

van Gennep, Arnold. *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1960. pp. 2 - 4, 10 - 11, 26, 191 - 194.

This is a famous foundational work of anthropology. It can often be easier to perceive the divisions in another society than it is to recognize created features in our own (there's an article about the Nacirema people worth discussing). This article gives us a framework for discussing the structural changes cars can have on American culture.

- What magical significance do strangers in our domains have for us?
- What are the stages and rites of passage in American life?
- What are the effects of thinner walls and wider doors in Western civilization?
- What aspects of our super-secular lives continue to be dominated by the sacred?

Licht, M. "Some Automotive Play Activities of Suburban Teenagers." *New York Folklore Quarterly* 30 (March 1974): 44 - 65.

To recognize aspects of our own culture, we need to inspect and catalog our behavior. Licht does so, and most importantly recognizes that the activities have a deeply connected psychological and social purpose. Licht also seems to be obsessed with mooning.

- Does Licht's conception of getting a license match van Gennep's model of a rite of passage? What changes in status accompany a license to drive?
- What kinds of ceremonial transgressions are sanctioned at MIT?
- What were your play activities in the car? What was their psycho-social purpose?
- Have play activities changed or diminished?

Pettifer, Julian, and Nigel Turner. "The Car and Courtship." In *Automania: Man and the Motorcar*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1984. ISBN: 9780316703710. pp. 180 - 199.

This is a very fun reading. Cars have a deep connection to how the sexes interact in America, because of the opportunities they provide and because of the perceptions we have of them. Without the car, sex in America might be very different, and as the car changes, so might sex in our culture.

- Do today's car designers design for sex?
- What are the hottest cars of recent years? Why?
- How important is the car to a successful courtship today? How is the role of the car in courtship changing today?
- Why did "Love Motels" fail to develop in the USA?
- What kinds of restrictions do parents try to place on car usage to curtail sexual activities?

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ES.272 Culture Tech
Spring 2003

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