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Life On Wheels

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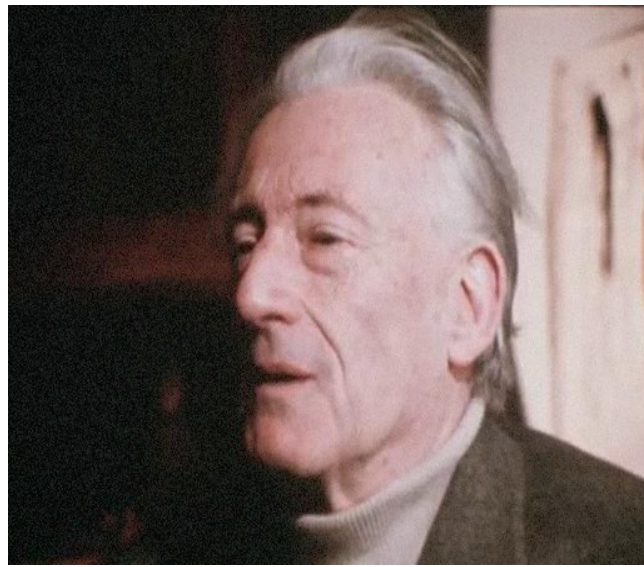
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ENG 366: Cultures of American Modernism

James Mangum

BACKGROUND

American society is built on a foundation of modernity, based around this notion of mobility. Mobility is critical to all the intersections of life, it connects our places of work, leisure, and home. We as a society can construct space to fit our needs. We build roads and create structures to serve as our homes, places of entertainment, and business.



Henri Lefebvre
Wolfe, Ross. "The Works of Henri Lefebvre." The Charnel-House

Thus space may be said to embrace a multitude of intersections, each with its assigned location. As for representations of the relations of production, which subsume power relations, these too occur in space: space contains them in the form of buildings, monuments and works of art. Such frontal (and hence brutal) expressions of these relations do not

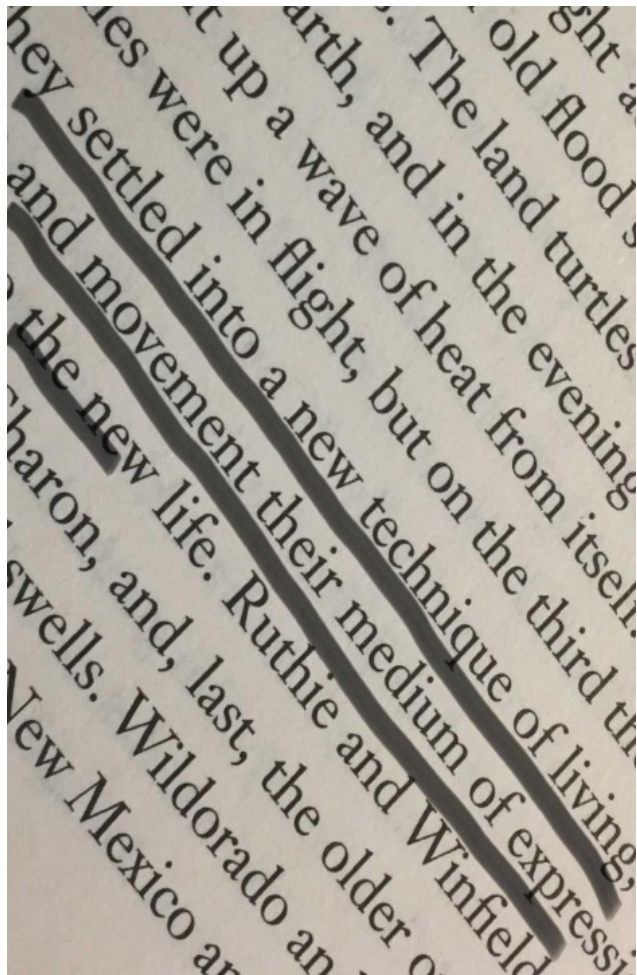
Author Photo

THE GRAPES OF WRATH

The Joad family and their journey for a new life is made possible by the Ford Super Six converted into caravan. It houses the family and their few belongings, becoming the new site of homeliness and matriarchal wisdom provided by Ma Joad. The jalopy as coined by Steinbeck becomes a creation of space produced from the need of shelter on the road.



National Geographic Society, Dorothea Lange. "The Grapes of Wrath."



Author Photo

THE NOMADIC MILLERS

Unsatisfied with the conventional life, Denver and Vanessa Miller decide to seek a life of adventure for their family of 5. The Millers sell all their belongings and decide to reconstruct a school bus to function as their space of home, school, and adventure. This bus is an important creation of space, becoming the singular social structure intersecting key elements of society for the Miller family.



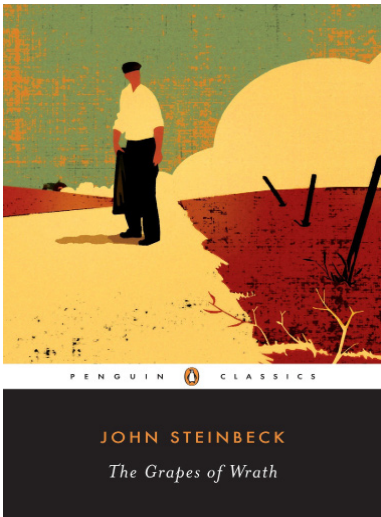
Above Images:
Journey, Tiny House Giant. "Family Downsizes to a School Bus to Live on the Road." YouTube, 24 Nov. 2017, www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVq-ldQ5fS0.

ASSUMPTION

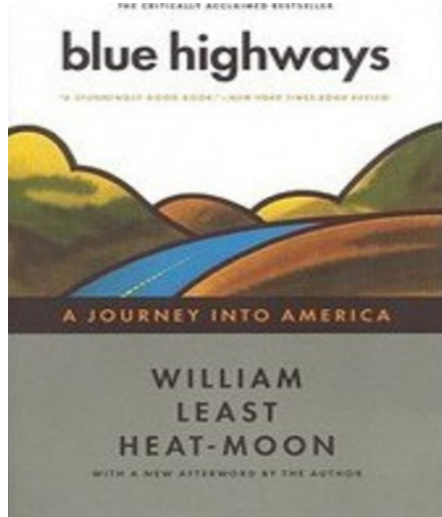
From these examples analyzed, people can stretch the limits of their creation and construction of space. By merging the intersections of life with vehicle, a new social product emerges. This creates a new structural creation of space that combines the unique intersections of society that people participate in.



Millers, Nomadic. "Living on a School Bus (Nomadic Millers)." YouTube



Steinbeck, John. The Grapes of Wrath. Penguin, 2008
Least, Heat Moon William. Blue Highways: a Journey into America. Back Bay Books/Little, Brown, 2013.

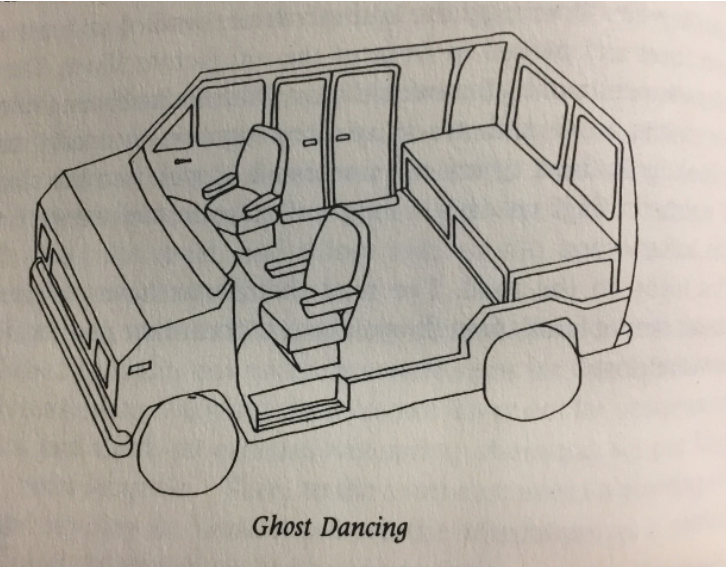


GHOST-DANCING

William Least-Heat Moon and his journey of knowledge is made possible by a mobile recreation of space named Ghost Dancing. It becomes a movable structure meant to serve his purpose as space of wisdom and refuge on his journey of America. The traveling on the blue highways are the backroads that connect the forgotten and peculiar places of America. Ghost-Dancing is a means for him to function in his new life on the road. Incorporated with bed, facilities, and amenities; the van is a functioning structure capable to be lived in.



Least-Heat Moon, William. "William Least Heat-Moon (Official)." Facebook, William Least-Heat Moon, 1 Feb. 2016, www.facebook.com/WilliamLeastHeatMoon/photos/ghost-dancing-the-van-heat-moon-traveled-in-on-his-blue-highways-trip-in-1978-is/1070350596329210/.



Author Photo

CONCLUSION

Mobility is closely tied with American modernity. For society to function we need structures built, space created, and a means to get to and from these different places. Modernity has allowed the ideas of our creation to expand. Expand to the point that we can combine vehicle and space, creating a new spatial element designed to function as the center of our different societal needs.

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