emergent field (Kwan and Schwanen 2016, 247–248). In a seminal paper, Cresswell (2010b, 21) argues that the politics of mobility should be conceptualized as "the ways in which mobilities are both productive of such social relations [of power] and produced by them," but that the concept needs nuance to distinguish the dimensions of mobility beyond a simplified mobility-immobility framework. He proposes *motive force, speed, rhythm, route, experience*, and *friction* as potential mid-level concepts "that have a role to play in the constitution of mobile hierarchies and the politics of mobility" (Cresswell 2010b, 22). Mobilities researchers have utilized these mid-level concepts and, more generally, followed the call for theoretical refinement of the politics of mobility through a range of empirical contexts such as ferry boat commuting (Vannini 2012), cycling (Spinney 2009), and public transit (Bissell 2010b, 2016). Bissell (2016, 397), for example, has argued for a 'micropolitics of mobility' where "micropolitics refers to the barely perceived transitions in power that occur in and through situated encounters," within everyday spaces of mobility, in his case his evening train commute in Australia. He argues that the politics of mobility tends to understand differential mobility through 'larger' explanatory forces (c.f. Sheller and Urry 2006), which can obscure "the very transformations that mobility practices themselves actually create, giving rise to a different sort of unevenness" (Bissell 2016, 395). Similarly Adey (2009, 119) has argued that we must not see mobility as simply "strangled, sorted and denied, or overdetermined as an outcome of some other practice, regulation or policy." These conceptions of the politics of mobility center everyday mobility as a force through which social inequality is produced and contested.

While this literature has insightfully advanced understandings of the performative, affective, and micro-political experiences of movement, the *politics* in politics of mobility has remained relatively narrow and elusive. As Bærenholdt (2013, 20–21) has argued "[t]here is a dominating interest in, if not even fascination with, the micro-sociology and phenomenology of mobile practices rather than macro issues…When dealing with issues of power, hegemony and social order, mobility studies are rather vague." Importantly for my purposes here, only rarely does this research program critically engage in the relationship between the development of transport systems and neoliberal urbanism, discussed in the following section. I find this lack of engagement problematic. Let me be clear: my purpose is not to re-assert a monist framework for understanding the politics of mobility, with political economy as the primary explanatory force. Rather, it is to suggest that the theoretical refinement of the politics of mobility has been relatively disconnected from conceptions of politics and governance emerging from urban political economy (urban regime theory, regulation theory, neoliberal urbanism, etc.). This disconnection severely limits our ability to understand the political implications of urban mobilities in general and, in the particulars of my case, the recent surge of heavy and light rail projects in United States cities. It limits an understanding of how the governance of urban transit provision is implicated in the production of differential mobility. Thus, I argue for a more pluralist framework for the politics of mobility—one that can move beyond mobilities' implicit rejection of historical materialism, and the assumptions of economic determinism, reductionism, and teleology that have marred some strains of Marxist political economy.

In recent years, there have been tentative moves in this direction through political economic critiques of the mobilities' treatment of urban transportation (Addie 2013, 2015; Enright 2013; Cidell and Prytherch 2015). Addie (2015, 191), for instance, has argued that "the [new mobilities] paradigm's tendency to focus on issues of governmentality, representation, and experience and sociocultural analyses of personal mobility, identity, and affect limits its capacity to illuminate the

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political and economic challenges of contemporary urbanization." He argues that mobilities and urban political economy can be productively brought together though their mutual emphasis on connectivity in order to examine transportation infrastructure as a socio-technical system that shapes city-regional governance (Addie 2013, 2015). Similarly, Enright (2015, 175) argues that "attention to flows of capital through urban space, often conspicuously absent from mobilities literature, is particularly important to understanding regimes of…[mobility] in an era of neoliberalization." Thus, Addie and Enright advocate an expanded conception of the politics of mobility to include questions about the role of urban transport systems in capital accumulation, uneven development, and class formation. Their focus on the political economy of urban transit provision adds an important dimension to the politics of mobility—namely the local institutional politics of city-regional governance in the provision transportation infrastructure and the ways in which that provision is implicated in various forms of discrimination and uneven development (Bullard, Johnson, and Torres 2004; Farmer 2011). This provides an entry point for placing urban political economy within the politics of mobility. In the next section, I offer a more robust discussion of the ways in which urban political economy has treated urban transit, moving towards an integration of these two literatures.

The Political Economy of Urban Transit

Transportation infrastructure is a central component in the production of urban space under capitalism. Transportation systems enable accumulation in that they support commodity circulation (Harvey 2001b), the movement of laborers to the place of production (Feldman 1977; Hodge 1990), and the creation of place-based advantages for investment in local real estate markets (Logan and Molotch 1987; Immergluck 2009). Capital accumulation is entwined with the ability of transport systems to accommodate these functions and, crucially, to connect spatially separated markets, commodities, and points of production and consumption. The circulation of capital therefore

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requires systems of fixed infrastructure to allow for the mobility of objects in which value is temporarily embedded (Harvey 2001b). These systems of fixed infrastructure produce a geography that facilitates production, circulation, exchange and consumption (Harvey 1983; Sheppard 2016), yet it is precisely their fixity in the landscape which later impedes fresh rounds of accumulation in new spaces (Harvey 2001a). Systems of fixed infrastructure must later be destroyed or devalued in order to allow for further rounds of mobility—necessitating new systems of fixed infrastructure and so on. In this sense, geographical restructuring through transportation systems can act as a temporary 'spatial fix' for internal contradictions of capitalism (Harvey 2001b, 2006), shaping and reshaping the built environment in uneven ways over time.

In United States cities, the dominant transportation system through which this process of creative-destruction has proceeded has been the freeway and road network, which is produced, supported, and governed through what John Urry (2004) calls 'the system of automobility.' Automobility refers to the collective impact of the automobile on the urban form, including its supporting technical and social systems (petrol refinement, repair shops, urban planning and design), the freeway and road network, and automobile manufacturing, including the cultural hegemony of the car's association with freedom, individuality, and social status (Urry 2004). The rise of this system of automobility coincided with the post-war Fordist project, which facilitated the decentralization of the city, provided much greater individualized mobility, and generated enormous domestic growth. Fordism is not accidentally named; automobility as a form of mass transportation was embedded in, and emerged with, its system of capital accumulation: standardized, vertically-integrated mass production alongside high wages that were the standard for Ford automobile production (Manderscheid 2014, 617). This economic and spatial configuration, however, was founded on a fundamental contradiction between fixity and flow—namely that capital has a contradictory need to be both mobile and fixed in place, leading to uneven urban development

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(Harvey 2006, 101). The system of automobility manifests this tension through a host of consequential geographies: the decentralization of the city, but also the spatial concentration of African Americans in the urban core; enormous economic growth, but also traffic congestion and unprecedented greenhouse gas emissions; increased individual mobility, but also disinvestment in public transit (Whitt 1982).

In recent years, these economic, environmental, and social problems of the automobile have taken center stage in urban policy debates, engendering a set of 'automobility anxieties'—popular and academic concern over the cumulative impact of automobility on U.S. cities. Popular media have heralded "The End of Car Culture" (Rosenthal 2013) and "The End of the Car Age: How Cities Are Outgrowing the Automobile" (Moss 2015), citing unsustainable energy consumption, traffic congestion, and decentralization as critical concerns for certain populations who are travelling less by automobile. Concomitant to the growth of these 'automobility anxieties,' there has been massive resurgence of political and financial support for public transit development in United States cities—particularly heavy and light rail transit[3]. Since 1980, an average of 1.7 entirely new rail systems has opened every year, tripling the national total within three decades, over and above the expansion of existing systems (Neff and Dickens 2015b). In dollar terms, annual heavy rail capital investments grew from $5.6 billion in 1992 to $14.3 billion in 2013, with light rail investments increasing from $0.83 billion to $5 billion (Neff and Dickens 2015a). Furthermore, electorates have continuously backed local transit ballot measures, approving over 75% of measures proposed between 2003 and 2014 (Grisby 2015), increasingly across party lines. Even conservative groups and think tanks—long opposed to public infrastructure investments—have begun to promote rail

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[3] This increased financial and political support for transit has not, however, necessarily translated into increased transit use. Nationwide, transit ridership remains stable, and in Los Angeles is has been steadily dropping despite enormous investments (Nelson 2017).

development as a way to reduce congestion and facilitate economic activity through real estate ventures and public-private partnerships (see Weyrich and Lind 2009).

This growing consensus around rail transit development can be situated within macro-scale changes in the political economy of United States cities. As is well-rehearsed, cities have become key sites for the production, reproduction, and contestation of neoliberalization—the ongoing hegemonic project to position the 'free market' as the archetype for organizing society, alongside a distinct rejection of public welfare and collectivism (Peck and Tickell 2002; Leitner, Peck, and Sheppard 2007; Peck, Theodore, and Brenner 2013). Rail infrastructure is one spatial dimension of these twin movements towards market triumphalism and public divestment. Across U.S. cities, researchers have documented how rail mega-projects increasingly privilege market-oriented growth and elite consumption over the *public* mobility provided by 'public' transit (Farmer 2011; Farmer and Noonan 2013; Siemiatycki 2013; Enright 2015). Grengs (2005) has argued that, in neoliberalizing cities, local governments have abandoned the social goals of public transit, privileging the exchange value of transit systems over their social functions of providing access to the city for all urban residents[4]. Yet, it is important to note that rail development as an accumulation strategy is not distinctly neoliberal. To characterize it as such would be to ignore the historical continuity of transit infrastructure's relationship to urban growth (Feldman 1977). However, as scholars like Grengs and Farmer emphasize, rail development as accumulation strategy has taken on new political and economic significance in an era of neoliberal urban governance.

There are at least three dimensions of rail development as an accumulation strategy employed by entrepreneurial urban governments. First, rail development catalyzes the production of rent through reconfiguring the transportation network. While rail mega-projects in the United States

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[4] Though this is perhaps overstated considering the longstanding histories of racially discriminatory transit policy (Bullard and Johnson 1997; Bullard, Johnson, and Torres 2004).

are now almost exclusively publicly-funded[5], developers and rentiers continue to accumulate capital through capturing increased rent from the price premium placed on access. As the system grows, new connections to the network redistribute accessibility benefits through the city, and this spatial redistribution has externality effects that private individuals, firms, and interest groups seek to capture (Harvey 2009). New transport systems thus attract real estate investment and development around lines and stations to capture the price premium on accessibility. Indeed, "transportation doesn't just serve growth, it creates it," long implicated in uneven urban development (Logan and Molotch 1987, 74). In Los Angeles, for instance, the rail transit system was privately developed in order to provide transportation to and from Henry Huntington's extensive subdivisions on the periphery of the city. Though Huntington lost incredible amounts of money on the transit system, the net gain from growth in real estate investments offset his losses (Altshuler and Luberoff 2003). Transit mega-projects like Atlanta's Beltline, Chicago's Circle Line, or Los Angeles' Red Line have raised property values (Chatman 2013), and pushing working class residents away from proximity to transit services (Immergluck 2009; Revington 2015).

Second, rail development is increasingly utilized by entrepreneurial municipal governments to cultivate the image of a world-class city. With the ascendency of neoliberal economic policies in the 1980s under Ronald Reagan, federal funding for public transit dropped drastically, with subsidies for operating costs entirely eliminated (Farmer 2011). Responding to these shifts, city and regional governments have increasingly 'rolled out' entrepreneurial institutional practices in order to secure capital from both private investment and federal block grants for transport infrastructure—an urban governance structure that Harvey (1989) famously labeled "urban entrepreneurialism" (see also, Leitner 1990). Urban entrepreneurialism is situated within a field of inter-urban competition in

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[5] Increasingly, however, cash-strapped municipalities have turned towards public-private partnerships as a viable solution to attract capital and roll-out large-scale transportation projects (Siemiatycki 2009, 2011).

which the 'serial reproduction' of spectacles of urban redevelopment becomes a tool for gaining a temporary competitive edge (Harvey 1989). Urban transit systems are one such tool. In the United States, and in cities across the globe, municipal governments have embraced rail development as a model for growth[6], promoting transit-oriented development (TOD) around new rail transit stations to attract global capital and cultivate the image of a world-class city (Siemiatycki 2006; Enright 2013). As Farmer (2011, 1156) writes, "to lure multinational corporate headquarters, producer services, professional managerial workers, and tourists to their city, municipal governments recreate urban space by prioritizing megaprojects and infrastructure that help businesses gain competitive advantages and keep them connected within global networks." Rail infrastructure acts as one mode of urban restructuring deployed by entrepreneurial municipal governments in order facilitate capital investment and growth.

Third, transit infrastructure can reduce traffic congestion and accelerate the turnover time of capital. As capitalists seek to integrate spatially separated factors and locations, reducing transportation time is one method for increasing revenue. Marx famously describes this drive for a reduction of the turnover time of capital advanced as the "annihilation of space by time."—"the creation of the physical conditions of exchange—of the means of communications and transport—the annihilation of space by time—becomes an extraordinary necessity for it" (Marx 1973, 524). While mass transit systems (i.e. regional commuter railways, urban rail systems, ferries, bus systems, etc.) function as one component of the larger urban transportation network, it is important to make a conceptual distinction between *transportation* as the overcoming of distance required for capitalist accumulation and the production of mass *transit* systems[7], the central concern of this thesis.

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[6] See also "Open For Business: The Business Case for Investment in Public Transportation" American Public Transportation Association.

[7] While I make this distinction between *transit* and *transportation*, different authors varyingly use public transport, public transportation, transit, urban transit, mass transit, to describe what I refer to as 'transit.'

However, insofar as rail development draws individuals away from the road network—the primary

ground transport for commodities in the United States[8]—it can reduce the turnover time of capital

and the costs of assembling a labor force, and therefore facilitate accumulation (Feldman 1977;

Farmer and Noonan 2013). Indeed, the reduction of traffic congestion to facilitate the circulation of

capital for private firms is one reason cited within the growing conservative movement for rail

development (Weyrich and Lind 2009).

The leveraging of rail development for these three dimensions of accumulation has

historically, and increasingly, had important implications for the social functions of public transit. At

its most basic level, public transit provides urban residents with access to goods and services,

income opportunities, and the spaces of the city necessary to prosper. Research has shown that rail

mega-projects have differential impact on the mobility of groups and individuals in cities, shaping

their capacity to realize these benefits (Grengs 2005; Farmer 2011). In some cities, transit agencies

have cut bus service, raised fares, and re-allocated funds towards rail service, redistributing service

and accessibility to wealthier, whiter populations and away from transit dependent communities

(Kain 1988; Davis 1995; Altshuler and Luberoff 2003; Grengs 2005). Los Angeles is perhaps the

paradigmatic case for this trend. In 1996, an activist group called the Bus Riders Union won a civil

rights lawsuit claiming the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority was spending a

disproportionate amount of public funds on connecting affluent, white suburbs with rail rather than

supporting the failing bus system and its predominately low-income, minority ridership (Soja 2010).

In this sense, the development of rail infrastructure functions as a site for the entrenchment of

unequal class relations, with rail mega-projects—planned and produced to facilitate capital

accumulation—costing the mobility of the poor and working class (Davis 1995; Grengs 2005; Soja

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[8] By weight, truck transport moves nearly ten times the amount of freight of rail. In 2013, truck transport moved 13,732 (millions of tons) and rail freight only 1,681(millions of tons) within the country (Sprung 2015).

2010). The production of unequal mobilities through rail infrastructure has been exacerbated in this era of neoliberal urban development, as cities increasingly leverage rail in ways that prioritize its exchange value over its use value (Farmer and Noonan 2013). Thus, far from being a neutral technology facilitating the movement of people throughout the city, transit development is an integral aspect of capitalist urban development, and embedded within particular ideologies regarding the relationship between the production of transit infrastructure and urban growth.

Regulating the Regime of Metromobility

Theresa Enright (2015, 173) calls this resurgence of rail development a "regime of metromobility"—"a form of neoliberal accumulation based on contemporary connectivity" to "attract increasingly mobile capital into the built environment, to catalyze urban rent production, and to increase territorial competition and economic growth." Yet, forms of accumulation do not function within an isolated economic sphere, but are embedded within other political and socio-cultural institutions (Polanyi 1944). 'The economy' relies upon and necessitates forms of social and economic regulation through the capitalist state and civil society (Aglietta 1979). The regime of metromobility is not, and cannot be, simply "a form of neoliberal accumulation," nor is it *a priori* a mode of accumulation without being politically and ideologically assembled as such. Further, despite often being legitimized using the economic logics described above, the development of rail infrastructure does not necessarily bring capital investment, world city status, or traffic reduction (Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee 2000; Richmond 2005). Thus, it is crucial not to take for granted the stories that entrepreneurial governments tell themselves about the economic benefits of rail development, but to analyze the political and material work necessary to realize the potential of those stories.

I take my lead from Enright's use of the word 'regime' which suggests that dominant systems of urban mobility are not autopoietic "closed loops reproducing [their] logics relentlessly"

(Böhm et al. 2006, 6), but rather unstable achievements that must be sustained through complex articulations between economic and more-than-economic relations of power. Thus, I argue that an *urban mobility regime* can be understood as consisting of (1) a particular system of urban mobility and its socio-technical infrastructure (rail transit, cycling, etc.), (2) a political-economic project to structure urban space to accommodate that system, and (3) institutional, ideological, political, and cultural relations of power that legitimize that system and enroll support for it. Current literature on rail development focuses mostly on the first two of these, with an understanding of rail development as form of accumulation (*pace* Enright). Yet, as a regime, rail development is assembled by a host of more-than-economic power relations such as the state's need for legitimization (Habermas 1975), cultural forms (Sum and Jessop 2013), environmental concerns (Jonas, While, and Gibbs 2010), and racial formation (Gilmore 2007). The task of analyzing urban mobility regimes should be to discern the complex articulations between these economic and extra-economic logics and forms shaping mobility systems, and how they take shape within a given geo-historical conjuncture.

The 'regulationist approach,' while not without its limits, provides one theoretical inroad for such an analysis[9]. Regulation theory seeks to explain how capitalism reproduces itself despite its contradictory tendencies towards crisis (Aglietta 1979; Jessop 1990b; Lipietz 1993). It is concerned with "the historically contingent ensembles of complementary *economic* and *extra-economic* mechanisms and practices that enable capital accumulation" (Jessop 1996, 53). The central insight of regulation theory is to recognize the 'embedded' (Polanyi 1944) nature of the economy within extra-economic relations, such as organizational and institutional forms, legal frameworks, 'the state', norms of

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[9] There is a body of scholarship in mobilities examining the ways in which circulation and mobility are (self)-governed beyond the state (Molz 2006; Bærenholdt 2013; Salter 2013). This work has almost exclusively embraced a Foucauldian analysis of governmentality (Molz 2006; Moran, Piacentini, and Pallot 2012; Salter 2013; Ong, Minca, and Felder 2014). While Foucault is a natural fit for studying the governance of circulation (see for instance, Foucault 2009, 65), this thesis argues for an expanded role for political-economy in mobilities research, and therefore I focus more so on the regulatory and institutional dimensions of governance. I recognize that governance cannot be reduced to regulation, nor the state. Incorporating governmentality approaches is goal for future research.

economic calculation, etc. This constellation of relations and mechanisms is what regulation theorists call the 'mode of social regulation' (MSR), which works to mediate and secure the expanded reproduction of capital as a social relation. Crucially, the MSR—and the extra-economic relations that comprise it—operates dialectically with a 'regime of accumulation' (RA)[10], and in this sense these relations are not 'extra'-economic at all. Rather they are constitutive of the economy, in the same manner that the economy is constitutive of them. This is not to say that one is the expression of the other; but that one cannot *function* without the other, and a crisis on one side of the dialectic requires a re-articulation of the other (Tickell and Peck 1992). While explicit adherence and reference to this classical RA-MSR model has become increasingly uncommon, geographers and critical scholars continue to draw on the regulationist insight that the economy is intertwined with extra-economic relations and mediated by local institutions and governance frameworks rather than simply founded on self-referencing market logics and social relations (Peck 2011).

A persistent theoretical challenge for regulation theory has been applying it to understand economic regulation at scales beyond the nation-state, particularly urban governance (Lauria 1996). Geographers have sought to move past the methodological nationalism of much earlier regulation theory, to address what Jones (1997, 832) calls the "regulationist enigma: the difficulty of employing regulation theory to explain local transformation." In response to arguments that regulation theory has severe limitations beyond the scale of the nation-state, Jones argues that attention to the 'spatial selectivity' of the local state can address this regulationist enigma. Spatial selectivity "implies that the state has a tendency to privilege certain places through accumulation strategies and hegemonic projects…within which high degrees of experimentation exist, the exact form being contingent on interest groups and the mobilisation of representational forces that ideologically support such

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[10] For countries of the North Atlantic region, the prototypical RA-MSR couplet is the Fordist regime of accumulation and the Keynesian welfare state, wherein accumulation is based on mass production and consumption, supported by an interventionist state, demand-side management, and social welfare programs.

experimentation" (Jones 1997, 855). Such an approach can provide "insight into the role of social regulatory institutions, their spatial form, policies, politics, and uneven development" (Jones 1997, 856). Similarly, Goodwin and Painter (1996, 14–15) argue that that regulation theory should be less concerned with identifying RA-MSR couplets, but is best understood as "a perspective and a form of analysis" that can inform understandings of the social regulation of urban economies. It is in this sense that I deploy regulation theory—as a 'perspective and form of analysis' that is concerned with the articulation between economic strategies of accumulation and the more-than-economic institutional mechanisms (c.f. Jessop 1996), including the ways in which uneven urban development is (re)produced through experimental governance (c.f. Jones 1997). In this spirit, I find regulation theory useful for thinking through the relationship between institutional regulatory frameworks for urban transit provision, and the geographies of rail development as an accumulation strategy.

I follow a handful of mobilities scholars who have sought to utilize a regulationist approach to theorize the ways in which mobility is constitutive of accumulation strategies (Paterson 2007, 2010, 2014; Manderscheid 2014; Walks 2015). Paterson (2007), for instance, has argued for a cultural political economy of automobility by showing how automobility, as a system of mass transportation and cultural formation, was central to the Fordist regime of accumulation. On the production side, the industrial production of the automobile was foundational for innovations in mass production, vertical integration, and standardization that were the hallmarks of Ford's automobile factories. On the consumption side, the automobile (along with standardized suburban housing) was one of the most important consumer commodities of the era (Aglietta 1979, 159), triggering new regulatory institutional arrangements for mass consumption—new credit systems, high wages, etc. Walks (2015, 406) goes further to suggest that "[a]s articulated on the ground, the regime of accumulation known as Fordism, and the rise of the system of automobility, are effectively the same thing." Expanding upon Paterson, and Walks' rather reductionist account, Manderscheid (2014, 607–608)

has attempted to link mobilities to regulation theory through the Foucauldian notion of a *dispositif*—a theoretical approach that examines "the constitution, ordering and governing of mobile bodies and their corresponding spatialities" through various discourses, objectivities, practices, and subjectivities. She proposes augmenting this Foucauldian approach with elements of regulation theory in order to consider how "the automobility *dispositif* is located between regimes of accumulation and modes of regulation, linking it through knowledge and discourses, their sedimentation in material landscapes, institutions and laws to governmentalities, subject formations and empirical practices" (Manderscheid 2014, 619).

These scholars help focus attention on the ways in which urban mobility regimes are constitutive of capitalist development and how that arrangement necessitates a loose constellation of regulatory mechanisms to stabilize and support their co-constitution. Automobility provides a ready example of these regulatory mechanisms. As a mass transportation system entangled with the Fordist accumulation regime, automobility in the United States was supported and stabilized through law (the 1956 National Interstate and Defense Highways Act), local politics (freeway dis/placement), enforcement mechanisms (traffic police), racial formation (white flight, the spatial containment and policing of mobile black bodies), technological systems (security, stoplights, etc.) and ideological formations (equating the automobile with freedom, liberty, and American individualism). Drawing on regulation theory, I suggest we can understand this constellation of legal, political, institutional, material, political and ideological forms as a *mode of mobility regulation* that works to stabilize a particular urban mobility regime. Crucially, this is not a self-reproducing system conceived in the proverbial smoke-filled room. Rather, it is—as implied by the notion of regime—an "unauthored…constellation" (Ferguson 1990, 21) in need of constant assembly, experimentation, reform, and legitimization by a range of actors. A mobility regime is necessarily incomplete and open, seeking temporary closure.

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While this scholarship provides a useful entry point, the small corpus bridging mobilities and regulation theory has focused exclusively on automobility and its relation to (post-) Fordism. This work is both important and obvious given automobility's wide-ranging social and environmental impacts. Yet, automobility's dominance exists in relationship to alternative mobility regimes vying for hegemony to reorient urban space, such as cycling and rail infrastructure (c.f. Gramsci 1971). Provocatively, Manderscheid (2014, 620 my emphasis) ends her discussion of mobility *dispositifs* with a call that "a lot of empirical research are [sic] needed on *[the] dark sides of future mobility regimes*…the ongoing search for new ways to organise transportation may also be seen as renegotiating the governance of mobilities…[which is] part and parcel of social order and political economies." In this spirit, I argue that the political work of governing potential future mobility regimes has a 'dark side': the regulation of mobility regimes through social relations of power that have differential and unequal impact on the mobility of groups and individuals.

In this thesis, I undertake empirical research into the 'dark side' of an emergent alternative mobility regime—urban rail transit. I argue that the surge of rail infrastructure development deployed by entrepreneurial local governments in United States cities since the 1980s must be understood in relation to its 'mode of mobility regulation.' While geographers and sociologists have well-theorized and documented how rail continues to be leveraged as a strategy of capital accumulation with implications for unequal mobilities (Farmer 2011; Farmer and Noonan 2013; Siemiatycki 2013; Enright 2015), scholarship on the development of rail infrastructure has largely overlooked extra-economic relations and mechanisms[11]. I conceive of the mode of mobility regulation for rail as consisting of institutional priorities and logics, legal frameworks, security systems, and policing practices. Drawing on the conceptual framework developed above, I argue

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[11] Discourses supporting rail development have received a fair amount of attention. See (Richmond 2005; Siemiatycki 2005; Enright 2013)

that these institutional and material arrangements provide a framework for regulating mobility on rail systems—a 'mode of mobility regulation' that supports the economic potential of rail development as an accumulation strategy.

Modes of mobility regulation vary across space and time. At different geo-historical conjunctures, the local articulations of the economic mode of production, racial hierarchies, ideologies of governance, institutional arrangements, and political interest give shape to the ways in which the local state regulates human mobility across different modes of transportation (Hall et al. 1978). During moments of crisis and transition, the constellation of these social trajectories are re-articulated, re-regulated, and re-spatialized through social relations of power, positioning individuals differently within the "power geometries" of mobility (Massey 1993). Thus, a full understanding of the mode of mobility regulation requires placing an analysis of how governance is shaped by articulations of economy, race, ideology, and politics *within* an analysis of how those articulations give shape to, and are shaped by, the geo-historical conjuncture of which they are a part.

My analysis focuses on the mode of mobility regulation for rail transit in Los Angeles during the early 1990s—a moment of restructuring for both urban transit and urban political economy as the modern rail program first launched. This historical conjuncture was characterized by the renewed importance of rail development in entrepreneurial urban governance (Harvey 1989; Farmer and Noonan 2013), a movement towards 'revanchist' urban policies aimed at the securing public spaces through expanded police powers (Smith 1996), and high racial inequities that would, just two years after the opening of the Blue Line, erupt in the urban uprising of 1992. Together, I will show that these relations of force constituted the mode of mobility regulation for rail transit in Los Angeles as one of securitization. As I will show, the securitization of public transit co-evolves with the broader trend towards the commodification, securitization, and social regulation of public space under neoliberalism (Smith 1996; Mitchell 2003).

In public transit systems, securitization has been deployed to attract what the transit industry calls 'choice riders'—public transit users who could have made the same trip through another mode (bike, car, etc.). Transit agencies have implemented various technologies of security that that attempt ensure the safety and security of passengers through new strategies of policing, legal mechanisms to banish 'undesirables' from the system, increased surveillance and security systems, and micro-technologies of spatial control such as benches upon which one cannot lie down (Klein 2015). Further, the broader turn towards the securitization of public space through legal banishment orders (Beckett and Herbert 2009; Herbert and Beckett 2010) and anti-homeless laws (Mitchell 1997, 2003), enforced through racialized broken window policing (Camp and Heatherton 2016) originally emerged as a coordinated political effort to 'take back' the New York subway for purposes re-instating 'order' and re-capitalizing on the transit system (see Kelling and Coles 1996). I return to this argument in chapter four to examine the role of securitization in rail systems—and how such forms of regulation have come to dominate the mode of mobility regulation for the Los Angeles system.

Conclusion

At its broadest scope, this chapter has worked to integrate mobilities theory and urban political economy through a regulationist approach in order to analyze the relations between rail infrastructure as accumulation strategy and as a mode of mobility regulation within a particular geo-historical conjuncture. I have suggested that geographical political economy—and more specifically a regulationist approach—can expand the politics of mobility to incorporate questions of capital accumulation, uneven development, and social regulation and governance under neoliberal urbanism. A regulationist approach signals to the ways in which systems of human mobility are central to capitalist development, while taking into account the loose constellation of extra-economic relations and mechanisms that assemble it as such. I argue that a 'mode of mobility

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regulation' is a productive framework to examine the recent surge of heavy and light rail development in United States cities because it centers on the grounded political work that facilitates and stabilizes the *potential* of rail development as a strategy of capital accumulation by entrepreneurial municipal governments. I add this urban political-economic dimension to the politics of mobility in urban transit systems in order to understand the ways in which regulation (in my case, via securitization) becomes an avenue through which uneven mobilities are socially and materially constructed in urban transit systems. How systems of mobility are regularized through institutional arrangements, legal frameworks, and socio-technical systems has differential effects on the mobility of individuals and groups. As I will show in chapter four, the securitization and over-policing of the Blue Line was implemented largely to ensure the economic viability of the rail system as an attractive alternative to the automobile, but had clear and important implications for the ways in which mobility on the line became racialized and controlled.

Such an analysis of an historically and geographically contingent mobility regime and its mode of mobility regulation poses methodological problems. Mobility regimes sit at the confluence of a host of social relations—ideological, economic, cultural, political, racial—the exact articulation of which cannot be known in advance. Understanding the relationship between these forms within historically specific, multi-scalar geographical contexts takes grounded, analytical work that regulation theory, at times, has failed to deliver (Jessop 1990a; Jones 1997). In the following chapter, I argue that the work of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, and more specifically his 'conjunctural' thinking, provides one methodological approach for addressing this analytical problem, and more generally that a conjunctural approach has immense value for the study of mobility and immobility.

CHAPTER 3. A Conjunctural Approach to the Study of Mobility and Immobility

"Gramsci gives us, not the tools with which to solve the puzzle, but the means with which to ask the right kinds of questions…" (Hall 1987, 16)

As illustrated in the previous chapter, the traditions of geographical political economy and mobilities theory sit restlessly with one another. Their integration in this thesis therefore poses not only considerable theoretical challenges, but also significant methodological questions that must be addressed before moving forward—most centrally, how to incorporate their diverging logics of inquiry and predominate methods. On the one hand, Marxian political economy tends to embrace historical-dialectical inquiry, which explores social change over time. Within this logic of inquiry, empirical evidence is usually textual or macro-qualitative and the method generally analyzes how interdependent structural relationships and processes change over time, shaping different periods, events, spaces, and conjunctures (Watts 2006, 9). On the other hand, mobilities is more driven by a phenomenological logic of inquiry, which tends to focus on the construction and interplay of socio-cultural meanings, discourses, and symbols. Within this logic of inquiry, field observation is typical and the method generally analyses social interactions, encounters, roles, relationships, and shared meanings (Watts 2006, 9). Yet, it is important to note that epistemological traditions are not bound to any given logic of inquiry, nor method. Indeed, creative—but deliberate—exploration of overlaps and mashups between differing traditions can be enormously productive. While my use of historical analysis and archival methods would seem to privilege the political economy side of my theoretical framework, this is not my intention. Rather, in using archival methods, I wish to re-assert the importance of historical approaches to mobilities research, which by-and-large have gone overlooked in the mobilities literature (though see Cresswell 2001; Merriman 2007). In short, the aim of this chapter is to explore the possibilities and importance of an historical-dialectical logic of inquiry for mobilities research to better understand the development of historical mobilities.

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By historical mobilities I do not simply mean various practices of mobility in the past, but more broadly the ways in which prior 'constellations of mobility'—"historically and geographically specific formations of movements, narratives about mobility, and mobile practices" (Cresswell 2010b, 17)—continue to shape the present and the future. Loosely following Lefebvre (though not citing him), Cresswell (2001, 2006) describes 'constellations of mobility' as an interlocking triad of *movement* (perceived mobility), *representation* (conceived mobility), and *practice* (lived mobility), the exact entanglement of which varies historically and geographically. At different geo-historical conjunctures, the entanglement of movement, representation, and practice articulate differently with one another, positioning individuals differently within the power geometries of mobility (Massey 1993). Research into the 'politics of mobility'—the ways in which individuals are positioned in and produce those power-geometries—therefore demands an understanding of how constellations of mobility are constituted at different conjunctures and the ways in which those constellations carry forward in space and time. In this sense, I understand historical mobilities as a continuing force shaping current practices, injustices, and political possibilities for mobility in the city.

In this chapter, I follow recent calls for the importance of tracing historical processes that shape current and future mobilities (Merriman 2014; Mom 2015) to argue for the importance and utility of historical-dialectical approaches. In particular, I explore Gramscian-inspired 'conjunctural analysis' (Hall et al. 1978; Hall and Massey 2010) as one fruitful methodological approach that can inform research on the politics of mobility. I proceed in three parts. First, I briefly review the growth of 'mobile methods' that emerged out of the so-called new mobilities paradigm, which—in the view of some (Mom 2015)—has engendered a 'crisis' of mobility studies: a lack of methodological and theoretical tools capable of examining and understanding past constellations of mobility. Second, I draw on such critiques of mobile methods to underscore the importance of historical analysis for mobilities research, working to move beyond the dominance of mobile methods in mobilities

methodologies. Third, I draw on the work of Antonio Gramsci to develop the conceptual

underpinnings for what Stuart Hall calls 'conjunctural analysis,' arguing that such an approach

provides one productive methodological orientation for historical-dialectical inquiry into mobilities.

I conclude by synthesizing these points to demonstrate Gramsci's relevance for the study of mobility

and immobility[12].

The Methodological 'Crisis' of the New Mobilities Paradigm

Mobilities researchers across disciplinary boundaries have emphasized the importance of

methodological innovation to respond to the epistemological shift engendered by the 'mobilities

turn' (Büscher and Urry 2009; Büscher, Urry, and Witchger 2010; Fincham, McGuinness, and

Murray 2010; Murray and Upstone 2014). Mobile methodologies take movement as an

epistemological premise of social life, placing it at the center of empirical inquiry. Accordingly,

mobile methods "seek to use movement as part of the research approach itself, so that generally the

researcher is mobile and thus either follows the subject through space, or makes the subject mobile

for the purposes of research" (Hein, Evans, and Jones 2008, 1269). This approach draws on a wide

range of methods, including 'shadowing' and/or 'moving with' research subjects, 'follow the thing,'

'mobile ethnography,' and mobile interviews (Büscher and Urry 2009, 104–108). Following the trend

in mobilities to privilege phenomenological modes of inquiry, these methods are oriented towards

understanding the affective and experiential dimensions of movement as the researcher and subject

move together through space. Within this methodological formulation, immersion in "the fleeting,

multi-sensory, distributed, mobile and multiple, yet local, practical and ordered making of social and

material realities" gives researchers "an understanding of movement not as governed by rules, but as

methodologically generative" (Büscher and Urry 2009, 103–104). Mobile methods are often cited as

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[12] This section is titled with apologies to Stuart Hall (1986a) in that I am inspired both by the content and title of his
influential essay "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity."

the cutting-edge of mobilities research, triggering a significant growth in the use and discussion of such methods.

This emphasis on mobile methods has tended to depict 'traditional' methods—interviews, surveys, archival research, etc.—as 'sedentary' and thus inadequate for the demands of researching our modern, mobile world (Merriman 2014). This rejection of 'sedentary' methods reflects a broader "historical amnesia" (Cresswell 2010b, 29) that characterizes much of mobilities research in that it over-emphasizes the 'new' in the new mobilities paradigm. In other words, mobilities methodologies are overwhelmingly presentist. For example, two of the most frequently cited, agenda-setting, and influential articles in the field (Sheller and Urry 2006; Büscher and Urry 2009) list a variety of methods that could be utilized for mobilities research, yet neither suggest archival methods and no historical approaches are advanced. Rather, the emphasis is consistently on 'moving with' to understand the practices and experiences of mobile subjects. This orientation neglects the ways in which spatio-temporal contexts matter in understanding mobilities, over-emphasizing the affective experiences of mobile subjects to the detriment of theorizing the political, ideological, and economic dimensions of mobilities and their evolution. Gijs Mom (2015) describes this as a methodological 'crisis' plaguing mobilities research.

In recent years, cultural historians and geographers have begun to respond to this 'crisis' through critiques of mobile methods and exploring alternative historical approaches to mobilities studies. Bissell (2010a) has argued that mobile methods privilege active decision-making experiences while less intentional, passive mobile practices are overlooked. Similarly, Merriman (2012, 2014) has argued that mobile methods have been constructed as distinctly social scientific, obscuring approaches from the arts and humanities and limiting a pluralization of methods that could potentially contribute to a fuller understanding of mobility. As he writes, "there is a danger that key texts calling for 'mobile methods' are read as manifestoes promoting specialisation in a few

fashionable methodological areas rather than as calls for mixed- methods, innovation and pluralisation" (Merriman 2014, 172). In response, he seeks to demonstrate the relevance of a humanities approach through a cultural history of driving in the United Kingdom, drawing on extensive archival research of England's M1 motorway. Other cultural historians have utilized Foucauldian genealogies to examine issues of citizenship, subjectification, race, and deviance in their relation to the automobile (Packer 2008; Seiler 2008). Demonstrating the presentism of mobile methods and therefore the current limits of mobilities methodologies, these scholars argue for historical mobilities. Leveraging these critiques as a starting point, I work to extend mobilities methodologies to include historical-dialectical analysis.

For Historical Mobilities: Beyond Mobile Methods in Mobilities Methodologies

In this thesis, I wish to re-assert the importance of the historical methods in mobilities, moving beyond mobile methods in mobilities methodologies. Historical analysis examines how mobilities and moorings of the past leave legacies which shape the present and future of mobilities in the city: prior systems of mobility create 'transportation palimpsests' that inscribe particular geographies of power into the landscape (Banham 1971); path-dependent regimes of mobility become 'locked-in' and continue to shape social, political, cultural, and economic conditions and possibilities (Urry 2004); and techniques of governing mobile subjects develop in response to the crises of particular historical conjunctures and carry forward, riven with their own spatial and social contradictions (Whitt 1982; Cresswell 2006). History, in James Baldwin's (1965, 47) words, "is literally present in all that we do." Or, as Cresswell writes, "We cannot understand new mobilities…without understanding old mobilities" (Cresswell 2010b, 29).

In arguing for more attention to historical mobilities, I depart from previous interventions in two ways. First, research on historical mobilities has focused predominately on the automobile, to the neglect of other systems of mobility. While automobility's wide-ranging social, environmental,

and cultural impact demands extensive analysis (Urry 2004), I understand the automobile's hegemony as an unstable achievement, in contest and co-existing with different systems of mobility (Gramsci 1971; Böhm et al. 2006). Indeed, recent research in the United States cities suggests the wavering dominance of automobility, opening up space for latent regimes of mobility (Manderscheid 2014). Historical analysis of the political, economic, ideological, and cultural trajectories that give rise to alternate systems of mobility takes on great importance, if we are to avoid reifying the dominance of the automobile. Second, research on historical mobilities has overwhelmingly embraced post-structural frameworks, reflecting the trend in mobilities studies more broadly. Foucauldian methodologies are utilized, while political economic frameworks are often rejected outright for their supposed economic determinism, facile reductionism, and teleological understanding of historical change (Seiler 2008; Packer 2008; see Paterson 2007 for exception).

To avoid these analytical pitfalls and to bring political economy into mobilities research, I draw on the conjunctural thinking of Antonio Gramsci, who spent the latter part of his short life working to preserve the significance of the economy in historical analysis, while rejecting a theoretical reductionism that flattens the complex articulations of economy, culture, and politics. I argue that this type of conjunctural thinking has immense value for the study of historical mobilities in that it attempts to understand how articulations between economic and extra-economic relations take shape in a given geo-historical conjuncture. Like regulationist approaches, Gramsci was invested in understanding the articulations of economy, culture, politics, and ideology, or what he called the "decisive passage from the structure to the sphere of the complex superstructures" (Gramsci 2000, 205). Indeed, as Jessop and Sum (2006, 348) argue, Gramsci can be understood as a "proto- and post-regulation theorist," who "prepared some of the intellectual ground for regulationist analyses and…whose work indicates the need to move beyond." Gramsci's conjunctural thinking is foundational to the regulationist insight that the economy is always

embedded in extra-economic relations. While Gramsci's analysis of historical situations takes dialectical materialism as its foundation, this is never presented as given. He argued against any such pre-determined teleology, insisting on attention to historical (and, less explicitly, geographical) difference. Gramsci, therefore, provides a useful methodological orientation for investigating the question posed at the end of chapter two—namely how to approach and analyze the formation and composition of a mode of mobility regulation within a given geo-historical conjuncture. In the next section, I develop the conceptual underpinnings for this type of 'conjunctural approach' in the spirit of an historical-dialectical analysis of the power relations constituting a mode of mobility regulation.

The Conceptual Underpinnings of a Conjunctural Approach

The notion of an historical conjuncture derives from a Gramscian understanding of crisis and social change. In contrast to the epochal periodization that characterized much Marxist historiography, his formulations and concepts are rooted in—and attempted to address—the concrete historical conditions and political questions that faced Italy during the first four decades of the 20th century. Rather than seeking generalizing analytics about the relations of state, capital and civil society over time, his work "has a direct bearing on the question of the 'adequacy' of existing social theories, since it is precisely in the direction of 'complexifying existing theories and problems' that his most important theoretical contribution is to be found" (Hall 1986, 5). For Gramsci, this type of reconstruction is achieved by moving from an abstract level of theorization to concrete attention to historical difference, with the aim of deepening, reconstructing, and 'complexifying' the often deterministic understandings of class formation, political struggle, and historical change that typified much Marxist thought. While Gramsci's work takes the historical-materialist tradition as its foundation, his later work especially criticized 'economism'—by which he meant a simplified understanding the economy as the determining social structure 'in the last instance.' Economism is exemplified by crude base-superstructure understandings of ideology, the capitalist state, and cultural

formation, in which these social forms are understood only as expressions of the economic base of society, subject to change solely through crises of capital accumulation and class struggle. Such conceptions are rooted in "an iron conviction that there exist objective laws of historical development similar in kind to natural laws, together with a belief in a predetermined teleology" (Gramsci 2000, 220). Gramsci argued for an historical materialism 'without guarantees' (Hall 1986b), a non-teleological historicism in which the relationships between economic and extra-economic forms are not determined 'in the last instance' by the economic, but rather are subject to an analysis that parses out the "decisive passage from the structure to the sphere of the complex superstructures" within a given temporal and geographical situation (Gramsci 2000, 205).

A methodological commitment to concrete historical analysis of this 'decisive passage' between economic and extra-economic forms the basis of Gramsci's most important conceptual innovations such as hegemony or historical bloc (Hall 1986a, 11). Methodologically, the question becomes how to analyze the complex relationships between economy and society within a given historical situation. The contours of an answer can be found in an illuminating methodological note in *The Prison Notebooks*, "Analysis of Situations: Relations of Force," which he begins by stating: "It is the *problem of the relations* between structure and superstructures which must be accurately posed and resolved if the forces which are active in the history of a particular period are to be correctly analysed and the relation between them determined" (Gramsci 2000, 200, my emphasis). For Gramsci, historical analysis hinges on both this 'problem of relations,' as well as a distinction between what he calls organic and conjunctural 'relations of force.' Organic forces refer to relatively permanent, systemic structures within a social formation that can give rise to a crisis, such as how the contradictory unity between production of commodities and realization of their exchange value

can precipitate a crisis of over-accumulation[13]. Conjunctural forces, on the other hand, are more ephemeral, a loose "ensemble of circumstances which determine the market in a given phase" (Morera 1990, 90). They are relationships and social structures that set the immediate terrain of political and ideological struggle, taking on shape and importance in relation to an 'organic crisis':

> A crisis occurs, sometimes lasting decades. This exceptional duration means that incurable structural conditions have revealed themselves (reached maturity), and that, despite this, the political forces which are struggling to conserve the existing structure itself are making every effort to cure them, within certain limits, and to overcome them. These incessant and persistent efforts…form the terrain of the 'conjunctural', and it is upon this terrain that the forces of opposition organize. (Gramsci 2000, 201)

The conjunctural, then, can be thought of as the political, legal, economic, ideological, and cultural terrain upon which the 'incessant and persistent efforts' to preserve or overturn the status quo organize. While crises can appear as isolated moments, Gramsci reminds us that the accretion of contradictory tendencies can last decades, during which these 'incessant and persistent efforts' attempt to form new political arrangements and coalitions, experimental policies and practices, and political rationalities. If successful, such efforts can form a new political settlement—a political coalition during a relatively durable period of hegemony, which Gramsci described as an 'historical bloc.' Crucially, an historical bloc is not composed of, nor can be assumed *a priori* as confined to the ruling classes, but rather is a combination of the dominant class together with subaltern social groups. An historical bloc is not stable or automatic, but is *constructed* through political alliances between classes, the restructuring of existing institutional arrangements, and by deploying new ideological and cultural formations that frame a 'solution' to the 'problem.' These conjunctural movements attempt to resolve the organic crisis in such a way as to temporarily secure the

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[13] It is important to note, however, that within Gramsci's thought, crises are not generated solely by the economy. A crisis of the state's legitimation or ideological paradigms also form relatively durable and long-term forces within a social formation (Morera 1990, 88).

hegemony of the historical bloc (Hall 1986a, 422). They define the contours of a geo-historical conjuncture, taking on meaning through historical and geographical difference.

It would be a mistake to consider conjunctural relations of force as somehow less significant than organic ones in giving shape to an historical situation. Gramsci insisted upon a dialectical relationship between the two, making any analysis of their interaction necessarily relational. As David Forgacs writes, a conjunctural analysis "must constantly *connect* the organic and the conjunctural moments to one another. This means understanding and seeing as equally real the terrain of the conjunctural" (Forgacs 2000, 427). The concept of the historical conjuncture, then, is fundamental to Gramsci's 'open' Marxism, and it is for this reason that he has been called the "theoretician of conjunctures" (Morera 1990). Unlike many of his contemporaries—and, indeed, some of mine—Gramsci's understanding of class formation, systems of accumulation, regulation, etc. are not assumed, epochal, and totalizing; rather, each is understood as an emergent constellation of social forces, the constitution of which must be posed as a 'problem of relations' within a particular geo-historical conjuncture. This theoretical and methodological orientation takes the organic and conjunctural, but also the economic and extra-economic, as equally important to understand the development and resolution of historical situations, especially crisis.

In "Analysis of Situations: Relations of Force," and elsewhere in *The Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci provides a provocative methodological sketch for a conjunctural approach. Yet, the practical and analytical work of such an approach remained relatively vague and abstract until the 1970s and 1980s. During this period, these theoretical and methodological formulations inspired an emerging group of scholars—later becoming known as British Cultural Studies—who were interested in the cultural, ideological, and political dimensions of the ongoing crisis of Fordism, and the ascendency of neoliberalism. Stuart Hall, in particular, drew on a reading of Gramsci to develop and deploy what he calls "conjunctural analysis"—an historical methodology that works to explain

particular events and phenomena through understanding the "development of contradictions, their

fusion into a crisis and its resolution" into a new political settlement (Hall et al. 1978, xv). It involves

"looking at the social, political, economic and cultural contradictions in any particular period of

political settlement, and trying to understand how they are articulated to produce that settlement"

(Rutherford and Davison 2012, 5–6).

The earliest, and perhaps most important, work performing an explicit 'conjunctural analysis'

is *Policing the Crisis* (*PTC*) (Hall et al. 1978), which emerged from an interdisciplinary working group

at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham. Published in

1978, the book has remarkable insights into—and arguably predicted—the rise of Thatcherism in

the United Kingdom. As John Clarke (2008, 123), one of the book's co-authors, reflects, "the great

pleasure of *PTC* is not its depressing accuracy about the moment being analysed, but the means by

which that analysis was constructed and created." A truly collaborative and interdisciplinary work,

PTC draws on media studies, race and ethnicity studies, criminology, and sociology to analyze British

society's reaction to the cultural phenomena of 'mugging' during the 1970s. The book begins with

the question of why three youths received unprecedented sentences for 'mugging' despite its lack of

legal designation, but quickly spirals outwards to a dizzying scope. More broadly, it examines the

multiple relations of force that made such a harsh sentencing not only possible, but *necessary* to

'restore order': racial formation, the rise of a law and order state, and 'the crisis of consent' marked

by the growing contradictions of Fordism-Keynesianism (Clarke 2010). It traces the ideological,

cultural, and racial dimension of 'mugging' as a signifier of the crisis, which legitimized the

scapegoating of immigrant youths and a law and order state to 'restore order' to British society.

Drawing on a mix of discourse and content analysis of popular media, legal documents,

archival document analysis, *PTC* analyzes the "exhaustion of consent" (Hall et al. 1978, 215) of

Fordism-Keynesianism—the unraveling of the post-war balance of power between corporate capital,

a strong welfare state and the Labour Party, as this historical bloc faced stagflation, civil society unrest, and growing popular fears of terrorism. Following Gramsci, the economic crisis of Fordism is integral to the historical moment in which the three youths were sentenced, but not primary. Parallel conjunctural questions of racialization, social order, and legitimation were equally constitutive of the eponymous 'crisis' and its attempted resolution through the expanded role of state coercion (Clarke 2010, 341)—new legal arrangements criminalizing poverty, racialized policing, the expansion of the carceral state, and the securitization of populations and public space. Importantly, *PTC* takes seriously culture, politics, and race as sites of this hegemonic work. Coercion is always paired with consent (Gramsci 1971), and 'common sense' cultural understandings of the crisis—such as the moral panic around mugging—are themselves political and intertwined with the expansion of state power and securitization (Clarke 2010, 344).

PTC helps to ground a conjunctural approach practically and methodologically in at least three interlocking ways. First, it draws attention to the ways in which multiple social trajectories, and their concomitant contradictions and antagonisms, come together in an historical conjuncture, without any necessary primacy. Mugging—or more precisely British society's reaction to the cultural formation of mugging—provides an analytical entry point into this process of articulation between, in this case, the crisis of Fordism, racial formation, the expansion of state power, and the exhaustion of consent. The point is not to identify the primary explanatory social force driving the formation of 'mugging,' but rather to analyze and understand how these social formations condense and articulate with one another, shaping the geo-historical situation. This leads to a second point: conjunctural and extra-economic relations of force are central also for understanding geographically and historically contingent struggles for hegemony. For instance, *PTC*'s emphasis on the way in which mugging was racialized—that is, made exceptional through the social construction of race—shows the central role of racial formation in the roll-out of this law and order state. Race delineated the line separating

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order and disorder, and organized both the state of exception in British society *and* legitimized

exceptional state power. Thus, mugging "could not have been represented as a crisis of authority

without this racializing of Britain and its imagined social order" (Clarke 2008, 125). Race and racial

formation set the terrain for the exhaustion of consent, one of several extra-economic forms that

shaped the historical conjuncture at which the extreme sentences for 'mugging' took place. Third,

PTC shows the concrete analytical work necessary for understanding Gramsci's 'decisive passage'

between, for example, race and economy or legitimation and accumulation. Geo-historical

conjunctures are processual, their composition and shape cannot be explained *a priori*, nor are they

geographically or temporally universal. Rather, as Gramsci and Hall insist, they are historically and

(less explicitly) geographically contingent. A conjunctural approach demands the analytical work of

parsing out the complex articulations of economic and extra-economic, organic and conjunctural,

universal and particular.

The methodological and analytical demands of such an approach are considerable, and far

exceed the practical limits of this thesis. My goals are far more modest than those of *PTC*. Rather

than performing a comprehensive *conjunctural analysis,* which would necessitate a wide-ranging

disciplinary and methodological toolkit, I draw on *PTC* as inspiration and as an example of a

concrete *conjunctural approach* to think through Gramsci's relevance for the study of urban mobilities.

Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Mobility and Immobility[14]

Gramsci would not have stood for the level of abstraction at which this discussion has so far

progressed. The remainder of this chapter takes the general methodological formulations of a

conjunctural approach outlined above and moves into the more concrete challenge facing research

into historical mobilities—namely the over-emphasis on both 'mobile methods' and the experiential

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[14] See footnote 12

the dimensions of movement. A conjunctural approach provides a methodological framework that centers on the analysis of the political economic dimensions of urban mobility regimes at particular geo-historical conjunctures, thereby working to address mobilities studies' persistent presentism. More specifically, I argue that a conjunctural approach has four dimensions that offer some methodological insights into a political economic approach to the study of historical mobilities.

First, a conjunctural approach emphasizes the historical and geographical specificity of urban mobility. Urban mobility regimes develop in differentiated ways, and are held together in dominance through varying institutional, cultural, and material relationships. In Los Angeles, for instance, the spatial form of the city was dramatically shaped by the development of the Pacific Electric railcar system (Banham 1971; Bottles 1987). The regime of automobility appropriated this form during the inter- and post-war periods, profiting immensely from the dispersal of the city initially set in motion through the railcars. Yet an intra-urban railcar system once again took on cultural and material prominence in the 1970s and 1980s, as traffic congestion, air pollution, and foreign oil dependence became central policy issues. Culturally, the development of the modern rail program has been deeply shaped by romantic notions of returning to the former glory of the Pacific Electric system, despite its manifold problems (Richmond 2005). Materially, the system is partially limited by the geographies of the original rail system. The Blue Line, for instance, was built in large part because of the cost-savings afforded by an existing Pacific Electric right-of-way running from downtown to Long Beach (Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee 2000; Elkind 2014). In this sense, the rail system did not disappear so much as ebb into the "transportation palimpsest"—the inscription of past systems of mobility within the landscape that enable or constrain the development of new arrangements for providing mobility in the city (Banham 1971, 75). The L.A. case demonstrates the importance of contextualizing urban mobility regimes within particular geo-historical conjunctures as an entry point into the cultural and material specificity of automobility's hegemony and its contestation. Such

an orientation alerts us to the fact that the system of automobility is not autopoietic (Böhm et al. 2006), but exists in antagonistic relationships with countervailing political projects that prioritize different forms of mobility (bus, rail, cycling, walking, car-sharing, etc.), and therefore the spatial organization of the built environment to support the viability of that mode of urban mobility. This insight takes on renewed importance as municipal governments in the United States accumulate 'automobility anxieties': environmental, governance, economic, and security concerns about the system of automobility's cumulative impact on air pollution, traffic congestion, demographic shifts, racial segregation, and decentralization.

This leads to a second point: the accretion of automobility anxieties form a conjunctural terrain upon which political projects to both preserve and reconstruct automobility organize. Gramsci reminds us that the accumulation of crisis tendencies can last decades during which political projects vie for hegemony. In U.S. cities, municipal governments present 'solutions' to the urban transportation 'problem' though new technological and policy experiments (Bus Rapid Transit, light rail, car-sharing subsidies), political alliances (conservative think tanks, liberal municipal governments, and real estate developers alike promoting TOD [see Weyrich and Lind 2009]), and different ideological paradigms framing 'a way forward.' Henderson (2013), for instance, has shown how competing ideologies of mobility shape the dominant modes of urban development in California's Bay Area. While "progressives believe government should actively discourage automobility and neoliberals believe the market should dictate mobility patterns, the conservative politics of mobility in San Francisco are to use government to preserve automobile access throughout the city" (Henderson 2013, 30). He shows how bicycle activists in the city have sought to build political power and reconfigure urban space to accommodate bicycling as a viable form of transportation. Most interestingly from a Gramscian perspective, these 'progressive mobility' activists have aligned politically with "the neoliberal developer class, which is cognizant of the role

mobility has in maintaining the exchange value of the city and also envisions bicycling and transit as part of the broader commodification of livability" (Henderson 2013, 131). Consistent with a conjunctural approach, Henderson shows that there are no neat political or ideological corollaries to the dominance of particular systems of mobility. Deterministic assumptions, for example that bicycle development is more progressive than automobile or that buses are more so than rail, cannot be taken as guaranteed. Rather, ideological, political, cultural, and economic trajectories shape their dominance at different historical conjunctures, making analytical work necessary to understand their interaction. Gramsci's emphasis on historical specificity helps us unpack these different social trajectories without losing the ability to say something general about the socio-spatial structuring of urban mobilities.

Third, Gramsci's critique of economism and attention to cultural and historical difference helps prevent an economistic treatment of race and class in understanding the politics of urban mobilities. While Gramsci never wrote about race, Stuart Hall (1978; 1986a) has argued that Gramsci's open Marxism brings attention to "the culturally specific quality of class formation in any historically specific society…how the regime of capital can function *through* differentiation and difference" including racial categories (Hall 1986a, 24). In other words, "race…is the modality in which class is lived" (Hall 1996, 341). As I have shown in the previous chapter, the development of rail infrastructure can re-entrench class relations by privileging the mobility of so-called 'choice riders' over the transit dependent. This process emerges, however, through culturally specific processes of racial formation (Bullard, Johnson, and Torres 2004; Henderson 2006). A conjunctural approach takes seriously race as constitutive of urban mobility systems, without privileging it as the primary social force organizing differential mobility. For instance, Virginia Parks (2016) has argued for an understanding of commuting—the journey from home to work and back again—as a *racial mobility project* that sits at the nexus of three institutional racisms: labor markets, housing, and

transportation. She writes, "a racial mobility project organizes, redistributes, and mobilizes resources along racial lines in conjunction with the movement of bodies across space" (Parks 2016, 293). As an analytic, the idea of a racial mobility project highlights the ways in which race becomes an organizing concept in the distribution and exercise of power within urban mobility regimes. Thus, rather than reducing the development of rail infrastructure to solely an economistic understanding of capital accumulation for the rentier class at the cost of mobility for the working class, a conjunctural approach is attentive to the ways in which local racial formation and racial hierarchies (Pulido 2006) structure the political economy of urban transit development and the governance of mobility regimes.

Fourth, a conjunctural approach focuses attention on the political work necessary to close the incompleteness of any mobility regime. Gramsci's conception of politics is instructive for understanding the social inequality produced by mobility regimes' attempts to secure dominance. It is processual and provisional, a constant experimentation with different modalities and techniques of governance that draw on, and reinforce unequal relations of power. Hegemony is open-ended; it needs constant renewal, defense, experimentation, and modification. Such a conception is instructive for thinking through the hegemony of the regime of automobility. Urban mobility regimes are perpetually incomplete, requiring political, ideological, and cultural work to secure dominance (Böhm et al. 2006). Attempts to govern automobility through congestion reduction, or traffic police inevitably "fail to close the wounds they are designed to 'heal,' but either leak round the edges (or through the middle), or generate their own knock-on unintended consequences, their own iatrogenic diseases, and which in turn are articulated as problems requiring their own remedies" (Böhm et al. 2006, 11). In other words, "The task of politics is precisely to 'make up' automobility, that is, to set the limits and thereby gloss over the particular antagonisms of automobility" (Böhm et al. 2006, 14). Methodologically, such an approach considers not only the constant political work of closing the

wounds of the hegemonic mobility regime (i.e. automobility), *but also* countervailing political projects that vie for power, particularly in an era of crisis. Automobility, yes, but also bus rapid transit, light rail, bicycling, car-share, transportation network companies, and walking, and how urban space is configured to make these various transport systems viable.

Summarizing, a conjunctural approach to understanding the formation and development of mobility regimes is: (1) historically and geographically concrete; (2) centers the political and ideological terrain upon which struggles for hegemony in urban transport organize; (3) attentive to how class is consolidated by and through mobility, taking seriously the geographically specific modalities in which class relations are reproduced through other social differences, including race; and (4) works to understand the mechanisms and relations by which a mobility regime attempts to secure dominance. To simplify these inter-related and individually complex dimensions, one could say that a conjunctural approach embraces a Gramscian understanding of politics—an historically and geographically contextual process

> where forces and relations, in the economy, in society, in culture, have to be actively worked on to produce particular forms of power, forms of domination. This is the production of politics — politics as a production. This conception of politics is fundamentally contingent, fundamentally open-ended. There is no law of history which can predict what must inevitably be the outcome of a political struggle. Politics depends on the relations of forces at any particular moment. (Hall 1987, 20).

In this sense, Gramsci provides conceptual tools for thinking more expansively about the 'politics' in the politics of mobility. His relevance for the study of mobility and immobility is in thinking conjuncturally about the development and reproduction urban mobility regimes, and how struggles for dominance structure social inequalities in mobility. This provides two important correctives to mobilities methodologies. First, a conjunctural approach provides a fruitful methodological orientation that can help address the persistent presentism of mobilities studies. It provides an historical analytic that can untangle how constellations of mobility are configured at different historical conjunctures through complex articulations of economy, culture, ideology, and

race. Second, it adds an historical-dialectical logic of inquiry to the study of urban mobility, without falling into the teleology and determinism correctly rejected by post-structural approaches to mobilities. This offers a methodological bridge between mobilities and urban political economy to address how different mobility regimes attempt to configure urban space and govern the social and spatial ramifications of that project, producing differential mobility for groups and individuals. A Gramscian politics of mobility takes seriously the ideological, cultural, and political work of this process, as "an extension of competing and contested ideologies and normative values about how the city should be configured and for whom" (Henderson 2004, 193).

Method: Archival Document Analysis

Taking a conjunctural approach, this thesis investigates a moment when constellations of mobility in the Los Angeles metropolitan region were significantly restructured: the beginning of what transit officials and the *L.A. Times* refer to as the city's "transit renaissance" (Murphy and Taylor 1990), marked by the opening of the first modern line of its ever-bourgeoning system, the Blue Line. I understand the consensus on rail development in Los Angeles as a particular 'political settlement' constituted by the economic and spatial contradictions of automobility, articulating a range of conjunctural relations of force: racialized cultural anxieties surrounding the placement of the Blue Line through historically African American areas; bourgeoning revanchist urban policies oriented toward the securitization of public space; and the renewed importance of rail development in entrepreneurial urban governance. It is the articulation of these conjunctural forces that shaped the 'common sense' of governing the new rail system and it is precisely this 'common sense' that I wish to defamiliarize in the rest of this thesis.

In this analysis, I conducted archival research into the processes and policies that informed the governance of security on the Blue Line, with particular attention to the period between 1980 – 2000. Archival research was conducted over the summer of 2015 at two primary sites: The Dorothy

Peyton Gray Transportation Library archives and UCLA Special Collections. Broadly, I targeted five

types of documents:

(1) Internal documents from the transit agencies
   - ❖ Meeting minutes
   - ❖ Internal reports (audits, peer evaluations, crime reports, research, etc.)
   - ❖ Newsletters
(2) Popular media and *Los Angeles Times* articles
   - ❖ Articles on Blue Line
   - ❖ Articles on transit police (Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Los Angeles Police Department, Rapid Transit District Transit Police)
   - ❖ Letters to the editor regarding the new rail program
(3) Law and legal cases
   - ❖ Metro Administrative Code
   - ❖ California Public Utilities Code
   - ❖ United States legal cases (for instance, *Florida v. Bostick*, a 1991 Supreme Court case which allowed for legal seizures of bus passengers, previously ruled "unreasonable search and seizure," protected in the 4th Amendment)
(4) Personal Papers and Memoirs
   - ❖ Personal letters of transit officials and politicians (Tom Bradley Papers, Yvonne Burke Papers)
   - ❖ Memoirs of William Bratton (1998) and George Kelling (Kelling and Coles 1996)
(5) Documents that address the national context of transit security
   - ❖ Federal Transit Administration reports on security
   - ❖ Magazines and trade-journals such as *Transit Policing* and *Police Chief*
   - ❖ Academic journal articles on transit security ("crime prevention through environmental design," "fear of crime," etc.)

I photographed, catalogued, and tagged these documents for themes. In addition, I built a database

of local media reports on the Blue Line (from *LA Times*, *Long Beach Press-Telegram*, etc.) from 1980 –

2000. All documents were analyzed using a combination of theoretical codes derived from my

explanatory framework, and inductive codes emerging out of the documents themselves (Lofland

and Lofland 1984). As described in chapter one, my analysis centered on two questions: (1) how and

why did securitization become a dominant mode of regulating the Blue Line? And (2) how did the

development of the Blue Line re-regulate transit security in Los Angeles?

Accordingly, my analysis has two parts. First, I identify and analyze the relations of force that

gave rise to securitization on the Blue Line. While I obtained the documents above from archives

and libraries in Los Angeles, rarely do the ideas, policies, and discourses contained within them begin or end there. As the transit agency sought to develop 'best practices' for transit security, decision makers engaged in a constant inter-referencing of the policy horizon, which at the time was overshadowed by debates in New York as the city and its new Transit Police Chief, William Bratton, moved to 'take back' the subway using zero-tolerance policing. In this sense, I am also concerned with the dense networks of circulating knowledge about transit security, and the social and spatial context in which decisions around security were made. This means broadening the scope of analysis beyond Los Angeles and to understand how the securitization of the system in Los Angeles was shaped through mobile policies and the practices through which policies are mobilized (Peck and Theodore 2012; Roy 2012). I trace how securitization—as a modality of regulating human mobility in the capitalist city—eventually formed on the Blue Line, and the ways in which mobile policies mutate in transit, and are re-articulated through local geographies of power (McCann and Ward 2011), including racial geographies of discrimination, and local political economy of urban transit.

The second part of my analysis concerns how the Los Angeles transit agency understood the need for mobility regulation, and how they developed and implemented techniques to meet those needs. I analyze the documents above to understand the discourses and anxieties surrounding security on the Blue Line, the logics determining security and policing policies, the laws governing behavior and the policing strategies to enforce them, and security budgets and their legitimizing narratives.

While a conjunctural approach to mobility studies extends the current methodological and theoretical boundaries of the field, it is not without its own limits. As with all archival methods, the conjunctural approach I undertake here privileges the interpretation of textual materials over participant observation, interviews, statistical analysis, and so on. Thus, my research does not adequately account for the Blue Line passengers' everyday encounters with socio-technical systems

of security (including transit police), nor for the practices of mobility that rework those systems. Furthermore, this methodological focus struggles to incorporate the experiential dimensions of mobility that have been the foundational pillar of mobilities. My analysis, therefore, inverts the general thrust of the field, taking its perceived strength and interpreting it as a limit. The next chapter probes beyond these limits, empirically demonstrating the importance of a conjunctural approach for thinking through the macro-level forces that shape the conditions and possibilities for mobility in the city.

CHAPTER 4. The (Thin) Blue Line: Police and the Politics of Mobility

"One of the unfortunate realities of policing is that you put that blue uniform on and you become part of the thin blue line between us and anarchy" (William Bratton, qtd. in Berlinger, Sanchez, and Prokupecz 2014, n.p.)

On July 14th, 1990, Los Angeles began operations on the first line of its modern rail program, the Blue Line. At the opening ceremony, the President of the Southern California Rapid Transit District (RTD) remarked, "The skeptics were wrong. The trains are back. This is the beginning of a transit renaissance" (Murphy and Taylor 1990, n.p.). Mayor Tom Bradley and Los Angeles County Supervisor Ed Edelman heralded the Blue Line as the first step in transitioning Los Angeles from the car capital of the world to a modern, world-class, transit-oriented city (*ibid.*). Indeed, for the politicians and planners on the stage that day, the line took on mythical proportions—a silver bullet that could resolve the socio-spatial contradictions of the automobile: traffic congestion, decentralization, air-pollution and racial segregation (Richmond 2005).

The opening of the Blue Line marks a crucial moment for the Los Angeles rail program. It was an historical conjuncture at which the economic and spatial contradictions of the automobile had come to fore, and rail development took on renewed importance in entrepreneurial urban governance, as politicians and business elites sought to cultivate a world-class image, promote downtown business interests, and develop transit-oriented real estate markets for urban renewal (Whitt 1982). Nationally, this moment was also characterized by growing cultural anxieties of 'losing control' of urban transit systems, which provoked political responses to 'take them back' (Kelling 1991; Kelling and Coles 1996). Just months before the opening of the Blue Line, the New York City Transit Police Department hired William Bratton to enforce the emerging broken windows theory, which argues that visual signs of disorder and minor offenses incite more serious criminal activity (Wilson and Kelling 1982). George Kelling, who recruited Bratton, had developed and refined the theory in the mid-80s while working as a consultant for the New York Metropolitan Transit

Authority (Kelling, Wasserman, and Sloan-Howitt 1988). Before William Bratton would move on to implement broken window theory through zero-tolerance policing under Rudy Giuliani's New York Police Department (NYPD), and later as Commissioner for the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), the New York subway was the experimental testing ground for a new paradigm of policing.

It was within this local and national context that the Los Angeles transit authorities (RTD and the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission [LACTC]) made decisions on how their new rail program would be governed, regulated, and policed. Cutting through nine different cities, including the historically African American areas of Watts, Compton, and Carson, the Blue Line posed a regulatory dilemma for the transit agency. While the placement of the line had been politically and economically advantageous in the early planning stages, the City, RTD, and LACTC had become increasingly concerned over how crime and 'gang activity' in the surrounding areas would impact ridership on the line, which was understood by local government as a key determinant of its financial and popular success. The collective 'solution' to this regulatory dilemma was to invest heavily in security and policing on the Blue Line. In its first year of operation, LACTC spent a total of $12.1 million policing the Blue Line, which was a 19-mile corridor (now 22-mile) with 17 stations (now 22) and 13 trains operating at any given time (RTD Security Briefing Book 1991). During that same period, the agency was spending $13.6 million to police the entire bus system serving Los Angeles County, approximately 1,400 route miles, with around 20,000 stops and 2,500 buses (*ibid.*). In terms of the ratio of passengers to expenditures on security, the agency was spending $1.62 per passenger on the Blue Line (versus $0.03 per bus passenger), over ten times the national average of $0.156 per passenger for lines similar to the Blue Line (*ibid.*).

These striking figures provoke the core empirical questions of this thesis: Why did LACTC spend this exorbitant amount of money on securitizing the system? How were the incredible disparities in security expenditures between the bus and the rail system legitimized? What about the

geographies of the Blue Line provoked this response? What can the panic around security—and more pointedly, the agency's response to that panic—tell us about the historical conjuncture in which their decisions on security were made? Taking these questions and opening of the Blue Line as an empirical entry point, I analyze how institutional regulation of mobility on the new system developed alongside the new space of the rail system in Los Angeles. New systems of mobility demand new forms of governance and are assembled through institutional priorities and goals, ideologies of governance, economic relations, and racial projects. As Höhne (2015, 313–314) writes of the opening of the New York subway, "[w]henever new infrastructures are implemented into the social realm, they bring about new forms of governance, interaction, experience and knowledge…The actual opening of an infrastructural system…is often a critical moment that is full of unpredictabilities and risks." Throughout this chapter, I will show that, for the politicians and bureaucrats managing the new system, the unpredictability of opening the Blue Line clearly centered on security and crime. I argue that this panic around security, and the transit authorities' response to that panic, was distinctly shaped by the geo-historical conjuncture in which those regulatory decisions were made. This chapter examines the ideological, economic, and racial relations of force that made such an extreme securitization of the Blue Line not only 'legitimate', but *necessary* to 'maintain order' (Hall et al. 1978) and secure the nascent rail system for new riders.

The previous chapters outlined a theoretical and methodological approach to the question of regulating systems of human mobility in capitalist cities. Theoretically, I drew on the regulationist approach to conceptualize the ways in which systems of human mobility are essential to capitalist urban development, but that such systems necessitate extra-economic arrangements to regulate and govern mobilities—what I term the mode of mobility regulation. Methodologically, I proposed that localized modes of mobility regulation can be productively examined through a Gramscian-inspired conjunctural approach, which provides methodological tools for bridging mobilities studies and

political economy through a grounded historical materialism. This chapter situates this general

theoretical and methodological approach within the particulars of my case: The Blue Line, circa

1990. As Anna Tsing writes, "Universals are effective within particular historical conjunctures that

give them content and force" (Tsing 2005, 8). It is the particulars of a geo-historical conjuncture that

gives a generalizable concept like of the mode of mobility regulation 'content and force'. In other

words, the varying relations of force delineate the content; their articulation, the force—the ways in

which a mode of mobility regulation shapes, and is shaped by, social relations of power. The aim of

this chapter, then, is to consider the socio-spatial forces that give shape and definition to the mode

of mobility regulation for rail transit in Los Angeles, California.

I do so through identifying and analyzing the articulation of three 'relations of force'

(Gramsci 2000) that gave definition to the mode of mobility regulation: (1) bourgeoning revanchist

urban policies oriented toward the securitization of public space through the expanded powers of

law and police; (2) the renewed importance of rail development in entrepreneurial urban governance;

and (3) a 'racial project' (Omi and Winant 1994; see also Parks 2016) to organize and regulate

movement within the Los Angeles system according to racial categories, including anxieties about

routing the Blue Line through the historically African American areas. I argue the articulation of

these three relations of force—ideological, economic, and racial—assembled the mode of mobility

regulation for rail transit in Los Angeles as one of securitization. While I take each of these three

relations of force in turn for analytical purposes, they should not be thought of in isolation. As

Gramsci suggests, it is their articulation that gives force to an historical conjuncture—each

dimension is changed based on its interaction with the others. In this case, their articulation

legitimized the exorbitant security expenditures on the Blue Line and made securitization the

'common sense' mode of mobility regulation. By way of conclusion, I argue that such systems of

mobility regulation are not neutral technologies, but rather draw on, and reproduce, unequal social relations of power, leading to the production of differential mobilities.

Revanchist Urban Policy and Zero Tolerance Policing

When the Blue Line opened in July of 1990, it was not merely the sheer number of number of officers on the line that constituted its securitization. In addition, the officers and their superiors were armed with a growing praxis of enforcement known as zero tolerance, which is aimed at preventative policing through aggressive crackdown on visual displays of perceived disorder and minor offenses. At its most basic level, zero tolerance is the theory and practice of immediate, punitive action against illegal or perceived anti-social behavior, even for the most minor offenses (Mitchell 2011, 295). Zero tolerance has been employed in a range of settings such as education, environmental governance, and domestic violence but is most commonly associated with policing. In particular, it is associated with the policing practices of the New York Police Department (NYPD) in the period after Rudy Giuliani's election to mayor (1994). Giuliani's platform was based on improved 'quality of life' through the expanded powers of the police in order to 'reclaim' public spaces through anti-homeless laws (Smith 1996) and crackdown on minor offenses such as public drunkenness or urination, panhandling and loitering. Neil Smith (1996, xviii) famously characterized this policy front as "revanchist" urban policy—a "revengeful and reactionary viciousness" by the upper classes against groups portrayed as "stealing" the city from them. Zero-tolerance policing is premised on broken windows theory, a criminological theory first popularized by sociologists James Q. Wilson and George Kelling in an *Atlantic Monthly* article originally published in 1982. Broken windows theory argues that visual signs of disorder and minor offenses incite more serious criminal activity (Wilson and Kelling 1982). This type of disorder, so the logic goes, invites criminal behavior because it appears to both other potential criminals and the general public as though crime will go unpunished, creating a sense of disorder. Thus, within this paradigm, there must be 'zero-tolerance'

for minor offences because they produce disorder and subsequently more crime. Zero tolerance policing becomes the logical endpoint of broken window theory. Despite widespread criticism for its lack of supporting empirical data (Harcourt 2001), problematical theoretical assumptions (Herbert 2001), and disproportionately negative impact on people of color (Camp and Heatherton 2016), broken window theory and zero tolerance policing have gone on to have enormous impact on municipal policing practices throughout the world (Swanson 2013).

The common historical narrative places the 'origin point' of zero-tolerance policing in Rudy Giuliani's New York and William Bratton's subsequent appointment as commissioner of the NYPD in 1994 (e.g. Harcourt 2001; Wacquant 2009; Mitchell 2011). Yet, the country's first large-scale implementation of the theory was not at the level of neighborhood policing, but rather in the largest urban transport system in the United States: the New York City subway system. In April of 1990, the New York Metropolitan Transit Authority hired William Bratton to 'take back the train' (Kelling and Coles 1996) through zero tolerance policing. This section situates the implementation of zero tolerance policing on the Blue Line within this broader historical and geographical context to show the ways in which the mode of mobility regulation for the Los Angeles rail system took shape as one of securitization. As I will show, institutional decisions regarding the regulation of mobility on the Blue Line system were influenced by Bratton's concurrent 'retaking' of the New York subway, and the more general trend towards the reclamation of public spaces in the city for the elite and to attract private capital investment in 'blighted' areas.

Zero tolerance as a technique for the governance of mobile subjects emerged out of a particular geo-historical conjuncture—namely New York city's fiscal crisis of the 1960s and 70s. The fiscal crisis served as a crucible that gave rise to an ideological and political project that sought re-assert a conservative urban policy agenda through a variety of foundations, think-tanks, and research institutes (O'Connor 2008). Most influential among them was the Manhattan Institute, a

conservative think tank founded on promoting market-led governance and a rejection of Great

Society liberalism through policies such as school reform, zero-tolerance policing, workfare, and

privatization of city services. Founded by Anthony Fischer (mentor to Margaret Thatcher) and

former CIA director William Casey, the Manhattan Institute has been enormously successful in

"turning intellect into influence" (Manhattan Institute for Policy Research et al. 2004)—the

concerted advancement of an intellectual and ideological project to reframe the urban crisis in terms

of policy solutions defined by market-led governance and, especially, the expansion of a law and

order local state (Peck 2010). In this intellectual project, the Institute financed and published a set of

influential publications including *City Journal*, a quarterly journal beginning in 1989 that continues to

advance 'best-practices' of neoliberal urban governance (Wacquant 2009; Peck 2010).

In the accounts of the Manhattan Institute and *City Journal*'s influence on the rise of zero

tolerance and neoliberal urban governance, most look over the journal's earlier history as *The N.Y.*

City Journal, instead focusing exclusively on the Giuliani era after it had rebranded itself as *City Journal*

(e.g. O'Connor 2008; Wacquant 2009; Peck 2010). Yet during those intervening years, *The N.Y. City*

Journal published extensively on an important policy arena that touched on the daily lives of nearly all

New Yorkers: the subway. Between its first issue in 1989 and 1994 *N.Y. City Journal* published on a

range of policy issues related to the subway: the moral decline associated with sexually suggestive

advertisements on the train cars (MacGuire 1991), MTA management policy (Greenberg 1992;

Netzer 1992), the privatization of mass transit (Savas 1993), quality of life crimes (Vitullo-Martin

1993), and, most importantly, policing (Kelling 1991; Bratton 1992). Through the pages of *N.Y. City*

Journal, the transport system became not only a space central to early moves towards revanchist

urban policy but—perhaps more importantly—a signifier of the 'disorder' of the city. As Kelling

(1991, n.p.) writes in an early *N.Y. City Journal* article titled "Reclaiming the Subway," "If disorder is

allowed to flourish, the subway system will inevitably decay, even in the face of the billions spent in

recent years to restore it. Service will erode. The well-to-do will find alternatives, not just in the form

of cabs and limousines, but by abandoning the city." According to this narrative, the ramifications

for the city could be disastrous if the disorderly trains were left unchecked. Without proper

enforcement of order, the MTA would be wasting billions of dollars in capital investment and, more

broadly, the 'well-to-do' classes who the city and real estate interests were desperately trying to

attract (Smith 1996) would abandon the city. Thus, the subway becomes a signifier of the city in

crisis—a space of disorder in need of 'reclamation' through the expanded powers of a local law-and-

order state in order to prevent these untenable economic outcomes.

The effort to 'reclaim the subway' was coordinated by Robert Kiley, then-chairman of the

Board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). With the mandate of researching legal

and tactical options for dealing with the 'disorder' associated with graffiti and 'the homeless

problem,' Kiely formed the Police Study Group, which included George Kelling. Bratton would

later reflect in his autobiography "the TA [Transit Authority] Police was an organization *uniquely*

positioned to test many of their [the Police Study Group's] most progressive theories" (Bratton and Knobler 1998,

140 my emphasis). To implement these 'progressive' theories, Kelling contacted and recruited

William Bratton who had distinguished himself as Chief of the Boston Transit Police. In April 1990,

just four months before the opening of the Blue Line in Los Angeles, Bratton began his position as

Chief of the New York Transit Police, immediately re-organizing the bureaucracy by promoting

"aggressive," "creative," "tough guy[s]" and consolidated power within a "brain trust" of lieutenants,

media analysts, academics, and close advisors (Bratton and Knobler 1998, 147–150). Their collective

strategy included the immediate roll-out of zero-tolerance policing through cracking down on fare-

evasion[15] and removing homeless individuals through what the MTA Police called "Operation

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[15] Fare evasion is the practice of deliberate or unintended nonpayment of full-fare for a trip on a transit system. It is considered theft of services and has a direct effect on the revenues of the system, the magnitude of which depends on the farebox recovery ratio, and the rate of fare evasion.

Enforcement[16]." Fare evasion was widespread throughout the system and, according to Bratton (1998, 143), "legitimate riders felt that they were entering a place of lawlessness and disorder. They saw people going in for free and began to question the wisdom of abiding by the law...others just gave up and felt the entire city was out of control." Once again, we see the subway as synecdoche for the city in crisis, the extra-ordinary means of resolution legitimized through the narrative of an extra-ordinary problem, an entire city out of control. In this case, extra-ordinary means consisted of new legal arrangements targeting the homeless population (see Freitag 1990; Smith 1990), a dramatic increase in arrests and ejections from the system (Kelling and Coles 1996), and zero tolerance for 'quality of life crimes' such as sleeping, eating, playing music and especially fare evasion.

Despite ongoing legal challenges to Operation Enforcement and widespread complaints about the impact of the agency's aggressive new tactics on poor and non-white riders (Freitag 1990; Wolff 1990), the subway proved to be both testing ground and, in the eyes of Bratton and the rising conservative movement in Manhattan, a 'proving' ground for broken window policing. Indeed, Bratton cites fare-evasion as the original 'broken window':

> We had reduced fare evasion, motivated the cops, streamlined the arrest process, and increased police productivity; we had involved the public, increased their attention, and won their approval; we had controlled disorder and achieved a decrease in crime. All from arresting people for a buck-fifteen crime [the price of MTA fare]. We were proving the Broken Windows theory (156).

Thus, the subway facilitated policy experimentation with zero tolerance policing and Kelling's most "progressive" theories. In the terms outlined in the previous chapter, the New York MTA had drastically re-oriented its mode of mobility regulation for the subway towards securitization, achieved through an institutional support of revanchist ideologies of governance and the expanded

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[16] Through Kelling's efforts, Operation Enforcement had officially commenced on October 25, 1989, but stalled due to legal challenges and a lack of support from the police force and MTA leadership (Freitag 1990). Kelling reached out to Bratton to correct that situation.

presence and powers of the Transit Police. Bratton described it differently: "It was a transit renaissance" (Bratton and Knobler 1998, 159).

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the 'renaissance' in the subway—ushered in through the New York MTA's reformulated mode of mobility regulation—had widespread influence on the ways in which transit systems across the country were regulated and policed (see Boyd, Maier, and Kenney 1996). In this, it is difficult to understate the influence of the NYMTA as a policy model for urban transit provision. The New York public transit system is, by far, the largest system in the country by nearly any measure. This status makes it, at once, both the perpetual outlier and prototype. It is a peak in the policy landscape of public transportation provision and governance, the system to which managers of agencies across the country look for inspiration and 'best practices.' This is as true for policing practices and transit security as it is for other areas such as route planning or fare structuring. Throughout my analysis of security in the Los Angeles system, there were repeated references to New York in transit agency documents, as well as many clear cases in which L.A. officials explicitly drew upon models from the MTA when implementing new security measures, policing practices, or legal frameworks.

For instance, both systems have implemented administrative tribunals called the Transit Adjudication Bureau[17] (TAB), which allowed the agencies to bypass local courts and retain more profit from citations. Additionally, Los Angeles implemented a zero-tolerance policy on graffiti on the Blue Line, explicitly modeled after the NYMTA's Clean Car Program, in which train cars with

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[17] In New York, the MTA levied the state legislature to decriminalize sections of state law that governed infractions relating to riding public transit such as fare evasion, drinking, or lying down. This decriminalization allowed for the MTA to set up their own "transit court" in 1984, bypassing the local courts and retain more profits from citations, which are then reinvested in security (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2004). The legislation also allowed them to garnish wages and, in 1996, it received state authority to withhold tax refunds from outstanding citations (*ibid.*). Los Angeles struggled to implement the transit court model, with first references to the New York TAB as early as 1992 (Southern California Rapid Transit District 1992), but not finally put into place until 2011 after many years of political struggle and research on the New York TAB. Reasons cited for the Los Angeles TAB include: *"our need for revenues at the lowest cost"* and "to continue improving service to achieve and maintain a 'world class system"* (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2010).

graffiti on them were not allowed to be put in service, often causing delays and overcrowding (Taylor 1990b; see also Austin 2001, 221). With programs like the Transit Adjudication Bureau (1984), the Clean Car Program (1984), and Operation Enforcement (1989) chronicled in trade journals like *Transit Police* and *The Police Chief,* as well as local media, LACTC and SCRTD were not ignorant of the dramatic drops in crime that NYMTA was attributing their restructured mode of mobility regulation. Neither was the comparison lost on the *Los Angeles Times.* After an incident in which the Blue Line construction site had been graffitied, an editorial on November 4, 1989 references New York's new regulatory environment as a model to emulate,

> The trolley route runs through some poor neighborhoods swarming with youth gangs. So the transportation commission showed an incredible lack of foresight in not anticipating the problem and doing more to nip it in the bud… The hard fact of the matter is that nobody with a modicum of sense will ride the trolley if they don't feel safe on it, so security must be a priority both in building and operating it…New York City recently spent $6 billion to clean up its subways, and it has 4,000 transit police to keep them safe. If transit officials here want people to ride their new system, they'd better be prepared to spend that kind of money on security, too. (Editorial 1989)

$6 billion on security expenditures is clearly an absurd number for a light rail line itself costing only $890 million. Yet, as I will show throughout the remainder of this chapter, the theme of 'nipping' the problem of 'youth gangs' in the 'bud' through enormous security expenditures is one that resonated with the transportation commission and played a significant role in decisions on how to regulate and police mobility on the Blue Line.

Urban Transit and Entrepreneurial Urban Governance

During the 1980s and 1990s, Los Angeles was in the midst of a broad-scale political effort to transform the landscape of its urban transportation system in response the growing accumulation of social, economic, and spatial contradictions of automobility: decentralization, foreign oil dependency, air pollution, racial segregation, and traffic congestion. Through the passage of a half-cent sales tax increase in 1980 (Proposition A), a 'political settlement' on rail development emerged

amongst the city's politicians and business elites in Los Angeles, as well as outlying cities attracted by a 25% local return from the tax, and working-class bus riders attracted by three year subsidy for bus fares (Richmond 2005; Elkind 2014). Proposition A was financially and politically supported by downtown business interests, with the hope to use fixed infrastructure in order to shape the direction of urban growth (Whitt 1982). To attract real estate investment back to the central business district and prevent further loses to outlying cities such as Santa Monica and Pasadena, political coalitions of business interests lobbied for a hub-and-spoke rail system centered on the downtown. Central business district firms dominated campaign contributions for the proposed sale-tax increase measures in both 1968 and 1974, and somewhat less so for the successful 1980 measure (Whitt 1982). Furthermore, the transit system was understood as a herald of a modern, world-class city able to compete with the recent surge of heavy and light rail development in San Francisco, Atlanta, and Washington D.C. (Whitt 1982; Richmond 2005; Elkind 2014).

After much debate, the Los Angeles – Long Beach line emerged as the front runner for the first route to be built from Proposition A funds, more for political and economic reasons than for any transport planning rationale. Politically, the route placement had significant advantages. According to LACTC Commissioner Christine Reed, "The reason the Long Beach Line got picked was because it ran through the district of the Chair of the [California] Assembly Transportation Committee and Supervisor Kenneth Hahn—the father of Proposition A—wanted there…and the city of Long Beach wanted it there" (qtd. in Richmond 2005, 198)[18]. Furthermore, the Blue Line was

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[18] Here, and throughout this chapter, I draw on Johnathan Richmond's study (2005) of the Los Angeles rail program, based on his doctoral dissertation completed in 1991. Richmond conducted an extensive set of interviews with politicians, planners, community groups, and transportation authorities, working to understand the motivation for building rail over expanding and supporting the bus system (for full list see pgs. 411 – 420). His book concludes that the rail system was legitimized not through economic or planning rationales, but through a series of metaphors and 'myths' such as a 'balanced' transportation system, community 'renewal,' or trains as a symbol of sexual acumen. I depart from this more symbolic, discursive, and inductive approach, instead framing my analysis through a conjunctural approach. I therefore do not use the book for explanatory purposes, but as an object of analysis and a rich secondary source for interpreting the politics of the Los Angeles rail program.

a crucial part of LACTC's larger regional strategy for the system. It was locally funded as 'starter line' that, if successful, could potentially leverage more federal funding in order to expand the system (Richmond 2005, 196; Elkind 2014). With President Reagan eying federal transportation funding for cuts, expediency and efficiency became crucial for LACTC. The Long Beach line was seen as optimal for this goal, as the agency already owned an old Pacific Electric right-of-way and could therefore avoid the costly and time-consuming land acquisition process. It was, in the words of then-Mayor of Long Beach, "the politically necessary line" (qtd. in Richmond 2005, 198).

While the placement of the line had perceived political and economic benefits, it also provoked a 'problem' for the agency of how to attract riders out of their cars and onto a rail line that was to pass through racialized territories of poverty. In particular, there was a panic about crime on the new system both within the agency and amongst the general public. By the late 1980s, as construction of the line neared completion, these anxieties reached a fever pitch. Letters from concerned citizens flooded the inboxes of politicians and Board members (Stolberg 1990). A 1987 letter from a Hollywood agent, Warren Meyers, to then-Mayor Tom Bradley represents one of the early and extreme examples:

> As a concerned citizen of Los Angeles, I urge you to consider carefully the inevitable consequences of creating an extended Metro Rail system. It will unleash on this city all the horrors of the New York subway system…*Subways are havens and spawning places* for muggers, vandals, drug pushers, loiterers, and homosexuals seeking random and anonymous sex…Los Angeles has been uniquely free, by and large, of street crimes of confrontation except in what are acknowledged slums and ghettos. We are an automotive society, and sheer distance alone has been instrumental in insulating many a residential community from marauders lacking easy access to those communities…*You have your hands full policing this city as it is. Imagine the escalation of that problem that the subway will certainly bring.* (Meyers 1987 my emphasis)

While the rhetoric is inflammatory, a close read of Meyers' letter reveals two core concerns that were shared by both the transit agencies and by the public at large—namely that transit systems are spaces of disorder that 'spawn' crime and that the new system would exacerbate crime throughout the city. In letters to public officials (Meyers 1987; Stolberg 1990) and in news media (Editorial 1989; Taylor

1990a, 1990b, 1990d), these core concerns are expressed again and again, contributing to a sense of

unease regarding the development of the rail line. Within agency documents, there is a clear

expression of the need to address these concerns around crime and disorder, if not an outright

invocation of them (e.g. Rail Construction Corporation 1990). While dominant discourses

surrounding the rail system lauded the Blue Line's wide-ranging potential to reduce congestion,

improve air-quality, and spur growth and "community renewal" (Richmond 2005, 345), there was a

simultaneous undercurrent that suggested that such potential would never be realized without also

'nipping' the problem of crime in the 'bud' (Taylor 1990b, 1990b). To pull drivers out of their cars

and onto the new system as revenue-generating customers, the agency felt compelled to compete

with the perceived order and safety of the isolated automobile, and minimize the perceived threats

rail passengers through the securitization of the system.

By the early months of 1990, as the transit agencies were finalizing governance decisions for

the line, the panic over crime came to an institutional head. There was an intense political struggle

about which law enforcement agency would police the Blue Line, the internal police force of the

Southern California Rapid Transit District (RTD Police), or the Los Angeles County Sheriff's

Department (LASD). Each police force was supported by a different agency, the Southern

California Rapid Transit District (RTD) and the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission

(LACTC), respectively. While the relationship between the two agencies had always been

contentious[19] due to the fact that LACTC was financing the line and RTD was charged with

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[19] Up to 1976, there was only one regional transportation agency in Los Angeles: the RTD, a special tax district with a
legislative mandate to provide transportation to the area. After several failed sales tax measures to fund mass transit
throughout the 1960s and early 1970s (see Whitt 1982 Chapter 3), the chairman of the California Assembly Committee
on Transportation, Walter Ingalls, grew frustrated with the RTD's stalled progress (Elkind 2014). He wrote, and
successfully advocated for, legislation to create a second transit bureaucracy for Los Angeles County that would have
taxation powers, the LACTC. Immediately after being signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown, Ingalls stripped the
RTD of taxation powers, leaving LACTC as the only authority legally capable of placing tax measures on the ballot, and
RTD as the entity responsible for operating the already-existing bus system and any potential rail system (Elkind 2014,
36). Los Angeles was left with one transit agency financing mass transit and one operating it, a combination that one
RTD board member later described as "a true recipe for civic disaster" (qtd. in Elkind 2014, 36).

operating it once complete (Elkind 2014), the issue of transit security on the Blue Line brought it to a toxic level. Board meetings in which security was discussed devolved into shouting matches with public officials accusing each other of "public corruption" and "shameful, abominable [conduct] and politics at its dirtiest" (Southern California Rapid Transit District 1990a, 4–5). On February 9th, 1990 the RTD board voted to award the contract for policing the Blue Line to the RTD Police after a 9-2 vote (Taylor 1990d). The RTD Police bid was $6.2 million for 101 officers. However, at the next board meeting on March 8, 1990 the board reversed its own decision and awarded the contract to the Sheriff's Department in a 7-1 vote, submitting to intense pressure from the County Board of Supervisors and Mayor Bradley who argued that RTD police force would not inspire public confidence in the line (Southern California Rapid Transit District 1990b). The board president admitted, "We succumbed to political pressure. That's the truth…It had everything to do with politics" (Stolberg 1990, n.p.). The Sheriff's bid was $9.9 million (later increased) for 126 officers (*ibid.*). The decision caused a minor controversy, but again was legitimized through the invocation of safety and security, coupled with the need to cater to the panic surrounding crime on the line: "the RTD transit police could not provide the level of security needed to build public confidence in the rail line" (Taylor 1990d, n.p.).

With the hope of 'building public confidence,' LACTC spent unprecedented amounts of money to securitize the new rail system. From 1990 – 1991, the agency paid LASD $12.1 million for security services on the Blue Line, over a third of its entire operating budget for the Blue Line (Taylor 1990a; RTD Security Briefing Book 1991). Even the New York MTA, with easily the highest volume of passengers of any transit system (and highest crime) in the United States, spent only around 10% of its operating budget on security in 1990 (Taylor 1990a). In terms of the ratio of passengers to expenditures on security, LACTC was spending $1.62 per passenger on the Blue Line. According to an survey of agencies operating similar light rail lines throughout the country, this was

over ten times the national average of $0.156 (RTD Security Briefing Book 1991). Each passenger

on the bus system, meanwhile, received $0.03 in security expenditures.

LACTC legitimized their incredible expenditures on policing through an economic logic that

stressed symbolic returns of the security precedent set by the Blue Line. In agency documents and

popular media, there is a clear concern that the Blue Line would be the standard against which

Angelenos would make their judgement of the entire new rail program as an alternative to an urban

transportation system dominated by automobility (Editorial 1989; Taylor 1990c; RTD Security

Briefing Book 1991). A 1991 report prepared for the RTD board vote to renew the LASD contract

demonstrates this point:

> *There is nothing more important to the riding public that [sic] their sense of personal security.*
> There is nothing more important that we can do to provide this sende [sic] of
> security than to financially support the quality of service that has been provided by
> the Sheriff's Department…It's [sic] value is incalculable. In addition, *the Los Angeles*
> *County Transportation Commission is convinced that the perception of the entire rail system as an*
> *attractive alternative to the automobile is affected by how security is handled on the Blue Line.* That
> is why the LACTC is totally supportive of investing money for security knowing is
> [sic] has implications far beyond this one route. *As rail systems are built into other areas in*
> *the county, the quality of security on the Blue Line will affect the very acceptability of using*
> *alternative modes of transportation.* There is no higher priority than insuring the security
> of the travelling public. (RTD Security Briefing Book 1991, n.p., my emphasis)

One can see the economic rationality: the precedent set for security on the Blue Line will have

ramifications that could impact the entire financial future of the rail program. The multi-billion-

dollar gamble that rail transit could be a viable alternative to the automobile in Los Angeles suddenly

relies upon maintaining order on the Blue Line—to make it appear a safe, clean, attractive alternative

to the private automobile. Indeed, security overrode all other issues, including warnings from

planners and the operators' union that the line would be prone to vehicular collisions[20]: "Security is

the No. 1 issue…The initial success of this rail line and future rail lines is riding on it" (Taylor 1990a,

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[20] Infamously, the Blue Line would go on to be the deadliest light rail line in the county, killing more than 120 people
since 1990 (31 by suicide), more than the rest of the lines combined (Nelson 2013).

n.p.). Neil Peterson, the executive director of LACTC and a major promoter of the securitization of the Blue Line, has been quoted in recent years as saying, "my peers thought I was nuts [to spend so much on security]…But from day one, no one touched that line" (qtd. in Elkind 2014, 112). Peterson's choice of language is relevant and instructive. It is not that that nobody was touched *on* that line, the ostensible goal of transit police, to 'ensure the security of the travelling public.' Rather it was that nobody touched *that line*, LACTC's property.

With public pressure from the *Los Angeles Times* to 'nip the problem in the bud' (Editorial 1989), and political pressure from the L.A. County Board of Supervisors and Mayor Bradley to secure the system, LACTC made sure the precedent of order was set from the beginning; there would never be a need to 're-take' the system (as in New York) because they never intended to 'lose' it in the first place. On the ground, this meant that police flooded the Blue Line and its surrounding neighborhoods upon its opening. Taking their policy lead from Bratton's New York Transit Police, zero tolerance policing was widely practiced. Quality of life crimes were quickly cracked down upon and there was 'zero-tolerance' for displays of disorder such as sleeping or eating on the line. This is exemplified by a *Los Angeles Times* article on July 17, three days after the opening of the line, with the headline "Minor flareups are met by a show of force on the Blue Line" (Merina 1990). In the article, officers of the newly formed Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Transit Services Bureau describe the situation, "The problem with gangs hasn't happened. The crime problems haven't happened. It's all been pretty peaceful" (*ibid.,* n.p.). Lt. Jim Holts felt similarly, "It's like making football plans to attack your opponents and the opponents never show up. You've got the field to yourself" (*ibid.,* n.p.). While violent crime on the line was quite low, citations for 'quality of life crimes quickly came to triple those on the bus system, despite the fact that 99% of riders were on the bus (RTD Security Briefing Book 1991). During the first year of operation, there were 18,938

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citations distributed by the Sheriff's department on the Blue Line, compared to 5,746 for the entire bus system (*ibid.*).

The securitization of the Blue Line is an instructive case for examining the ways in which the political economy of rail transit becomes reliant on systems of social regulation and control. The economic potential of the rail system as an accumulation strategy necessitated a regulatory system to assemble the conditions for its realization as a 'successful' route, one that could attract riders, promote the image of a modern, transit oriented city, and leverage federal funds. Yet, as I outlined in the previous chapter, to characterize the mode of mobility regulation as exclusively a function of the economy is a reductionist treatment of the politics of mobility. A conjunctural approach demands attention to the ways in which strategies of capital accumulation and their necessary regimes of regulation operate through social difference, including racial categories. As I have stressed in chapters two and three, the same is true for systems of mobility in capitalist cities. As I show in the next section, the securitization of Blue Line relied on a racial logic of differentiation that allowed for such dramatic expenditures on security.

Security as a Racial Mobility Project

In agency documents and popular media there was not only a prominent anxiety about disorder and crime on the new system in general, but also specifically about the fact that the line passes through territories of racialized poverty. During the 1990s, the Blue Line route ran through several neighborhoods with the highest concentrations of African Americans in the Los Angeles region: South Central (officially renamed South L.A. in 2003), Watts, Compton and Carson, among others. While the route of the line had political and economic benefits (Elkind 2014), it also posed a perceived governance problem for the agency—the need to protect 'the riding public' from 'youth gangs' and the challenge of attracting new riders who might be feel unsafe passing through an area

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the *L.A. Times* regularly referred to as a "ghetto." In this section, I explore the relationship between the solution to that 'problem'—securitization—and the racialization of public transit in Los Angeles.

I understand racialization as "the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice or group," (Omi and Winant 1994, 18) in this case the coding of the city bus as "the bearer of racialized bodies, a symbol of the imagined geography of the ghetto" (Kirouac-Fram 2012, 179). This "persistent racialization of the urban bus," (Kirouac-Fram 2012, 162) emerges out of the long histories of racial discrimination in urban transport, housing, and labor markets (Parks 2016; see also Bullard, Johnson, and Torres 2004; Henderson 2006; Hutchinson 2003) as well as the white supremacist impulse to control the mobilities and moorings of black bodies (Hague 2010). The racialization of public transit in the United States might be understood as what Virginia Parks (2016, 293) calls a 'racial mobility project', a racial project (see Omi and Winant 1994) that "organizes, redistributes, and mobilizes resources along racial lines in conjunction with the movement of bodies across space." As I will show there was a distinct racial mobility project in the Los Angeles public transit system, one that sought to both 'organize' (or regulate) the mobility of non-white bodies on the Blue Line, and 'redistribute' security resources from the bus system to the rail system. Together this racial mobility project created a condition in which the bus system and its predominantly low-income, minority ridership experienced severe *under*-policing and the train experienced severe *over*-policing. Importantly, these are not isolated outcomes, rather they are different manifestations of the same racial mobility project—a relational and racial politics of mobility.

The securitization of the Blue Line both relied upon and reinforced a racial distinction between the bus system and the nascent rail system. As noted by many scholars of Los Angeles, the governance of urban transport in the region has become a major civil rights issue, in which the development of the rail system in the 1990s was actively leveraged to attract whiter, wealthier

populations to public transit at the cost of political and economic disinvestment in the bus system

and its overwhelmingly poor, non-white ridership (Davis 1995; Kelley 1996; Pastor 2001; Grengs

2002; Soja 2010). This inequity eventually lead to a landmark civil rights lawsuit in 1996 in which an

activist group called the Bus Riders Union (BRU) claimed that the Los Angeles transit authority was

creating a separate but unequal system of public transit, with public funds disproportionately

directed to rail transit service at the cost of bus service (see Garrett 2006; Soja 2010). The lawsuit

ended in by federal consent decree, which mandated that the transit agency close the financial and

service gap between the bus and rail systems. While the case of the BRU has been written on

extensively (Burgos and Pulido 1998; Grengs 2002, 2005; Cresswell 2006; Garrett 2006; Soja 2010),

an overlooked mandate of the consent decree reads, "MTA [Metro] shall institute and maintain a

policy of fairly distributing resources devoted to transit security in the form of uniformed officers,

improved waiting areas, and other measures, among all classes of service, all modes of transit, and all

geographic areas served by MTA" (Labor/Community Strategy Center v. Los Angeles County

Metropolitan Transit Authority 1996, 3). This mandate echoes the longstanding—and ongoing—

politics of racialized mobility in Los Angeles, one facet of which was expressed as an issue of

regulation and security.

Within this context, the securitization of the Blue Line cannot be fully understood outside of

its relationship to the level of security on bus system. As previously described, there was an

incredible imbalance in security spending between the two systems during the years leading up to the

1996 (and continuing thereafter, albeit to a lesser extent). Yet, in the midst of this incredible

disparity, rates of bus crime including assaults, robberies, graffiti, and pickpocketing soared,

increasing 500% between 1988 and 1992, with 80% of that increase concentrated in Central L.A.,

the area in which the Blue Line operates (Lopez 1993). Nonetheless, investments in bus security

remained flat while LACTC simultaneously poured incredible amounts of money into security on

the Blue Line (as well as the Red Line subway once it opened in 1993). Marvin Holen, the President

of the RTD Board of Directors, publicly blamed LACTC for withholding funds for bus security and

prioritizing the securitization of the rail system, reasoning that the bus system was being

institutionally devalued. In his words, "[t]here is nothing politically sexy about providing money for

bus security" (Lopez 1993, n.p.).

This lack of political will to invest in the bus system in general, and in security in particular,

was shaped by the "persistent racialization of the urban bus," (Kirouac-Fram 2012, 162), a false

perception amongst transit officials that the bus could not be salvaged from its image as the crime-

ridden transport system for black bodies. Walter King, Alternate Commissioner on the LACTC

Board, demonstrates this point:

> The crime on the bus is fantastic…The people themselves have lost their morals, the
> home is broken down, the church is broken down and the schools are broken
> down…When we build this [rail] system, we're going to have coverage you don't
> have on a bus. We're building in millions of dollars worth of things, it's going to
> make it safe…[but w]e've got a bunch of animals out there we can't design and build
> around. (qtd. in Richmond 2005, 261)

Here, King conflates the high minority ridership of the bus with an astonishing array of racial

tropes—'animals' in 'broken' institutions who have 'lost their morals' and therefore create a

'fantastic' amount of crime. King's reasoning is undercut by the fact that he sat on the board for the

very same agency that was actively defunding security for the bus system, in effect creating the

conditions for the rise in crime that he attributes to the moral failings of bus riders.

If the rail system was to be the bright, modern, safe alternative to the bus system, then

securitization provided the means of distinction—a mode of regulation that could sort 'desirable'

mobilities for the new system, and control the movement of 'disorderly' and 'undesirable' mobilities.

As Richmond concludes after extensive interviews with transit officials at the time, "[u]nderlying

many of the statements is a subtle racism suggesting that 'undesirable' people to be found on buses

will not contaminate the trains" (Richmond 2005, 274). This regulatory sorting is most clearly

illustrated in institutional discussions surrounding the concept of 'the riding public.' In security

reports and popular media there is a constant reference to the idea of a mobile public who has

unrestricted access to the entire public transit, yet the exact constitution of such a public remains

vague. Any public is defined by its process of inclusion and exclusion—identifying perceived

sameness as non-threatening and difference as in need of exclusion or control (Iveson 2007). The

ostensible mandate of the transit police—protecting 'the riding public'—is therefore a process of

determining who is deserving of 'safety and security', and who is undeserving and subsequently in

need of banishment or control and regulation. On the Blue Line, and more generally in United

States public transit systems, this process was distinctly racialized—that is, premised upon a logic

that sorts who is deserving and who is in need of control based on racial categories. The racial logic

of constructing the riding public was central in the securitization of the Blue Line.

In the months leading up to the opening, there was fervor within the agency and the media

over crime on the Blue Line (Editorial 1989; Merina 1990; Taylor 1990c). In particular, the perceived

threat of mobile 'gang activity' was used to legitimize the exorbitant security expenditures on the

Blue Line (Editorial 1989; Rail Construction Corporation 1990; Southern California Rapid Transit

District 1990a). LACTC documents would later admit, however, that "The gangs in the area are

known to have a respect for the rail line and recognize that the trains are not part of their turf" (qtd.

in Quiñones 2004, n.p.). In fact, LACTC had more cause for concern regarding gangs *within* their

chosen police force, rather than *on* the line. In 1991, a federal judge ruled that a "neo-Nazi, white

supremacist gang" of Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputies were routinely engaging in "racial

hostility" and "terrorist type tactics" against African-American and Latino residents in the area

surrounding the Blue Line, with the knowledge of their superiors (Tobar 1991, n.p.). This gang,

known as the Lynnwood Vikings, is just one of several white supremacist gangs that have historically

operated within the Sheriff's Department (Pfeifer 2007). The 1991 ruling came just a month before

LACTC voted to renew their contract with the LASD. Yet, despite a non-white ridership of 75% (Richmond 2005, 357) and federal recognition of white supremacist gangs within the department, LACTC continued to argue[21] that the Sheriff's Department was the best qualified for protecting 'the riding public' on that line. Thus, within the operating limits of LACTC's logic, exposure to racialized state violence was either not understood as unsafe for non-white passengers, or the safety of those passengers was institutionally devalued compared to attracting whiter, wealthier populations through increased 'safety and security.'

Indeed, in LACTC documents, the concept of the 'riding public' seems only to exist in relationship to the securitization of the rail system. While the line was sold to the public on its ability to reduce traffic by pulling new riders out of their cars, LACTC itself estimated that a majority of the ridership for the new line would be constituted by previous bus riders. These predictions bore out; during the first year of operation, 75% of Blue Line riders had previously used the bus for the same trip (RTD Security Briefing Book 1991). Furthermore, bus routes in the surrounding South L.A. were drastically re-oriented to connect with Blue Line, what LACTC staff called "force-feeding" bus passengers onto the rail system to boost ridership numbers (Richmond 2005, 294). In short, well-over the majority of 'the riding public' on the Blue Line were either recently bus riders on a system that was experiencing a surge in crime, or were riding that same system to and/or from the Blue Line. On the Blue Line, the Sherriff's Department was 'protecting' the same people riding the severely under-policed bus system, but those people were not understood as 'the riding public' in need of security until they became riders of the rail system. This indicates that, in fact, it was not the security of the public transit riders that was valued, but the line itself or, more accurately, the potential to attract a different class of riders to the new system.

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[21] In my reading of the struggle over the policing contract from 1989 – 1996, only Antonio Villaraigosa—then-City Councilman and Board member for the SCRTD and later Mayor—publicly raised concerns over "allegations of excessive force by the Sheriff's Department" (Southern California Rapid Transit District 1991).

The institutional disinvestment of security for the bus system, and the prioritization of security on the Blue Line reveal a racial mobility project within the governance of Los Angeles public transit—one that puts this statement from LACTC into new light: "There is nothing more important to the riding public that [sic] their sense of personal security" (RTD Security Briefing Book 1991, n.p.). If indeed there is nothing more important to the riding public than their sense of personal security, who constitutes the riding public? For whom is security important? Security for whom? As I have shown, 'security' was certainly not intended for riders of the racialized bus, nor for riders who were "force-fed" onto the Blue Line by re-routed bus lines, nor for black and Latino/a riders who were exposed to a police force who routinely engaged in racialized state violence and harbored known white supremacists. Thus, a racial mobility project informed decision making processes regarding the regulation of transit mobility on the Blue Line and, importantly, that racial logic was entangled with the extraction of value from the system. While the Blue Line was touted by politicians as providing mobility to South L.A.'s minority and low-income residents (Richmond 2005), the security apparatus on the line meant that—even if that were true—that their mobility would be increasingly policed and regulated.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have outlined the conjunctural forces that shaped the assembly of the regulatory environment for the Blue Line—the ideological, economic, and racial relations of force that made the securitization of the Blue Line 'common-sense.' First, the securitization of the Blue Line emerges out of both a critical historical moment in the turn towards revanchist urban policy *and* a space crucial to that political and ideological project: urban transit system in the early 1990s. As I have shown, the New York subway was an important experimental testing ground for the theory and practice of zero-tolerance policing, which went on to impact the policing and regulation of public transit systems around the country, including Los Angeles. Second, the

securitization of the Blue Line was a political project seen as necessary to maintain order, secure high ridership, and ideally leverage federal dollars with a 'successful' line. The success of the Blue Line was understood to be contingent on this strict enforcement of order—to make the train appear as a safe, attractive alternative to both the automobile and the bus system in order to realize the further expansion of the system as a strategy of accumulation. Third, securitization was shaped by a racial mobility project that sought the spatial control of non-white bodies on the Blue Line, and redistribute security resources from the racialized bus system to the rail system. Together, I argue that these relations of force formed a new mode of mobility regulation for transit mobilities in Los Angeles—one that relied heavily on law and police power to secure the system in uneven ways, shaping the production of differential and relational mobilities.

Importantly, the regulation of mobility is not a neutral technology, but rather, as I have shown through the case of the Blue Line, informed by particular ideologies of governance, economic goals and political priorities, and institutional racisms. The regulation of mobility does political work in sorting and policing mobile subjects, shaping the production of differential mobilities and entrenching uneven social relations of race and class. In short, there is a politics of mobility that operates through its regulation.

CHAPTER 5. Conclusion: Constructing Future History

"A common error in historico-political analysis consists in an inability to find the correct relation between what is organic and what is conjunctural…Moreover, if this error is serious in historiography, it becomes still more serious in the art of politics, when it is not the reconstruction of past history but the construction of present and future history which is at stake." (Gramsci 2000, 201–202)

On November 14th, 2016, the Labor/Community Strategy Center—the parent organization of the Bus Riders Union and Fight for the Soul of the Cities—filed a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Civil Rights Division against the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), claiming that the agency has created a discriminatory system of policing the public transit network. Citing citation and arrest data acquired through a Freedom of Information Act request, the Strategy Center claims that Metro has routinely engaged in the criminalization of Black riders through 'quality of life' citations, broken window policing and 'stop and frisk' policies. Their data show that Blacks receive 50% of MTA citations and 58% of arrests by Los Angeles County Sherriff's, despite constituting approximately 17% of bus and 19% of rail ridership (Mann 2016). White riders, meanwhile receive 11% of total citations and constitute only 8% of bus ridership and 13% of rail ridership. Furthermore, their complaint details individual cases of excessive force, racial profiling, and harassment targeted at Black riders by the Sherriff's Department. The report concludes that:

> The Black community is faced with the dilemma of being forced to subject oneself to a racial discriminatory system and increased contact with the police and potential police misconduct, in order to utilize public transportation, under conditions where transit reliance is more frequently than not a public necessity rather than a choice. (Mann 2016, 12)

The Strategy Center's claim centers upon a racial politics of mobility in which the regulation of mobility on the Metro system disproportionately impacts Black riders, restricting their mobility, and fundamentally changing "the nature and quality of public transportation for just one class of people" (Mann 2016, 14). The practices and policies of Los Angeles Metro and the Los Angeles

County Sheriff's Department shape and reinforce differential mobility and control over mobility for Metro riders through the securitization of the Los Angeles public transit system. In short, the report shows that not much has changed since 1990. In the intervening years, the governance and policing of the system have cycled through many different institutional arrangements including policing contracts with private security forces, the Los Angeles Police Department, and the Long Beach Police Department, yet securitization has remained the dominant mode of regulating mobility in the public transit system, with far ranging implications for the production of transit mobilities in the Los Angeles region. This thesis has traced the historical antecedents of this securitization of public transit, analyzing the relations of force—ideological, economic, and racial—that shaped and legitimized the formation of this mode of regulating mobility on public transit systems. In doing so, my analysis makes theoretical, methodological, and empirical contributions to the current state of knowledge about mobility, urban governance, and rail infrastructure development.

Theoretically, I worked to integrate two literatures that have so far remained relatively disconnected: urban political economy and mobilities theory (Chapter 2). This unlikely framework sparks creative tensions that can open up new lines of inquiry into the ways in which systems of human mobility are regulated in the capitalist city. I proposed that urban political economy—via a regulationist approach—is a useful lens to examine the *production* of mobilities. A regulationist approach to mobilities recognizes the ways in which infrastructures of mobility are essential to capitalist urban development, while simultaneously considering the loose constellation of extra-economic relations that stabilize the uneven tendencies of capital accumulation, what I term a *mode of mobility regulation*. This framework provides insights into the ways in which the potential of rail development as a strategy of capital accumulation is governed—how municipal governments and local transit authorities regulate mobility on transit systems to support a particular political-economic project. Yet, the ways in which systems of mobility are regulated through institutional arrangements,

legal frameworks, and socio-technical systems have differential effects on the mobility of individuals and groups (Chapter 4). Thus, I argued that modes of mobility regulation are one vector by which differential and relational mobilities in the city are produced, a core research agenda for mobilities theory. This framework moves in two conceptual directions. On the one hand, I reconstruct current treatments of 'the politics of mobility' to include questions of urban governance under neoliberalism. On the other, I extend urban political economy to consider the ways in which rail infrastructure development is not merely a neoliberal strategy of accumulation, but an *urban mobility regime* held together through the more-than-economic relations constituting the mode of mobility regulation.

Methodologically, I confronted the challenges of integrating urban political economy and mobilities theory, extending the current limits of mobilities methodologies in (Chapter 3). To date, mobilities research is dominated by 'mobile methods'—methods that incorporate movement into research praxis through 'following' people, ideas, or commodities through space. Following recent critiques (Merriman 2014; Mom 2015), I argue that this emphasis on mobile methods has constructed mobilities research as distinctly presentist, while simultaneously over-emphasizing the phenomenological and micro dimensions movement. In response, I propose that mobilities methodologies can be productively expanded through historical-dialectical approaches in order to develop methodological tools for understanding the formation, development, and reproduction of varying mobility regimes at different geo-historical conjunctures. To this end, I utilize the work of Antonio Gramsci and Stuart Hall to propose a *conjunctural approach* as one fruitful orientation for moving beyond mobile methods in mobilities methodologies. More broadly, I argued Gramsci's relevance for the study of mobility and immobility revolves around thinking conjuncturally about the development and reproduction urban mobility regimes, and how struggles for dominance structure social inequalities in mobility.

Empirically, I explored the formation and legitimation of a localized mode of mobility regulation for rail transit at the geo-historical conjuncture marked by the opening of the first rail line in Los Angeles (Chapter 4). In doing so, I contribute not only an empirical case study that shows how and why systems of human mobility are regulated, but also the specific articulations of ideology, economy and race that gave rise to what I call *the securitization of public transit* in Los Angeles. I analyze these articulations, showing how the mode of mobility regulation for the nascent Los Angeles rail system emerged out of three relations of force: (1) bourgeoning revanchist urban policies—first tested in the New York subway—oriented towards the 'ordering' and 'reclamation' of the built environment through expanded police powers; (2) rail infrastructure development as an accumulation strategy for the entrepreneurial urban government; and (3) a local racial project to organize and regulate the mobility of Black riders and redistribute security resources from the racialized bus to the rail system. The articulations of these relations of force—how each is changed through its intersection with the others—constructed a 'common-sense' mode of regulating mobility on the Blue Line, legitimizing incredible expenditures on socio-technical systems of security, including transit police. As I show, this socio-technical system was not neutral, but informed by ideologies of governance, economic and political projects, and institutional racisms.

In summary, I theorize that rail infrastructure development as a strategy of capital accumulation must be understood in relation to a set of more-than-economic relations, *a mode of mobility regulation*; I deploy a *conjunctural approach* to analyze the historical formation of *the securitization of public transit* in Los Angeles, a particular mode of regulating human mobility in the capitalist city. Securitization, then, is not given or inevitable. It is a particular mode of regulating mobility that gained dominance through a combination of conservative ideologies of governance, narrow political-economic interests, and racial discrimination. It is, in other words, contingent, open to deconstruction and reconstruction. As Gramsci so forcefully argues in the epigraph of this chapter,

conjunctural analysis is not merely about reconstructing the past, an academic question of parsing the organic and the conjunctural. Rather, it is ultimately about *constructing* history, which is to say it is about politics. A conjunctural approach seeks to identify the relations of force at play within a given moment—not to catalogue, but to recognize opportunities for change. Holding to Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach—that the point of philosophy is not just to interpret the world, but to change it—Gramsci argues that what is at stake in conjunctural analysis is not only historiography, but also the construction of what he calls "present and future history." In his reading of Gramsci, Stuart Hall also makes this argument. For him, an historical conjuncture was "both a moment of danger and one of opportunity; it was something to intervene in, a configuration whose components were to be rearranged through practice. It was a call to action—intellectual, social, cultural, political" (Bennett 2016, 284).

In this way, the Strategy Center's civil rights complaint is a response to that call, pushing on the racial relations of force that constitute the current historical conjuncture. It recognizes a moment of incredible anti-racist organizing and national discussion about policing, security, and societal and institutional racisms, what Kate Derickson (2016) calls the "Age of Ferguson," referring to the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. I both began this chapter and end this thesis with the Strategy Center's civil rights complaint because it highlights the political stakes of the securitization of public transit, and the uneven and racialized politics of mobility that operate through this particular mode of mobility regulation. Normatively, if we are to construct a future history in which the 'public' in public transit means that different social groups have equal access to transit, we must not only analyze the ideological, economic, and racial configuration of the mode of mobility regulation, but more importantly deconstruct it through the practice. The Strategy Center, through its organizing against what Robert Bullard (2004) calls "transportation racism," enacts Stuart

Hall's call to act upon the current historical conjuncture, attempting to rework access to—and the meaning of—public transit in the Age of Ferguson.

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