

## **Competition's Moment**

# **The Jitney-Bus and Corporate Capitalism in the Canadian City, 1914-29**

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[See table of contents](#)

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Article abstract

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*Courtesy of UBC, British Columbia Electric Company 1915*

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***Using a social constructivist approach to the history of technology, this article examines the jitney-bus phenomenon in urban Canada between 1914 and 1929. These hailed-ride common carriers briefly flourished during the First World War, but were soon suppressed by municipal regulators. Their suppression, though intended to protect public transit from “destructive” competition, in fact weakened it by depriving it of a flexible, speedy alternative to the private automobile. The article explains both the importance of jitneys in a modern context and the reasons for — and the social groups behind — their quick demise in most Canadian cities during the First World War.***

***Résumé***

***Abordant l'histoire de la technologie dans une optique constructiviste, l'auteur étudie l'évolution du phénomène des “jitneys” dans les villes canadiennes entre 1914 et 1929. Les jitneys (autobus à itinéraire fixe, à coût modique et à horaire variable s'arrêtant sur demande) connurent une flambée de popularité durant la Première Guerre mondiale mais furent prestement éliminés par le pouvoir municipal. Cette intervention, motivée par le souci de protéger les transports en commun contre une concurrence “mortelle,” eut pour effet de les affaiblir dans la mesure où elle supprimait un transporteur public capable, par sa souplesse et sa rapidité, de faire échec à la voiture particulière. L'auteur fait ressortir l'intérêt des jitneys dans le contexte actuel ainsi que les motifs — et les groupes — qui les ont fait rayer du paysage de la plupart des villes du Canada pendant la guerre.***

Few Canadians today could define a jitney, and historians have largely forgotten its meaning. The jitney, neglected even in the United States, land of its origin and greatest incidence, is remembered only as a passing fad, a minor irritation to public transit, so ephemeral that even its capacity to do harm was mercifully attenuated. Since even historians of urban transportation have regarded it as an epiphenomenon, it is not surprising that the scattered references in the published literature on the Canadian jitney do not add up to one good-sized article. A handful of historical articles about it do exist, but the jitney may well be one of the few facets of American history to lack a monograph.<sup>1</sup>

So why bother with jitneys? First, because they once flourished in the thousands. From the hearth of innovation in Los Angeles in the summer of 1914, they spread to Vancouver and Victoria that November — by 1 April 1915 they had also reached Edmonton, Winnipeg, Hamilton, and Toronto. By June 1916 the jitney had surfaced in more than 24 Canadian municipalities, and its use had been projected (and probably implemented) in countless others (see Table 1).

By late June 1915, which was the zenith of their popularity in North America, there would have been about 3,500-3,800 jitneys in Canada, as compared to 62,000 in the United States (see Table 2 for the breakdown by Canadian city). The Canadian estimate may rise as more is learned about jitneying in suburbs and small towns.<sup>2</sup>

Table 2 reveals that Canadians did not have a uniform experience with jitneys: only in six cities did a sufficient number of entrepreneurs enter the industry for it to gain staying power. Elsewhere only a handful of jitneys surfaced and these soon disappeared without trace. With jitneys, as with so many aspects of Canada's development, we find “limited identities.” (Possible sources of local and regional variation in the Canadian jitney experience are discussed in an appendix.)

For most of the country, however, jitneys did not make much of an impression.

The second reason for studying jitneys can be found in recent research — most notably by D. F. Noble, David Hounshell, R.S. Cowan, Wiebe Bijker, and Trevor Pinch — which has made us aware that any attempt to understand the social shaping of technology, including transportation systems, must include an examination of paths not taken.<sup>3</sup> The jitney was a plausible alternative to the automobile, the streetcar, and the transit bus; yet it took remarkably little time for most Canadian municipalities to reject it. The celerity of these decisions suggests that the jitney violated fundamental values. An examination of this failed innovation may shed new light on the Canadian mentality and power structure in the early automotive era.

There is a third, more impelling, reason for studying the Canadian jitney: the claim of historians Ross Eckert and George Hilton in 1972 that “the jitney episode was central to the history of urban transportation” and that “the policy of putting down the jitneys led directly to much of what is looked upon as most unsatisfactory in contemporary urban transport.”<sup>4</sup> This is quite an assertion, especially given the credentials of Eckert and Hilton in American transportation history. Yet it has not shaped subsequent historical research, either as an hypothesis to test or as an argument to refute.

One can only surmise the reasons for the discipline's indifference. First, transportation history has — despite its obvious relevance to daily life — been neglected in both Canada and the United States. Secondly, Eckert and Hilton did not attempt systematically to prove their claim; indeed, they devoted most of their article to proving how easy it was to legislate the jitneys out of existence. For many readers the retelling of the rout confirmed the marginality of the subject. Finally, few historians in the 1970s wanted to believe the thesis implicit in these statements by Eckert and Hilton, that the world needed more

## *Competition's Moment*

automobiles, even in the guise of public vehicles. Most probably still resist the notion.

Nevertheless, this article is designed to awaken historical interest in jitneys, to raise the possibility (using Canadian evidence) that Eckert and Hilton are correct, and to suggest that not only was the jitney a significant innovation, whose brief life is worth studying, but that its fate is also the key to understanding the decline of public transportation in Canada's cities in the automotive era.

So what is a jitney? Modern specialists agree that it is a large automobile or small van that "operates over more or less fixed routes" but has "apart from termini, neither fixed stops nor fixed schedules." It is differentiated from other types of paratransit, such as shared-ride taxis and dial-a-ride services for the disabled (see Table 3), by having a "relatively fixed" route and by being "hailed on the street by potential passengers." This latter feature is a defining characteristic according to Ronald Kirby, who has declared jitneys a "form of shared ride service which might be termed hail-a-ride." The route is also essential: although minor deviations are permissible, a jitney cannot build up a loyal clientele unless it quickly returns to its route or else people will not get into the habit of waiting for it.<sup>5</sup> Jitneys, thus defined, are found in many cities in less-developed countries — Manila (jeepneys), Mexico City (peseros), Caracas (por puestos), Istanbul (dolmus), and Hong Kong (pak-pais) — as well as in several American cities, most notably San Francisco, San Diego, and Atlantic City. In Canada the jitney has apparently not operated legally since 1930, although shuttle buses offer a jitney-like service at airports, on university campuses, and on Parliament Hill.<sup>6</sup>

In less-developed countries, jitneys often attract automobile owners who would not otherwise use public transit. In cities where they are marginally more expensive than the regular bus, this cost factor is connected in part to their social exclusivity, but more

**Table 1**  
*Diffusion of the Jitney:*  
*earliest known sightings in Canada (with representative U.S. cities)*

Period	Cities		
1911-1914	Berlin, Ont. Oakland Saint John Vancouver	El Paso Phoenix San Francisco Victoria	Los Angeles Regina Spokane
January 1915	Atlanta Fort Worth Oklahoma City Seattle	Dallas Houston Portland	Detroit Kansas City San Antonio
February 1915	Buffalo Louisville Paterson, N.J. Toronto	Chicago New Orleans Peoria, Ill. Winnipeg	Des Moines Omaha St Louis
March 1915	Edmonton Memphis	Fort William Saskatoon	Hamilton Syracuse
April 1915	Boston Ottawa Providence	Harrisburg, Pa. Pittsburgh Sherbrooke	Montreal Portland, Me.
May 1915	Calgary	London	Sudbury
June 1915 — June 1916	Belleville, Ont. Owen Sound, Ont.	Oakville Thorold, Ont.	Oshawa Vernon, B.C.

**Sources:** *Motor Bus*, 1(April 1916): 400; *The Automobile*, 32(4 March 1915): 434; *Commercial Vehicle*, 12(March 1915): 30; 12(15 April 1915): 14-15; 12(15 June 1915): 19; *Canadian Railway and Marine World*, April-July 1915 *passim*; *Electric Railway Journal*, 23 Jan.-11 Sept. 1915 *passim*; *Ottawa Evening Journal*, 7 April 1915: 2; Canadian Electric Railway Association, *Proceedings of Annual Meeting*, 21-22 June 1915, 104; Archives of Ontario, Oshawa Council Minutes, 23 June 1915; *Calgary Daily Herald*, 22 May 1915: 14; *Regina Morning Leader*, 20 July 1915; Stanley Mallach, "The Origins of the Decline of Urban Mass Transportation in the United States, 1890-1930," *Urbanism Past & Present*, 8(Summer 1979): 10; *Montreal La Presse*, 12 April 1915: 5.

## *Competition's Moment*

important to their superior frequency: as Wilfred Owen has pointed out, "In most cities that operate these public automobiles, there is almost always a vehicle in sight, eliminating much of the waiting time that frustrates patrons of conventional vehicles." As well, jitneys, being small and manoeuvrable, travel in most cities as swiftly as private automobiles and, when driven with taxi-like élan, can actually reduce overall commuting times for motorists who lack a guaranteed parking space. Moreover, and this feature explains the popularity with many of the city's poor of a jitney experiment in Los Angeles in 1982 (even though it charged a fare slightly higher than the subsidized bus), jitneys are less intimidating and bureaucratic than conventional transit: Chicanos, for example, were able to drive to work in Spanish. The Los Angeles experiment failed, however, because public automobiles — jitneys — can only generate sufficient revenue to support an owner-operator; they have not proven to be an attractive investment for corporate capital. Similar to taxis in markets with unrestricted entry, the jitney is by reason of its economic marginality destined to belong to the petty proprietor.<sup>7</sup>

Since they are small, jitneys have higher labour costs per seat-mile than other forms of public transit; to compete, they must maximize their revenue per vehicle-hour. Thus they focus on the main commuting routes, where they handle short-haul traffic, primarily at rush hour. These operating practices have produced a universal indictment from outraged bus and street railway companies — jitneys skim the "cream" of the public transit business, the short-haul, rush-hour strap-hanger whose fares subsidize less remunerative service to the outlying suburbs. The jitney is, accordingly, denounced as a threat to the overall viability of public mass transit.<sup>8</sup>

This "cream" thesis has always seemed plausible, and has since 1915 been the official rationale for suppression of the jitney; yet even in 1915 there were traction experts

who recognized that rush-hour service is the wormwood of public transit, not its "cream." Indeed, it has been the primary source of the industry's decline. Although this assertion is admittedly counter-intuitive, it is surprisingly easy to demonstrate. First, consider the economics: a public carrier has to keep additional drivers and vehicles in expensive reserve for peak-load operations: for example, peak-hour service in Vancouver in December 1913 required 70 per cent more cars than the base service. Although some of the surplus drivers can be used to drive sightseeing vehicles during off-peak hours, union rules normally prevent their full employment. As for the extra vehicles, most of these are too outmoded and decrepit to be used for anything but rush-hour service. These vehicles have high maintenance costs and their numbers have risen as the gap between off-peak and peak loads has gradually widened with shoppers, movie-goers, and other non-commuters switching to walking or to the automobile.<sup>9</sup>

The use of the jitney, if restricted to rush hour, thus helps conventional public transit to even out its passenger loads, thereby allowing it to reduce its overall costs. There are, however, more than economics at stake: rush-hour service drives away customers who, experiencing public transit at its worst, prefer to walk or drive instead. Consider the Toronto Street Railway in March 1914: even though it ran more than twice as many cars between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. as it did at noon or 8:00 p.m., its rush-hour trams were infamously overcrowded (an average of 42 per cent of its passengers had to stand during the evening peak — twice as many as a report to the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board deemed acceptable). Crowding of this magnitude repelled customers.<sup>10</sup>

Even those who found a seat were (and are) often appalled by what they found themselves riding in, for the aged equipment put on for rush hour often offended commuters' personal dignity as well as their civic pride. Those who rode public transit only during the

peak hours knew the service at its worst: aged equipment prone to breakdown, which in the street railway era meant long delays over an entire line. From our present vantage point, looking back through a romantic haze or from the window of "light-rail" transit bought in the 1970s and thus only halfway through its 30-year amortization, we find it difficult to appreciate the extent to which rush-hour service had alienated Canadians by 1914-29.

To be sure, historians are well aware of the unpopularity of the traction monopolies; but many Canadians have forgotten that we once loathed the tram itself. In the United States, poor memory has even fostered the notion that General Motors conspired to substitute buses for trolleys in the *foreknowledge* that buses would turn people off public transportation.<sup>11</sup> General Motors and associates such as Standard Oil of California did convert tram lines to buses in the 1930s and 1940s, but they could not — contrary to D. J. St Clair's allegations — have expected that conversion would damage public transit, for the simple fact that North Americans before 1945 generally preferred buses to streetcars, and would continue to do so until in each community ancient buses had replaced ancient trams as rush-hour "specials."<sup>12</sup>

Until then, many Canadians were willing to pay a premium to ride in a bus: in the mid 1920s not only did traction companies operate extra-fare buses in Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Calgary, and Vancouver but they also on at least one occasion tore up rails and substituted a bus so that a higher fare could be charged. People, of course, did change their opinion once enough buses had reached senescence.<sup>13</sup>

By helping out at rush hour, jitneys could strengthen public transit and enhance its appeal. It is even possible to restrict them to periods of peak demand, if regulatory authorities are prepared to admit part-timers

## Competition's Moment

**Table 2**  
**Jitneys:**  
*maximum number reported by Canadian city, in 1914-15*

No. of jitneys	Cities		
1-25	Belleville Fort William Oakville Owen Sound Saskatoon Thorold	Berlin London Oshawa Quebec Sherbrooke Vernon	Calgary Montreal Ottawa Regina Sudbury
75-100	Edmonton		
120-150	Victoria		
600-700	Hamilton	Vancouver	
> 700	Toronto	Winnipeg	

Sources: John Knowles, *The Sudbury Streetcars* (Sudbury, 1983): 8; *Canadian Railway and Marine World*, June 1915-March 1916 *passim*; *Vancouver Daily Province*, 13 June 1917: 16; Archives of Ontario, Oshawa Council Minutes, 23 June 1915; *Toronto Globe*, 24 Nov. 1915: 9; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(July 1915): 216, 246; *Calgary Daily Herald*, 22 May 1915: 14; Hamilton Public Library, Special Collections, Hamilton *Times* Scrapbook, vol. S5 "Street Railway," 10 May 1915.

**Table 3**  
*General service characteristics by transportation mode*

	Private auto	Para-transit modes				Prearranged ride-sharing services		Conventional transit
		Hire and drive services Daily and short-term rental car	Hall or phone services Taxi	Dial-a-ride	Jitney	Car pool	Subscription bus	
Direct route (DR) or route deviations (RD)?	DR	DR	DR	RD	RD	RD	RD	RD
Door-to-door?	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Maybe	No
Travel time spent as passenger (P) or driver (D)?	D	D	P	P	P	P/D	P	P
Ride shared (S), or personal (P)?	P	P	P/S	S	S	S	S	S
System routes fixed (F), semi-fixed (S), or variable (V)?	V	V	V	V	S	S	S	F
Account determined by prior arrangement (A), fixed schedule (F), phone (P), street hailing (H), or at user's discretion (U)?	U	U	H/P	P	H	A	A	F
Vehicle parking required (PR) or not (NP)?	PR	PR	NP	NP	NP	PR	PR/NP	NP

Source: Ronald F. Kirby, "para-transit: experience and potential in the USA," *Ekistics* 42(July 1976): 21.

Source: R.F. Kirby, "Para-transit: Experience and Potential in the USA," *Ekistics*, 42(July 1976): 21.

into the trade or to permit such vehicles as taxis and livery cars to double as jitneys.

There are some potential problems with jitneys: obviously they would add to traffic congestion if all they did was carry passengers who would have taken a streetcar or bus. However, in places where they have been used, they have also attracted people who would otherwise have commuted by private automobile, thereby tending to reduce overall congestion. Admittedly, there is no way of knowing how many car owners would use a jitney in Canada in the 1990s; jitneys (and extra-fare, guaranteed-seat coaches operated by the Toronto Transportation Commission on its "Hill" route) did attract automobile owners in the 1914-29 period — admittedly a different world. Then as now, however, jitneys need heavy traffic flows and would make economic sense on only the major thoroughfares of Canada's largest cities. They are not a "magic bullet" for all of Canada's transportation woes.<sup>14</sup>

Even so, as cities around the world contemplate reducing private automobiles in the central core (typically through class-biased "congestion" and "pollution" taxes) such actions would be politically more palatable and socially more acceptable if choice were provided in public transit, including not only jitneys but also shared-ride taxis and other forms of paratransit that approximate the automobile's speed and flexibility.<sup>15</sup>

So far we have been discussing the modern jitney. The historian would like to know if the jitneys of 1914-29 operated along the lines we have just discussed. If they did, their suppression was arguably a tragedy for Canadian urban development, for their demise ensured that the street railways (and later the buses) would be overburdened and unpopular at rush hour and that public transit would have no vehicle to offer with anything like the speed and flexibility of the private automobile. Also, jitneys would have helped

## Competition's Moment

Canada's cities more in 1915 than they would today — their impact would have been greater had they been able to proliferate before the automobile had altered residential and commuting patterns. The radial city of 1915 clearly had more use for jitneys than the multi-nucleated city of today.<sup>16</sup>

However, it may well be that the jitneys of 1914-29 operated according to different principles and that they richly deserved their fate. We do not as yet have a good idea of how they behaved, for Canadian historians do not agree upon their operating characteristics. According to Paul-André Linteau, Colin Hatcher, Tom Schwarzkopf, and Michael Doucet, the jitneys of the World War I era did conform to the modern definition. Doucet describes them as "simply private vehicles that were used by their owners to transport passengers along pseudo-routes for the payment of a five-cent fare." Gerald Onn, Chris Armstrong, H. V. Nelles, and Patricia Roy have, on the other hand, described the jitney of 1915-18 as a parasitical, shared-ride taxi: they were not true jitneys, for, to quote Roy, they had "no fixed routes or schedules." Instead, "most jitney drivers travelled along the main street car lines a few minutes ahead of the street car in order to pick up the cream of the passenger business." They also customarily delivered passengers "to their destinations," a practice not usually compatible with true jitney service.<sup>17</sup>

How do we interpret the historical disagreement? The most obvious explanation is that these historians, all of whom (to be fair) discussed the jitney only in passing, have been describing different parts of the same elephant. Doucet, the Canadian historian hitherto most sympathetic to jitneys (he describes them as "harbingers of a more flexible and less capital-intensive form of public transit"), apparently discovered the end with the tusks. As for Roy, Armstrong, and Nelles, they learned that many jitneys simply added to the transportation mess in 1915.<sup>18</sup>

The inability to reach consensus on the nature of the World War I "jitney" is to be expected, not only because research on the topic has scarcely commenced, but also because the jitney in 1914-15 had considerable malleability, a quality social constructivists have labelled "interpretative flexibility." Proponents of a "social construction of technology" approach argue that new artifacts are susceptible to a multitude of definitions and lines of development, at least until they have stabilized and the debate over their nature has been "closed." Different social groups have different socio-cultural values that influence their interpretation of an object; as Wiebe Bijker and Trevor Pinch have observed, "for different social groups really different artefacts are existing." For a radical innovation (such as the jitneys in 1914-15) there is no paradigm or exemplar to work from; instead it has to be constructed through the interaction of "relevant social groups" — "relevant" in the sense that they seek to impose their own definition upon the technology, and a "group" in the sense that they attach "the same set of meanings" to the artifact — in this case, the jitney. The relevant social groups should be determined empirically, rather than predetermined according to a model — whether pluralist or hierarchical — of Canadian society.<sup>19</sup> According to the media of 1914-29, each of the following groups had a homogeneous interpretation of the jitney and a desire to shape it socially: owners and operators of street railways, municipal governments, motor vehicle manufacturers, auto dealers and distributors, organized motorists, labour unionists, downtown merchants, real estate developers, suburban homeowners, youth, women, and, of course, jitneyists. This list is too long to explore in depth in an article, especially as several of these groups were less unified than the media claimed. There is space to make only brief generalizations about the attempts of each of these groups to define the jitney.

To start — as did the industry — with the jitney operators, they were so divided that they were arguably not a "relevant social group" at all. However, they did agree, as shown by the name they chose for it, to define the jitney in terms of its fare. Before 1914 a "jitney" was simply Californian slang for a five-cent coin. There is, however, disagreement over the word's etymology.<sup>20</sup> L.P. Draper of Los Angeles often received credit for first applying this slang to public transit, and in that sense the jitney bus may be said to have a birth date. Draper in 1915 became known as "the first jitney driver," inasmuch as he had started using his Model T Ford as a route taxi on 1 July 1914 and, when asked his fare, reportedly had replied: "Oh, a jitney will do."<sup>21</sup>

A jitney thus was, according to *Jitney Bus*, official organ of the International Jitney Association (whose name honoured its Toronto members), "anything that runs on four wheels and gasoline and 5 cents." The *Electric Railway Journal* and *Canadian Railway and Marine World* also concluded that the jitney name was being "applied indiscriminately to auto buses and to itinerant autos carrying passengers at a five cent fare upon any temporary route that seems likely to produce profits."<sup>22</sup>

The definition of jitneys as "nickel buses" explains the common perception that the jitney was somehow "invented" on 1 July 1914 or some other day that summer, despite the fact that similar vehicles were already to be found on North America's streets and highways. After all, the first American buses dated from 1898, the first Canadian from 1905, and both countries had touring cars (the standard open automobile) operating as public vehicles by 1912. There were several operating on interurban routes in California, and as early as 1911, according to Arthur Saltzman and Richard Solomon, Model T Fords "would cruise along the route of a downtown trolley line and pick up passengers who were destined toward some vaguely defined suburban location." As for Canada, in

## *Competition's Moment*

1915 Andrew Aitcheson was found guilty in Berlin, Ont., of running a jitney service without a licence, something he said he had been doing since 1912. In Regina, jitneys had by 1915 been serving the annual fair for "several years." The jitney had also begun to crop up as a union weapon in street railway strikes — as in Phoenix in 1913 and in Saint John, N.B., in July 1914.<sup>23</sup>

Despite these precursors, public use of motor vehicles had made little headway in North America by the summer of 1914 because potential investors, heedful of the street railway paradigm, believed they needed the protection of a multi-year franchise — something that municipal governments, reflecting upon their bitter experience with street railway franchises, would rarely grant. Also deterring investment in motorbuses was the widespread belief that they could not make a profit at a street railway fare, because they were smaller (with higher labour costs per seat-mile), were less mechanically reliable, and used more expensive fuel.<sup>24</sup>

So matters stood until word spread in the summer and fall of 1914 that Los Angeles (and soon Oakland) automobilists were making a profit of \$12 to \$15 a day by charging only a jitney for rides as long as five miles. The news ended the impasse: there was no longer need or time to wait for a franchise. Money was being made (contrary to all expert prediction) on public automobiles, and, since these were relatively cheap to buy and operate, thousands of Canadians concluded that the prospective rewards from jitneying were worth the financial and political risks of operating without franchise protection.<sup>25</sup>

Who, precisely, decided to take the gamble? Jitneyists have usually been depicted as unemployed tradespeople who were trying to make a temporary living during the severe recession following the collapse of the western development boom and the outbreak of the Great War.<sup>26</sup> This interpretation, largely inspired by street railway propaganda, has

never been tested. The identity of most of the jitneyists has been lost forever, along with the licence registers that recorded their names. The jitney register did survive, however, in Hamilton, and it reveals that its jitneyists in 1915-16 were either tradespeople (electricians, machinists, carpenters, teamsters, and chauffeurs) or shopkeepers (grocers and café proprietors). Their frequent change of jobs and addresses suggests that the jitneyists were a marginal group, probably badly hurt by the recession.<sup>27</sup>

Yet this does not necessarily mean that jitneyists drove a public automobile out of desperation, as the street railways implied, for there was in 1915 considerable reason to be optimistic about the prospects of the jitney business. Canadian cities were abuzz with news about the fortunes to be made in motor vehicles: the automotive industry was the fastest-growing, most lucrative business of the era. The keenest entrepreneurial spirits of 1914-15 were anxious to get into it, if not in manufacturing automobiles (which took considerable capital) then in applying them commercially.<sup>28</sup>

Many of the jitneyists were thinking big: despite modest means, they were dreaming of one day commanding a fleet of jitneys. Their ranks in every city included "bus promoters," who clearly hoped to supplant the street railway and to become in the process as rich as Henry Ford or Sir William Mackenzie. The bus promoters assumed they would succeed only insofar as they offered service comparable to the electric railway; consequently, they promised (but never provided) extensive route networks, and, through their own carpentry or a body shop's, they converted the Model T Ford into a minibus seating as many as 16 to 20 passengers. Generally, this interpretation of the jitney — as transit bus — failed before 1920 because the increased size forfeited the jitney's two advantages: speed and manoeuvrability. Moreover, as the vehicle got larger so too did its maintenance and municipal tax bill. A bus simply could not, as

the electric railways stridently announced, make a profit at a five-cent fare, and the bus promoters succeeded only where custom or distance allowed them to charge more — as in interurban runs.<sup>29</sup>

There were, as well, the "jitneurs," the owner-operators of a passenger car which, even if modified, remained small enough to match the speed of private automobile traffic. There were, it seems, very few multi-car owners after the spring of 1915, for it took only a week or two of employing drivers to realize that there was not enough profit in operating a public automobile for more than one person to make a living from it. Yet there was also a drastic need to provide a more coordinated jitney service, both to build customer loyalty and to fend off hostile regulation. About half the jitneyists in each city realized in 1915 that their long-term survival depended on their operating along modern lines — fixed routes with frequent headways. The other half simply wanted to cruise the streets as cut-rate, shared-ride taxis.<sup>30</sup>

Those who wanted to provide a coordinated service realized they would need to cooperate: as a result, they had by August 1915 formed jitney associations (citywide and for specific routes) in each of the major centres in Canada, starting with the Vancouver Auto Public Service Association the preceding January. The associations assigned routes and schedules, set fares (for interurban trips or for route deviations), provided tickets and bookkeeping services, directed traffic at termini, and undertook the collective purchase of liability insurance, gasoline, tires, and other supplies. For these services the jitney owner paid a weekly fee, generally \$2.50.<sup>31</sup>

While these associations usually functioned as cooperatives, in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa there were attempts to incorporate closely held jitney associations (with Toronto's the most ambitious since it had the backing of a prominent barrister and four auto dealerships), but these proved short lived as



most jitneyists preferred either to belong to a cooperative or to go it alone. All the jitney associations had trouble with “freelancers,” especially those who operated on a strictly part-time basis: for example, taxi drivers, chauffeurs, commuters, and farmers. Organized jitneys cooperated with the street railways in drawing up regulations to make part-time jitneying either illegal or unprofitable. These regulations, however, like the traffic laws, proved difficult to enforce.<sup>32</sup>

Organized jitneyists also found it impossible to come up with a regulatory formula that would eliminate freelancers who operated full time but would not eliminate themselves as well. Nor did the associations have any apparent economies of scale; indeed, their members did worse financially than independent jitneyists who simply ran on the same routes as the association, collecting passengers without having to pay the association a weekly fee. Ironically, organized jitneyists seconded the street railway’s complaints about losing the “cream” of their traffic to “freeloaders.” Although less universal and therefore less profitable than they hoped, jitney associations in most cities lasted as long as the jitney. They were vital to its survival beyond the spring of 1915 for they offered true jitney service — that is, more or less fixed routes, scheduled hours, and posted tariffs — thereby making it possible for some Canadians to get in the habit of commuting by public automobile.<sup>33</sup>

By now the chief weakness of the jitneyists should be apparent: they did not share a homogeneous interpretation of their industry and its product. Their lack of unity undercut their efforts to define the jitney, leaving that task to their chief antagonists, the street railways to accomplish.

No group in Canada was more unanimous in its interpretation of jitneys than the nation’s trolley companies. Their unity would have guaranteed them an important say in the jitney’s fate even had they not also been one



*Courtesy of UBC, British Columbia Electric Company 1915*

of the nation’s most powerful vested interests. As Chris Armstrong and H. V. Nelles have pointed out, Canadian rail executives had by 1915 created a host of consensus-building institutions, including the Canadian and American electric railway associations and their annual meetings, as well as trade journals such as *Electric Railway Journal* and *Canadian Railway and Marine World*. Electric railways had, as well, worked out standard accounting procedures by which success and failure were assessed to a thousandth of penny.<sup>34</sup>

Consequently, street railways concurred that jitneys should be judged by their ability to pass the performance criteria established for their own industry. Simply put, that meant the jitney car had to be as economically efficient as the tram and the jitney industry had to provide the same guarantees of permanence, regularity, and centralized coordination as did a transit monopoly. Obviously, the jitney could pass neither test: even the bus is still not as cost-efficient as the tram at high traffic densities. It was, therefore, with a sense of moral rectitude and urgency that traction companies lobbied for the jitney’s

**Table 4**  
*Ratio of seats to passengers in rush hour, selected North American cities, 1915*

City	Ratio
Ottawa	1 : 1
Detroit	1 : 1.5
San Francisco	1 : 1.6
Toronto	1 : 1.7
Chicago	1 : 2
Pittsburgh	1 : 2
Milwaukee	1 : 2
New York	1 : 4

Source: *Report of the Federal Plan Commission on a General Plan for the Cities of Ottawa and Hull, 1915* (Ottawa, 1916): 147.

## *Competition's Moment*

suppression before it did damage to what they considered a superior system. Had, however, different test criteria been chosen — for example, speed, flexibility, and the ability to attract new riders to public transit — the jitney would have appeared the superior technology. However, one of principal sources of inertia in any society is the success that defenders of conventional technology normally have in rigging the technological assessment process in their own favour.<sup>35</sup>

The street railways knew that they could not insist on jitneys being operated as a monopoly (at least until the railways themselves had obtained an exclusive transportation franchise). But they could insist that jitneys be regulated as *though* they were a monopoly. Hence traction companies demanded in the name of “fairness” that the government regulations applied to them (which in other contexts they bitterly denounced) be imposed on the jitney. The companies made no effort to hide their belief that, to quote the general manager of Hamilton’s system, jitneys could not survive “even a small proportion of the regulation imposed upon street railways.”<sup>36</sup>

The traction companies lobbied for and — in most cities — obtained by-laws requiring jitneys to be licensed, to end overcrowding, to offer continuous service, and to follow specific routes. These requirements, especially the licence fee, cut into profits and drove hundreds of part-timers out of the business. Yet they could not in themselves eliminate jitneys because, paradoxically, they pushed the new technology in the direction needed for its survival — that is, in the direction of offering assured, frequent service on one or two commuting routes. Most of the regulations, despite the traction industry’s high hopes for them, simply extended the life of the jitney by making it conform more to the Canadian desire for order in public transportation. Consequently, an American traction expert concluded in 1919 that “So far as the restrictions are concerned, nothing amounts to anything except a rigid bond.”<sup>37</sup>

Eckert and Hilton have agreed: “The most potent regulation for eliminating jitneys was the bond requirement.” Street railways demanded, and municipal councils agreed in 1915, that jitneys post indemnity bonds of \$1,000 to \$5,000 per vehicle to guarantee settlement of accident claims against them. In May 1915 the *Toronto Star* explained the rationale for the bond requirement: “Suppose a citizen is run down, what compensation can be obtained if the driver has no money?” Jitneyists, their worldly assets supposedly consisting of a used car, were not thought good for their debts, and they alone of the users of Canada’s streets in the 1910s and early 1920s, were required to take out accident insurance. Its cost was prohibitive — at least \$120 and more typically \$200-\$250 a year *in advance*. Inasmuch as Canadian jitneyists, like those in the United States, could not have made more than \$2.00 to \$2.50 a day, after expenses, from owning and operating a jitney Ford, the bond requirement immediately eliminated all but the dedicated jitneyists. Even they survived only by working 14-hour days and 6-day weeks.<sup>38</sup>

The cost of the bond was, furthermore, only the beginning of the jitneyist’s problems with it, for Canadian guarantee and security companies refused, according to the *Canadian Motorist* and *Monetary Times* in mid 1915, to insure jitneys at any price. They had already been unnerved by their experience with the private automobile — the fact that an automotive accident seemed to be twice as costly as a streetcar accident — and they wanted, therefore, to obtain better information about the frequency and the cost of jitney accidents before taking on the business. Canada’s insurance companies also, naturally, frowned upon an innovation that threatened to undermine the value of traction securities, thus shaking the stock market, and at the same time failed to open up any new investment opportunities for them.<sup>39</sup>

The attitude of Canadian insurance companies (one shared by firms in the United

States) meant that Canadian jitneyists had to take out policies with small, specialized American firms that not only tended to add a surcharge to their foreign business but also, more alarmingly, failed with disruptive frequency. In the ensuing crises, hundreds of North American jitneyists were periodically forced out of business by their failure to find someone to secure their bond.<sup>40</sup>

It is tempting to see this hostile legislation as proof that street railways ran city government. Yet most municipal politicians knew there were more votes to be gained from spiting than serving privately owned tram companies. Negative regulation and later outright suppression of jitneys came about because the street railways had powerful allies at city hall. The jitneys quickly made enemies, for they threatened not only the profits of the street railway but also the economic and moral order that the trolley had helped to create.

Most apprehensive were the street railway’s own employees: the jitney threatened their livelihoods. Everywhere the Amalgamated Association of Street Railway Employees lobbied for the strict regulation, if not suppression, of the jitney. Organized labour in general, however, was ambivalent because jitneys — at least in the winter of 1914-15 — provided jobs to unemployed tradespeople, served working-class commuters, and in some jurisdictions (for example, Victoria, Ottawa, and Winnipeg) spawned new labour unions. Overall, however, the trade union movement opposed the jitney, as Eckert and Hilton have remarked, “out of loyalty to the Amalgamated,” and out of concern for municipal ownership. In some cities, most notably Vancouver, Edmonton, Regina, and Saskatoon (and in the end, Winnipeg), they actively assisted the lobbying efforts of the street railway companies against the intruder.<sup>41</sup>

The interclass alliance in opposition to jitneys also included many property holders from the “streetcar suburbs” and the central business

## *Competition's Moment*

district, who viewed jitneys as a threat to the spatial hierarchy created by the tram and thus to established property values. The streetcar suburbs contained thousands who believed the warnings of the street railways that continued jitney competition would force rail service cutbacks and an end to the universal fare. The loss of rail service, which had been built into land values, threatened many property holders and real estate developers with financial loss. An end to the cross-subsidization of lines (so that street railways could attract short-haul riders from the jitneys) was equally unattractive to suburban residents and developers, since zone fares would reorder property values in favour of more central locations.

Which is not to say that property holders in the central business district looked kindly upon the jitney. Indeed, in Vancouver and elsewhere they helped to build the consensus for jitney suppression. Downtown businesses were inclined to make the jitney a scapegoat for the sins of the private automobile. With only one car for every 106 people in Canada in 1914 (many of whom were farmers), urban automobilists still tended to divide into two groups: the wealthy and those who used their vehicle commercially. For obvious reasons, it was politically easier to blame jitneys, taxis, and delivery vans than the elite automobilist for the declining benefits that downtown business was receiving from their location near the hub of the street railway system. As traffic congestion worsened downtown, and the trams became ever slower, centrality became less profitable as suburbanites increasingly did business closer to home. It was tempting to blame the jitney for this alarming trend.<sup>42</sup>

The jitney threatened not only the economic order of the radial city, but also its moral order. It raised all sorts of deep-seated fears, intensified by the Great War, about the the behaviour and fate of the nation's youth. Young people were, as might be anticipated, the most enthusiastic jitney riders; indeed, virtually every observer agreed that "the

**Table 5**  
*Indices of traffic density (crowding),  
Canadian electric railways, for the year ending 30 June 1915*

System	Passengers per car mile	Passengers per car (000) hour	Passengers per car
Toronto Ry.	9.41	209	84.4
Montreal Tramways (1)	9.20	—	—
Winnipeg Electric Ry.	7.60	228	—
Hamilton Street Ry.	7.51	175	64.1
Ottawa Electric Ry.	6.79	192	62.1
London Street Ry.	6.79	209	—
Edmonton Radial Ry.	6.78	169	61.2
Calgary Mun. Ry.	6.76	221	64.1
Quebec Railway	6.57	128	47.3
Toronto Suburban Ry.	6.25	164	52.0
Halifax Electric	5.85	134	43.9
Cape Breton Elec. Ry.	5.63	169	50.7
Sandwich, Windsor, & Amherstburg Ry.	5.56	107	—
Oshawa Ry.	5.09	27	—
Fort William Elec. Ry.	4.94	111	—
B.C. Electric Ry.	4.76	141	43.6
Berlin & Waterloo S.R.	4.71	71	—
Regina Municipal Ry.	4.67	131	41.0
Saskatoon Mun. Ry.	4.65	182	41.8
Saint John Ry.(2)	4.32	—	—
Moncton Tramways	3.68	107	—
Hull Electric Co.	3.04	56	27.9
Brandon Mun. Elec. Ry.	2.90	39	22.0

Sources: National Archives of Canada, RG 46-11, Series B III, 2. Reports of electric railways for year ending 30 June 1915; *Canadian Railway and Marine World*, May 1915: 184.

(1) For year ending 30 June 1913. This figure omits transfer passengers and so understates crowding by (judging from 1915 data) about one-third.

(2) For year ending 30 June 1911. This figure omits transfer passengers and so understates crowding.

## Competition's Moment

younger element of the population ... were the chief patrons of the early jitneys" because they were the social group most attracted, said one trolley executive, by its "two features — novelty and speed." In a world at war, young people wanted to experience life to the full, to defy death, to prove their courage, and the more dangerous the jitney ride the more attractive it was for some: hence the familiar scene in the early spring of 1915 (before the police cracked down) of youth sitting on doors or on the trunk, or standing on the running board of public automobiles whizzing through bumpy streets at one and a half or two times the streetcar's speed. The jitney had special appeal to military personnel and it flourished wherever they congregated.<sup>43</sup>

The youthful "joy riders" also sat upon each other's knees or laps — which could be more thrilling than the threat of instant death. There was disagreement as to how voluntary these seating arrangements were: "A Father" in Hamilton wrote of a young woman who faced "humiliation" when none of the males already seated in a jitney offered her any other place to sit but their knees. But the majority of opinion, much of it appalled, agreed with the sentiment in the following jingle from April 1915:

Women, they don't give a cuss  
When they ride a jitney bus;  
They don't hang on to a strap,  
But Ford right in and sit in your lap.<sup>44</sup>

Even more worrisome for moral arbiters than "undue familiarity" amongst strangers was the amorous behaviour of young people who used the jitney for a cheap date (with consequent declines in theatre attendance reported in some American cities) or for dangerous liaisons. All this activity happened beyond the prying eyes of relatives, and if late enough at night, with only an unseeing jitney driver in attendance. The jitney, in other words, added a lower-class dimension to the world of back-seat courtship already being pioneered by the private auto and the cab. Adam Shortt's report on Vancouver's jitneys in

1917 claimed that "the greater privacy and social attractiveness of the [jitney's] rear seats, especially in the evenings, offer inducements to many patrons ... which the larger area, formal arrangements of the seats, full illumination of the cars and consequent publicity [of the trolley] do not afford." Shortt wrote that one jitney driver told his one-man commission of inquiry "that as an attractive commercial venture he had in mind the devising of a car for evening traffic equipped throughout with back seats only."<sup>45</sup>

Youthful bravado during wartime helped to fill jitneys in 1915-18, but also raised the spectre of immorality and disorder. Canadian street railways collected and fed the media reports from all over North America to prove their contention that jitneys were filled with seedy characters, including prostitutes, pimps, pickpockets, bootleggers, and muggers, and that women passengers were frequent victims of "undue familiarity" — or worse.<sup>46</sup>

According to street railways and sympathetic media, women were a "relevant social group" whose interests lay in the suppression of the jitney. It is difficult to assess this damning contention, for despite the occasional incident (for example, a sexual assault in Hamilton), the "evidence" usually consisted of vague allusions to American "experience." Similarly, little hard evidence has surfaced to prove that Canadian women's groups were alarmed by the jitney. To be sure, *Canadian Railway and Marine World* claimed that women's councils in several American cities had condemned the jitney as a threat to public morals, but it could name no similar group in Canada, save for the Vancouver Juvenile Protective Association, which in December 1915 called for a ban on women riding jitneys at night.<sup>47</sup>

Moral outrage found concrete expression in most cities in police regulations requiring each passenger to have her own seat, and in some places (for example, Vancouver) in regulations requiring lights to be kept burning over the rear seat from dusk until dawn when the top was up.<sup>48</sup>

These regulations presumably were sufficient to protect feminine virtue, thus allowing some in the media — as well as this author — to address more tangible aspects of what the jitney actually meant for women: first, there is little doubt that women generally were at least as enthusiastic as men about jitneys — and perhaps even more so, given the sexual disparity in incomes that skewed auto ownership. The general manager of Hamilton's traction company asserted in June 1915, "Many people, *especially women*, who have been unable to afford automobile rides in the past, are greatly attracted by the chance to indulge their longings [emphasis mine]."<sup>49</sup>

Some women also saw in the jitney an opportunity (unless discriminatory regulation was passed, as in Hamilton) to become entrepreneurs. There were female jitneyists reported in several North American cities, including Toronto, Victoria, Ottawa, and Winnipeg, where, according to *Saturday Night* in July 1915, their cars were "more generously patronized than [those of] many of the men." *Saturday Night* thought their popularity was owed to gender stereotyping (to "careful handling" of the car by women drivers or male "gallantry"), but the emergence in Winnipeg and Montreal and in at least two American cities of jitney services operated by women for "women and children only" suggests that some women saw in the jitney an opportunity to extend the separate sphere.<sup>50</sup>

The jitney, it would seem, was a paradoxical machine: it created opportunities for social segregation even as it imposed extraordinary (certainly for the times) interclass mixing. *Saturday Night* observed in July 1915:

One takes a street car and pays no attention to any of the many passengers who may happen to be there at the time. But he gets into a jitney with the feeling that he is entering a more or less private equipage and with a certain amount of obligation to make the acquaintance of the

## *Competition's Moment*

other passengers, sit on their knees, or let them sit on his, ... and be a sort of hail well met fellow, generally.<sup>51</sup>

The jitney offered a chance to re-establish a sense of community, of *Gemeinschaft*, on the public thoroughfares, to offer an alternative to the anonymous tram and the solipsistic automobile. It also afforded endless possibilities for social discrimination, both destructively, as in New Westminster where regulations forbade "Asiatics and negroes" from entering jitneys where there were already whites, and constructively, as in exclusive service for women and the "Jim Crow" jitneys of the southern United States that provided a black-owned alternative to segregated streetcars. Of course, this amount of choice was unsettling, its overt social discrimination a threat to the presumed egalitarian order of the tram and the radial city.<sup>52</sup>

There were many groups in Canada's cities in the 1915-29 period anxious to suppress the jitney; aside from jitneyists themselves and their customers (a socially disparate group, united mainly by relative youth and the value they placed on speed and time), the only "relevant social group" to defend the jitney was the automotive industry and its retainers.<sup>53</sup> Indeed, the street railways and their media allies claimed that the motor vehicle industry had dreamed up the jitney as a sales promotion. The tram companies stressed the involvement of the major automotive corporations in order to tarnish the jitney's "populist" credentials. In actual fact, auto industry involvement in the jitney movement had a small business bias. The main thrust came from dealers who saw in jitneys an opportunity to unload used cars. These had begun to accumulate on their lots in large numbers for the first time (as production of new cars soared and the fast pace of technical innovation rendered many older makes obsolete). Dealers had not yet devised networks for moving the cars they took in trade: however, they found they could rent or sell them for use as jitneys, and in

Montreal and Toronto they even founded jitney companies to absorb their unwanted stock.<sup>54</sup>

Motor vehicle manufacturers, on the other hand, generally disapproved of their cars serving as jitneys.<sup>55</sup> Automobiles designed for maximum power and speed were, if used as common carriers, judged instead for their durability and load capacity. They usually failed the test: even the Model T Ford, the most commonly used make, aged prematurely in jitneying. For manufacturers, who as a group enjoyed a seller's market, there was little to be gained, and much to be lost, from having their cars travel the streets in ever more shabby guise until they broke down with several prospective customers on board. Manufacturers said special-purpose vehicles should be built for use as jitneys and some of the companies that had trouble selling automobiles did begin to build buses. Dozens of small companies also offered to modify the Model T Ford for jitney use, either by providing a buslike body for it (taking the Ford's tonneau in trade) or by providing a trucklike chassis. While these bus manufacturers helped to shape the jitney (it evolved much more rapidly into a bus than historians have realized), they could offer it minimal political or economic protection.<sup>56</sup>

Hostile forces pushed the government in every municipality towards jitney suppression. Politicians feared being held responsible for loss of the universal transit fare or, worse, of the trams themselves. They also wanted to avoid further legal battles with the street railways, which threatened to sue the city for breach of contract. Moreover, they did not want to have to levy new taxes to replace the revenue the jitneys cost local government. The main problem with jitneys — and the ultimate reason for their suppression — was that they reduced street railway income, and hence the tax street railways had to pay to the city government. Everywhere cities had tapped into the monopoly profits of the street railways to extract large incomes for themselves. Jitney competition thus was

costly for the municipal governments, and by mid 1915 it was obvious that jitneys were themselves of such marginal profitability that it was impossible politically (and legally, said some courts) to charge them more than \$5 a seat in annual taxes. Moreover, the decentralized nature of the jitneys meant that the administrative costs of regulating them would be higher than for the trams. In sum, any significant prolongation of "competition's moment" in urban transportation would have forced city governments to find alternative sources of revenue.<sup>57</sup>

Municipal governments thus had a financial stake in preserving the transit monopoly. Politicians may have vigorously debated who should own it (capitalists or the state) but there was little doubt that there should be a transit monopoly. Much was said of the virtues of centralized coordination, but the real issue was that municipal governments found corporate capitalism, especially in its monopoly guise, easier to tax and regulate than the anarchic jitney. The growth of the state as much as the protection of corporate capital demanded the elimination of the petty proprietor in public transportation.

The final suppression was brutal. The jitney did not simply wither away, as some historians suppose. It was finally eliminated by the ruthless but effective expedient of giving the local street railway either a veto over jitney routes or licences (Edmonton, 1921; Toronto, 1924) or an exclusive transportation franchise for the city (Vancouver, 1918; Winnipeg, 1918; Ottawa, 1923; Hamilton, 1926; and London, 1929). In each case the city was able to extract concessions from the street railways — a bus route in Winnipeg, rail extensions in Ottawa — in exchange for the bans.<sup>58</sup>

The jitneyists fought against extermination. In Hamilton, jitneyists were given two years to find alternative work, and yet dozens refused to accept the ban. For four months in 1928 they remained defiant, even as the police levied — at \$20 a ticket — \$45,000 in fines.

## *Competition's Moment*

Facing destitution (the city, relenting, later refunded the money), the jitneyists resisted until they had run out of courts they could afford. Their association then ordered them off the streets. The bitter-enders included 21 individuals who had been jitneying for at least seven years, and one, Guido Gilbert, who had taken out his first licence in 1915.<sup>59</sup>

The fate of Guido Gilbert permits us to grasp one final interpretation of the jitney, as a *populist machine* that did not fit into the “progressive society” being created by big government, big business, and big labour after 1890. The suppression of the jitney, therefore, should be understood as a defeat for “civic populism.” It is with some hesitation (and mischief) that the term “civic populism” is used here, for populism is — as Margaret Canovan remarked in her book on the concept — widely regarded as “an exceptionally vague” concept that “refers in different contexts to a bewildering variety of phenomena.”<sup>60</sup> So why use it? A short answer is that one has to appreciate the populist nature of the jitney in order to realize the extent to which the consolidation of corporate capitalism in the two generations before 1930 has so constricted the range of cultural options in Canada since then that “populism” (one possible way of organizing society) is now seen as no more realistic an option for modern Canada than slavery or seigneurialism.<sup>61</sup>

Since Chris Armstrong and H.V. Nelles described the rise and presumed triumph of “civic populism” in Toronto, it is obvious that there is disagreement as to what constituted “populism” in the jitney era. Armstrong and Nelles have defined “civic populism” as the belief “that essential services could be most economically, efficiently, and honestly supplied by public rather than private undertakings.” Civic populism they equate, in other words, with the “idea of public enterprise,” a cause identified by other scholars with municipal socialism or with boosterism. In what sense, then, was the cause of public ownership “populist”? In the

sense, Armstrong and Nelles have replied, that support for it “sprawled across class and occupational boundaries.” Populism for them is an “interclass alliance” — of “consumers” according to a 1984 article, of “producing classes” according to a 1986 book.<sup>62</sup>

Should populism be defined as an interclass alliance of either producers or consumers? No, according to current historical opinion in the United States. American historians now tend to define populism in class terms, as a “democratic social movement” composed (in Stephen Hahn’s words) of “petty proprietors, ... men and women of ‘small means,’ who faced and sought to resist the spectre of proletarianization.” Through cooperative action American populists sought, according to Lawrence Goodwyn, to achieve “the democratic organization of industrialized society” by altering its “hierarchical economic forms.” For Goodwyn, producer cooperatives were, and are, the essence of populism. Cooperatives have also been featured in Peter Wiles’s discussion of the populist “syndrome”: he explained in 1969, “The essence of of co-operation is that the owners are private people, not the state; each owns a share ... and each contributes something besides capital.”<sup>63</sup>

Although American populists did favour government ownership as a tactic in their struggle to maintain their economic independence, it should not be seen as the primary meaning of the populist experience. Wiles has explained rather cleverly the relationship between populism and government ownership, “Capitalism or co-operation for me, ... socialism if need be for you — under my control.” Support for municipal ownership should not be used then, as Armstrong and Nelles do, as a litmus test for populism. Indeed, quite to the contrary, the cause of municipal ownership was by 1915 just another another excuse for suppressing the jitney, the populist machine.<sup>64</sup>

There were, as we have seen, two key respects in which the jitney industry was

populistic: its ownership and its organization into jitney associations and cooperatives. It consisted primarily of petty proprietors (people similar in their social backgrounds and aspirations to the independent taxicab owner of today) who were anxious to remain independent and to avoid proletarianization. Although rampant individualists, they quickly realized the need to form cooperatives if they were to have any chance for survival in the era of corporate capitalism.

They failed, the jitney failed, because they simply were unable to convince Canadians that populism — a world of small producers and cooperative egalitarianism — was a viable method of organizing the movement of people in the era of corporate capitalism. Earlier we saw that jitneys might be justified because of the help they can potentially lend to public transit. Yet in the final analysis, jitneys are, and were, important only to the extent to which the survival of the petty proprietor is important to Canadian society.

## *Competition's Moment*

**Table 6**  
*State of employment in selected Canadian cities, in 1914-15 (jitney centres in bold print)*

City	Ratio in Sept. 1914	Ratio in March 1915	Ratio in Sept. 1915
Saint John	3.64	3.14	3.57
Halifax	3.52	2.92	3.71
Quebec City	3.24	2.19	3.13
London	3.15	3.24	3.83
Windsor	2.91	2.52	2.96
<b>Winnipeg</b>	2.82	2.38	2.83
Ottawa	2.45	2.88	2.55
<b>Toronto</b>	2.32	2.72	2.59
Saskatoon	2.65	2.63	3.00
Montreal	2.45	2.12	2.35
<b>Victoria</b>	2.09	2.17	2.34
<b>Hamilton</b>	2.07	2.31	2.59
Calgary	1.52	1.77	2.07
Edmonton	1.19	1.38	1.87
Regina	—	2.16	3.56
<b>Vancouver</b>	—	1.25	1.17
<b>Jitney centres</b>	2.10	2.04	2.23
Other cities	2.83	2.56	3.07

Source: *The Labour Gazette*, 15(Oct. 1914): 420-23; 15(April 1915): 1132-35; 16(Oct. 1915): 372-75. The table presents the mean average of correspondent assessments for employment conditions in the various occupational categories for each city. It uses the *Gazette's* implicit five-point scale wherein "very quiet" + 1; "quiet" + 2; "fair" + 3; "active" + 4; "very active" + 5.

## *Appendix*

### *Regional Variations in the Canadian Jitney Experience*

There are no easy explanations as to why the jitney flourished in six Canadian cities and not in the rest. The dreaded Canadian winter cannot be given the credit, for the jitney's extraordinary popularity in Winnipeg defies any kind of climactic determinism. There does, as in the United States, seem to have been an east-west gradient, with the jitney much less popular east of the Mississippi River — in this case the Mississippi River in eastern Ontario — than to the west. For the United States, Carlos Schwantes has attributed this pattern to Eastern conservatism.<sup>65</sup> Equally plausible for Canada is the argument that the time taken for the jitney to diffuse from its West Coast hearth diminished its attractiveness, since reports of the disadvantages of jitneying reached the East before the public had experienced its advantages.

City size seems to have mattered, since jitneys needed substantial, middle-distance commuting in order to flourish, but it was not a decisive factor, for several large cities, including Quebec, Halifax, Calgary, Saskatoon, Regina, Ottawa, and Montreal gave jitneys a cool reception. There were obviously other factors at work in these cities that neutralized its appeal. In Quebec, a city which apparently had not yet seen a jitney in June 1915, the escarpment and the narrow streets may have proved insurmountable obstacles for buses with 20 horsepower engines. Halifax, still jitney-free in July, may have been too compact, and, with only 200 automobiles in the city, car ownership had not penetrated very far into the class of small proprietors who introduced the jitney elsewhere.<sup>66</sup>

As for Calgary, concern for the municipally owned street railway caused City Council to restrict jitney operations to a half-dozen autos serving the Sarcee military camp; these cars

## Competition's Moment

were tolerated, indeed encouraged, to avoid having to extend the municipal railway to a base that might shut down at war's end. Saskatoon and Regina similarly regulated their jitneys out of existence to protect their municipal railways.<sup>67</sup>

Municipal ownership and jitneying did not, however, prove as incompatible in Edmonton and Toronto, two cities that showed surprising insouciance towards their municipal railways. Edmonton's city council, after being foiled by the Alberta Supreme Court in its first attempt, in April 1915, to put the jitneys out of business (through an onerous licence fee), took another six years to smite the jitneys. In August 1921 it finally forced them off their profitable routes, and they apparently soon disappeared. Colin Hatcher and Tom Schwarzkopf have attributed the long delay to the mismanagement of the street railway: its annual deficits alienated organized property holders who blamed them not on jitney competition but on failure to get operating costs down to Calgary's level. It is likely, as well, that Edmonton jitneys won allies by serving areas with otherwise inadequate public transit.<sup>68</sup>

That may also have also been true in Toronto after 1921 where the Toronto Transportation Commission (TTC) was, though popular, exposed to jitney competition until police commissioners agreed in August 1924 to a TTC veto over future jitney licences. There were still 268 jitneys licensed to operate in the municipality of Toronto in 1923; with the help of the TTC, there was only legal jitney left by 1927 and from then on there were none.<sup>69</sup>

In Calgary, Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton, and Toronto unsympathetic regulators helped hasten the jitney to its grave, but no public intervention was necessary in Ottawa and Montreal, where it died of natural causes. In Ottawa the "Jitney Passenger Service," as Charles Lévesque and his associates called the two second-hand autos they operated on Rideau and Bank Streets in early April, quit after four days of running for "lack of

patronage." A reporter for the *Ottawa Evening Citizen* wrote that "the people do not even seem to understand what the jitney is or just what is its object in trundling about the streets." The car made a paltry \$2.70 its first day (to be shared with a hired driver), and it is neither surprising that Lévesque's group failed to find new investors nor that Lévesque had no successors until the street railway strikes in 1918 and 1919.<sup>70</sup>

Ottawa's indifference may be explained by its being a civil service town. Notoriously conservative, and possibly resistant to innovations like the jitney and the transit bus (rejected as well in 1924 by the residents of Ottawa East), civil servants also enjoyed a long lunch break, with the result that Ottawa Electric had in 1915, according to the Holt Commission, "several periods of peak load," whereas "in most cities there [were] but two." As a result, Ottawa's trams were remarkably uncrowded. The Holt Commission found in 1915 that on every line "only occasionally [did] the passengers exceed the number of seats offered." Table 4 reveals that Ottawans did considerably less strap-hanging than residents of Toronto or of several large American cities. Given these ratios, it was not surprising that Ottawans, despite constant griping, were relatively uninterested in alternative forms of public transit.<sup>71</sup>

Montrealers, by contrast, may have suffered the worst crowding of any rail users in Canada. Table 5 not only attests to this dubious distinction, but it also shows a rough equivalence between crowded trams and jitney popularity (the latter's "strongholds" being in boldface). The Ottawa Electric and the British Columbia Electric Railway (BCER) appear to be anomalous, but the aggregate data for both are misleading thanks to Ottawa's unique commuting habits and the inclusion of BCER's interurban system.

Montrealers had, it would seem, reason to welcome the jitney. And they did. A Montreal Tramways executive agreed with the the *Financial Times* that their popularity in April

1915 "demonstrated that there [were] Montrealers who, while objecting strenuously to being compelled to hang to a strap in a street-car, are perfectly willing to have six or seven fellow-citizens standing on their feet in a jitney." Despite their initial popularity, jitneys never caught on in Montreal. The city never saw many more than the 15 jitneys it started with on 12 April 1915, and only one route running north-south on Park Avenue (on the east side of the mountain) survived into June.<sup>72</sup> By 9 July the press declared the jitney dead, and the *Montreal Star* offered the following obituary:

Ten little jitneys standing in a line,  
One got a passenger and there  
were nine.  
Nine little jitneys — we regret to state,  
One took a touring party, then there  
were eight.  
Eight little jitneys, two had to fix,  
Rather badly punctured tires, then  
there were six.  
Six little jitneys, all began to scrap,  
That's how all the jitneys vanished  
from the map.  
Lo, the poor jitney!<sup>73</sup>

No poet, the author of the ditty in the *Star* did grasp some of the factors in the demise of the jitney in Montreal and elsewhere. In general, the media blamed the collapse of the Montreal Jitney Association on its decision to abandon the nickel fare and upon the failure of its members to stick to their assigned route if sightseers offered to pay for a detour.<sup>74</sup>

The behaviour of Montreal jitneyists made economic sense, once the swarming process failed to take place. In May 1915 the manager of the jitney association "said that there was a difficulty in getting cars to put on routes which the public ask[ed] to have opened up." As a result, there were too few jitneys on any route in Montreal to offer potential riders the kind of frequent headways (a car always in sight) that drew patronage to jitneys on Yonge Street in Toronto or Hastings Street in Vancouver. As a result, Montreal's jitneys



## *Competition's Moment*

failed to attract short-haul passengers (that is, within a range of 1.5 miles) and found that they had to raise their fare to a dime or more to cover their costs for hauling a handful of riders two miles or more.

The swarming process was fundamental to the success of the jitney: unless hundreds of autos rushed into the industry, the public automobile forfeited its chief advantage over both walking and tram-riding: speed. Jitneys were 50 to 100 per cent faster than the trolley, but this meant little to its customers (except as an occasional thrill) unless it could promise service at least as frequent as the street railways, for as every Canadian knows, ten minutes spent waiting on a street corner for a bus in inclement weather can seem an eternity. Montreal's jitney association, with just six vehicles running on Park Avenue in mid June 1915, was simply a non-starter.<sup>75</sup>

In the six jitney strongholds in Ontario and the West, hundreds of individuals scrambled in each city to get into business, but in Montreal there was still not a jitney to be found more than 50 days after their emergence in Toronto. The public may have been ready to jitney, but the city's petty capitalists were not. As a result, three local auto dealerships tried to jumpstart the movement in order, it appears, to unload their used cars. The organizers of the Montreal Jitney Association were not, even so, willing to invest much money in the venture (they reportedly owned no jitneys themselves); instead they sought to create a jitney exchange to coordinate the operations (for example, routes, schedules, tickets) of independent jitneers, who were expected to pay a fee of \$2.50 a week to the association and to obey its dictates. This kind of approach to jitneying worked, as we shall see, in some cities; but it failed in Montreal for simple lack of interest from tradespeople, grocers, and the other sorts of petty entrepreneurs who filled jitney ranks in cities such as Hamilton. In Montreal perhaps car ownership had not spread as widely among this class as it had in points west, or — more

likely — they simply feared to tangle with the Canadian Autobus Company.<sup>76</sup>

Canadian Autobus had received a ten-year franchise from City Council in 1912 to run a five-cent service on most of Montreal's principal streets. The by-law included a promise that would-be bus competitors would require a permit from the city. But jitneys were not regarded as autobuses in Montreal, and when City Council finally got around to regulating them — in December 1915, by which time the association was long dead and the problem seems to have been one of shared-ride taxis — it amended the cab by-law to require taxis (jitneys) both to refrain from soliciting passengers on the streets and to operate from stands. The 1912 by-law did not, then, exclude jitneys but it meant that they could at any time face well-capitalized bus competition, because Canadian Autobus, which had done nothing to put buses on the streets since receiving its franchise, suddenly took receipt of its first double-decker bus on 30 April 1915 and, even more dangerously, began lobbying a hitherto pliant City Council for a \$3 million municipal investment in its proposed bus system. Although Canadian Autobus, a company with suspicious, allegedly corrupt, links to both Montreal Tramways and the Board of Commissioners, probably had no intention of ever putting buses on Montreal's streets, its flurry of activity in the spring of 1915 undoubtedly deterred some petty capitalists, always fearful of being crushed by a combination of corporate and political muscle, from entering the business of public transportation in Montreal.<sup>77</sup>

Montreal's lack of interest in jitneys is difficult to explain, given high local unemployment. Historians have emphasized the link between unemployment and jitneying. It is difficult to evaluate this argument, since economic conditions were generally poor in the winter of 1914-15. However, Table 6 does show some correlation between jitney swarming and unemployment. The table is, admittedly, based on impressionistic evidence — the

monthly reports to the *Labour Gazette* by its local correspondents.

As in the United States, absentee-ownership also played a role in determining the geography of the jitney: for local resentments against external control definitely favoured the spread of jitneys in Winnipeg, Vancouver, and Victoria; and comparable resentments against aloof and unresponsive management also contributed to the jitney's popularity in Toronto, where the Toronto Railway was so estranged from the local community it might as well have been owned by foreign nationals. Resentment against external control was clearly not, however, the chief explanation for the geography of Canada's jitneys since they thrived in Hamilton, where local capital controlled the trams until 1925, and in Edmonton, where the jitneys challenged a municipally owned railway.

In summary, there is no simple explanation for the geographical variations in the jitney's popularity in Canada. The only certainty is this: jitneys needed to swarm. Where they did, they thrived. In these cities, they had to be forcibly suppressed. Where only a few jitneys appeared, they offered no improvement over the street railway in overall commuting time, and here they died from neglect.

### **Notes**

\*An earlier version of this paper was presented to the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, Quebec City, 1-3 June 1989.

<sup>1</sup> For the Canadian jitney see Fred Angus, *Loyalist City Streetcars: The Story of Street Railway Transit in Saint John, New Brunswick* (Toronto, 1979): 40, 50; Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, *Monopoly's Moment: The Organization and Regulation of Canadian Utilities, 1830-1930* (Philadelphia, 1986): 254-62; Donald Davis, "Horse and Trolley Days: The Street Railway Transformed the Canadian City," *Horizon Canada*, 9(1987): 2456-61; Michael Doucet, "Politics, Space, and Trolleys: Mass Transit in Early Twentieth-Century Toronto," in *Shaping the Urban Landscape*;

*Aspects of the Canadian City-Building Process*, ed. G.A. Steller and A.F.J. Artibise (Ottawa, 1982): 356-81; Henry Ewert, *The Story of the B.C. Electric Railway Company* (North Vancouver, 1986): 123-40; C.K. Hatcher and Tom Schwarzkopf, *Edmonton's Electric Transit: The Story of Edmonton's Streetcars and Trolley Buses* (Toronto, 1983): 77-95; Paul-André Linteau, "Urban Mass Transit," in *Building Canada*, ed. N.R. Ball (Toronto, 1988): 59-87; J.M. Mills, *Cataract Traction: The Railways of Hamilton* (Toronto, 1971): 97-98; G.A. Onn, "The History of the London Street Railway Company (1873-1951)" (unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1958); P.E. Roy, "The British Columbia Electric Railway Company, 1897-1928" (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1970): 204-89; P.E. Roy, "The Fine Arts of Lobbying and Persuading: The Case of the B.C. Electric Railway," in *Canadian Business History: Selected Studies, 1497-1971* ed. D.S. Macmillan (Toronto, 1972): 239-54; P.E. Roy, "Regulating the British Columbia Electric Railway: The First Public Utilities Commission in British Columbia," *B.C. Studies*, 11(Fall 1971): 3-20.

For the American jitney see S.L. Bottles, *Los Angeles and the Automobile: The Making of the Modern City* (Berkeley, 1987): 50-51; B.A. Brownell, "The Notorious Jitney and the Urban Transportation Crisis," *Alabama Review*, 25(April 1972): 105-18; Ross Eckert and G.W. Hilton, "The Jitneys," *The Journal of Law and Economics*, 15 (Oct. 1972): 293-325; Mark S. Foster, *From Streetcar to Superhighway: American City Planners and Urban Transportation, 1900-1940* (Philadelphia, 1981): 50-51; Stanley Mallach, "The Origins of the Decline of Urban Mass Transportation in the United States, 1890-1930," *Urbanism Past & Present*, 8(Summer 1979): 10-11; W.D. Middleton, *The Time of the Trolley* (Milwaukee, 1967): 383-88; H.L. Preston, *Automobile Age Atlanta* (Athens, Ga, 1979): 57-62; Arthur Saltzman and R.J. Solomon, "Jitney Operations in the United States," *Highway Research Record*, 449(1973): 63-70; C.A. Schwantes, "The West Adapts the Automobile: Technology, Unemployment, and the Jitney Phenomenon of 1914-1917," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 16(1985): 307-26.

See City of Toronto Archives (hereafter CTA), RG 8, Box 45, *Report to the Civic Transportation Committee on Radial Railway Entrances and Rapid Transit* (Toronto, 1915): 18-19. The secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Electric Railway Association stated in June 1915 that 13 member companies had reported 1,750 jitneys. As these did not include the Toronto Railway, the minimum total, based on his figures, would be 2,500. See Canadian Electric Railway Association (hereafter CERA), Proceedings, Annual Meeting, 21-22 June 1915, 108-9.

For the U.S. estimate see *Electric Railway Journal* (hereafter *ERJ*) 52(26 Oct. 1918): 745-46; *Motor Bus* 1(Jan. 1916): 284; Eckert and Hilton, "Jitney," 295; Schwantes, "Jitney Phenomenon," 310; M.W. Roschlau, *Urban Transport in Developing Countries: The Peseros of Mexico City* (Vancouver, 1981): 55; *Motor*, 24(May 1915): 47. Some historians believe the number to have been considerably fewer than 62,000: Saltzman and Solomon, "Jitney operations," 64, say it was 24,000; William Middleton, *Time of Trolley*, 383, claims no more than 10,000. If 3,500-3,800 was the Canadian peak in 1915, it may be that the high point for jitney numbers in Canada came around 1 July 1919 when, with the jitney still flourishing in Hamilton and Edmonton, 6,300 jitneys were reported in Toronto and Ottawa during their simultaneous rail strikes (see Archives of Ontario (hereafter AO), Thomas L. Church Collection, Scrapbooks, Toronto *Globe*, 24 June 1919; Ottawa City Archives (hereafter OCA), Ottawa Electric Scrapbooks, Reel 86, Ottawa *Citizen*, 4 July 1919).

<sup>3</sup> D.F. Noble, *Forces of Production* (New York, 1983); R.S. Cowan, *More Work for Mother* (New York, 1983); David Hounshell, "Elisha Gray and the Telephone: On the Disadvantages of Being an Expert," *Technology and Culture*, 16(April 1975): 133-61; Trevor Pinch and Wiebe Bijker, "The Social Construction of Facts and Artifacts: Or How the Sociology of Science and the Sociology of Technology Might Benefit Each Other," in *The Social Construction of Technological Systems* (Cambridge, Mass., 1987): 17-50. See also *The Social Shaping of Technology*, ed. Donald MacKenzie and Judy Wajcman (Milton Keynes, England, 1985); and J.M. Staudenmaier, *Technology's Storytellers* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), chapters 4-5.

<sup>4</sup> Eckert and Hilton, "Jitneys," 293.

<sup>5</sup> Ecoplan International and Multisystems Inc., *The European Paratransit Experience. A Report in the Series Paratransit: Options for the Future*, Final Report, October 1981 (Prepared for Office of Policy Research, Urban Mass Transportation Administration): 18; Michael Kemp, "Jitney Service," in *Para-Transit: Neglected Options for Urban Mobility* (Washington, 1974): 167; R.F. Kirby, "Para-transit: experience and potential in the USA," *Ekistics*, 248(July 1976): 20.

<sup>6</sup> See Sigurd Grava, "The Jeepneys of Manila," *Traffic Quarterly*, 26(Oct. 1972): 465-84; R.N. Farmer, "Whatever Happened to the Jitney?" *Traffic Quarterly*, 19(April 1965): 263-79; R.N. Farmer, "Middle Eastern Jitney Services," *Traffic Quarterly*, 21(April 1967): 219-28; Roschlau, *Peseros*, 31, 46-48; R.L. Meier, "Evolution of Minibus Systems," *Ekistics*, 30(Oct. 1970): 281-83; Z.A. Farkas and Matthew De Rouville, "The Potential of the Jitney: A Case Study of the Baltimore Metropolitan Area," *Transportation Quarterly*, 42(Jan. 1988): 89-105; Daniel Roos, "Paratransit," in *Public Transportation: Planning, Operations and Management*, ed. George Gray and Lester Hoel (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1979): 142-55; J.R. Meyer and J.A. Gomez-Ibanez, *Autos, Transit and Cities* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981): 58-59; R.F. Teal and Mary Berglund, "The Impacts of Taxicab Deregulation in the USA," *Journal of Transport Economics and Policy*, 21(Jan. 1987): 52; and J.M. Thomson, *Great Cities and Their Traffic* (London, 1977): 249-57, 298-99.

<sup>7</sup> Wilfred Owen, *Transportation and World Development* (Baltimore, 1987), 60, 98; R.F. Teal and Terry Nemer, "Privatization of Urban Transit: The Los Angeles Jitney Experience," *Journal of Transportation Engineering*, 13(1986): 5-22. See also works cited in note 5.

<sup>8</sup> Ecoplan, *European Paratransit*, 18-19; Tristan Galvez, "Competition on an Urban Bus Route," *Journal of Transport Economics and Policy*, 20(Jan. 1986): 101-6; P.H. Bly and R.H. Oldfield, "Competition Between Minibuses and Regular Bus Services," *Journal of Transport Economics and Policy*, 20(Jan. 1986): 65-67; Thomson, *Cities and Their Traffic*, 249, 255-56; *The Management of Urban Public Transport* (Westmead, England, 1975): 166; Grava, "Jeepneys": 482; Roschlau, *Peseros*: 52-54, 62, 73; Arthur Saltzman, "The Decline of Transit," in *Public Transportation*, 32-33; Saltzman and Solomon, "Jitney Operations": 69; Teal and Nemer, "Los Angeles experience": 9.

<sup>9</sup> National Library of Canada, *Papers to be read before the Canadian Electric Railway Association at Annual Meeting*, 26-27 July 1916, W.G. Murrin, "Traffic Conditions in Vancouver": 4. For the recognition (by some) in 1915-16 that jitneys could help street railways by serving as "peak absorbers" and that rush-hour service was so unprofitable to street railways that "congestion" surcharges should be imposed, see *ERJ*, 45(27 Feb. 1915): 415-16, 47(19 Feb. 1916): 357, 47(11 March 1916): 477. In May 1918 the general manager of New Jersey's principal traction company testified that jitney competition at rush hour had been a "godsend" to the company because it lacked the facilities to handle the traffic (see Delos Wilcox, *Analysis of the Electric Railway Problem* (New York, 1921): 666). For examples of the conventional, "cream-skimming" analogy, see *Canadian Railway and Marine World* (hereafter *CRM*), May 1915: 186, Oct. 1923: 498, July 1926: 380; CERA, Proceedings,

## *Competition's Moment*

- 21-22 June 1915: 110, 2-4 June 1926: 51, 61; *ERJ*, 45(9 Jan. 1915): 83, 45(13 Feb. 1915): 326, 45(20 Feb. 1915): 361, 50(21 July 1917): 103; London Public Library (hereafter LPL), Clipping File "Paratransit," London *Free Press*, 4 Jan. 1926; *British Columbia Financial Times*, 4(1 Dec. 1917): 1. Daniel Roos (see Roos, "Paratransit": 152) has suggested that transit companies condemned "the ridership diversion impact of new paratransit service" as "cream-skimming" because they use total ridership rather than economic efficiency as "their primary measure of success." Subsidized municipal ownership obviously has reinforced this tendency.
- <sup>10</sup> AO, C.R. Barnes, *Report to The Ontario Railway and Municipal Board on a Survey of Traffic Requirements in the City of Toronto* (Toronto, 1914): 44, 155-56. See also AO, T.L. Church Scrapbooks, Toronto *Telegram*, 7 Feb. and 22 March 1917.
- <sup>11</sup> D.J. St Clair, *The Motorization of American Cities* (New York, 1986), chapters 1-4. See also Glenn Yago, *The Decline of Transit: Urban Transportation in German and U.S. Cities 1900-1970* (New York, 1984), chapter 4; B.C. Snell, "American Ground Transport: A Proposal for Restructuring the Automobile, Bus, and Rail Industries, February 1974," in Senate Committee of the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly, *Hearing on Bill 1167*, 93d Congress, 2nd session, 1974, A1-3: 21-27; J.A. Whitt, *Urban Elites and Mass Transportation: The Dialectics of Power* (Princeton, N.J., 1982): 46-48; Kenneth Jackson, *The Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York, 1985): 170-71; J.A. Whitt and Glenn Yago, "Corporate Strategies and the Decline of Transit in U.S. Cities," *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, 21(Sept. 1985): 37-65; and T.P. O'Hanlon, "General Motors, Nazis, and the Demise of Urban Rail Transit," *Government Publications Review*, 11(1984): 211-32.
- <sup>12</sup> J.J. Flink, *The Automobile Age* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988): 364-67.
- <sup>13</sup> The bus subsidiary of B.C. Electric Railway charged nearly twice as much in 1925 as did the trams between Vancouver and New Westminster and yet was a "more popular service" even though the tram alone offered express service. See *Bus Transportation*, 4(April 1925): 204; *CRM*, July 1926: 375, Dec. 1927: 728-29. For extra-fare buses in Montreal, Calgary, and Hamilton see CERA, *Proceedings*, 2-4 June 1926: 63; *CRM*, July 1925: 365, July 1926: 375, Oct. 1926: 553; J. M. Lajeunesse, *History of Public Transportation in Montreal* (Montreal, 1973): 57; Colin Hatcher, *Stampede City Streetcars: The Story of the Calgary Municipal Railway* (Montreal, 1975): 63; Mills, *Cataract Traction*, 42. For Toronto's extra-fare buses see works cited in note 14. Buses appealed especially to children: see Hamilton Public Library, "Transportation in Hamilton: Scrapbook of Clippings," vol. 1, Hamilton *Spectator*, 21 May 1929.
- <sup>14</sup> Roschlau, *Peseros*: 62-63; Roos, "Paratransit": 152; J. C. Thirwall, "The Jitney Problem - I," *Scientific American*, Supplement 2069, 90(28 Aug. 1915): 143; *Bus Transportation*, 6(May 1927): 278; CERA, *Proceedings*, 2-4 June 1926: 29, 54 and 2-4 June 1937: 42; *Canadian Motorist*, Aug. 1925, 364; *CRM*, Nov. 1925: 575, June 1926: 325, Aug. 1926: 443, Dec. 1926: 663; *ERJ*, 46(4 Sept. 1915): 386; Saskatoon *Phoenix*, 12 July 1915: 4; CTA, Annual Statement, Toronto Transportation Commission, 31 Dec. 1925: 3, 9-10; Frances Frisken, "A Triumph for Public Ownership: The Toronto Transportation Commission 1921-1953," in *Forging a Consensus: Historical Essays on Toronto*, ed. V.L. Russell (Toronto, 1984): 247. The "Hill Route" in Toronto was a jitney service for the prosperous burghers in the Annex neighbourhood and the "Hill" district immediately north of it. It, and similar, extra-fare services in Vancouver, Hamilton, Calgary, and Montreal transmogrified the jitney, originally a populist vehicle that temporarily democratized the automobile. In a future paper, I plan to address the social shaping of the urban motorbus by traction companies in the 1920s and 1930s once they had stifled independent jitney competition. The subsequent unpopularity of the bus suggests that something went drastically wrong.
- <sup>15</sup> For a quick introduction to the current debate in transportation circles concerning pollution and congestion taxes (as well as outright bans) on auto use see "The City, the Commuter and the Car," *The Economist*, 310(18 Feb. 1989): 19-20, 22 and Owen, *Transportation and Development*, 58-60. For the Canadian context, see M. W. Frankena, *Urban Transportation Financing: Theory and Policy in Ontario* (Toronto, 1982).
- <sup>16</sup> Dial-a-ride services, such as taxis, cannot substitute for automobiles when time is of the essence (as in commuting or in making sales calls) because of their unpredictability. Hailed-ride services like jitneys and cruising taxis (as found in New York City), on the other hand, are appropriate for commuting, if they operate in sufficient numbers to ensure short headways. Generally, one must always be in sight; the decision made in most communities to restrict entry into the taxi business and to forbid cruising for fares was, like the jitney ban, an important, yet unappreciated, factor in the "motorization" of Canada's cities and, to use James Flink's 1975 terminology, the triumph of the "car culture." For the origins and impact of restrictive taxi regulation see Emmett Sinnott and Paul Tennant, "The Origins of Taxicab Limitation in Vancouver City (or 'Good Try, Anyway, Stanley Anderson')," *B.C. Studies*, 49(Spring 1981): 40-53; D.J. Williams, "The Economic Reasons for Price and Entry Regulation of Taxicabs," *Journal of Transport Economics and Policy*, 14(Jan. 1980): 105-12; Walter Block, *Defending the Undefendable* (New York, 1976): 87-93; Gorman Gilbert and R.E. Samuels, *The Taxicab: An Urban Transportation Survivor* (Chapel Hill, 1982): 65-95; Martin Wohl, "The Taxi's Role in Urban America: Today and Tomorrow," *Transportation*, 4(1975): 143-58; "The Regulation of Taxicabs in Chicago," *Journal of Law and Economics*, 14(Oct. 1971): 285-350; and CTA, *Report of the Advisory Committee on Taxicabs to the Board of Police Commissioners*, 12 April 1932.
- <sup>17</sup> Doucet, "Space and Trolleys": 374; Hatcher and Schwarzkopf, *Edmonton's Transit*: 82; Linteau, "Urban Mass Transit": 76; Roy, "British Columbia Electric Railway": 204; Roy, "Arts of Lobbying": 246; LPL, London *Free Press* Clipping File, "Paratransit," G.A. Onn, "Car-owners turn to 'jitneys,' find gold in rush (hour)," *Free Press*, 1 July 1967; Armstrong and Nelles, *Monopoly's Moment*: 254-55.
- <sup>18</sup> Doucet, "Space and Trolleys": 375-76.
- <sup>19</sup> Pinch and Bijker, "Social Construction of Artifacts": 28-47; Wiebe Bijker, "The Social Construction of Fluorescent Lighting — An Effort to Integrate the Analyses of Social Shaping and Social Impact of Technology" (Paper presented for the International Workshop on the Integration of Social and Historical Studies of Technology, 3-5 Sept. 1987, Enschede, The Netherlands). See also S.J. Douglas, *Inventing American Broadcasting* (Baltimore, 1987), Introduction, and Mackenzie and Wajcman, *Shaping of Technology*, Introductory Essay. The social constructivist approach has been criticized by Stewart Russell, a proponent of the "labour process" model of technological change, as intrinsically pluralist (and therefore conservative). However, there is no *a priori* reason why it should be incompatible with Marxist class analysis, feminist analysis, or any approach that also seeks to explain why some groups are excluded from shaping technology while others have a disproportionate say in defining it. See Stewart Russell, "The Social Construction of Artefacts: A Response to Pinch and Bijker," *Social Studies of Science*, 16(1986): 331-46 (and Pinch and Bijker's rejoinder: 347-60, same issue).
- <sup>20</sup> Many persons held in 1915 that the word derived from the name of a small Russian coin and that it came to America along with Russia's Jews. More common, however, and more persuasive to lexicographers, was the belief that "jitney" was a corruption of Creole French — of "jeton" (for counter or token) — and that it originated in either the West Indies or the Mississippi Valley among French-speaking slaves, reaching California soon after 1849. See *Edmonton Journal*, 14 May 1915: 2; CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915: 110; *Commercial Vehicle*, 12(15 Feb. 1915): 10; *Jitney Bus*, 1(July 1915): 114; Schwantes, "Jitney Phenomenon": 307-8; A *Dictionary of Americanisms*,

ed. Mitford M. Mathews (Chicago, 1951): 908; S.B. Flexner, *Listening to America* (New York, 1982): 497. A reader wrote the *New York Sun* in 1915 that "French speaking negroes of Louisiana and the Southern states" had long used this jingle:

Mettons jetnée danz li rou  
Et parcourons sur la rue —  
Mettons jetnée — si non vous  
Promenez ou pied nul!

He translated this as: "Put a nickel in the slot, On a bus this is the fare; If a nickel you've not got; You must trust to Shank's mare" (see *Jitney Bus*, 1 (May 1915): 41).

- <sup>21</sup> *Jitney Bus*, 1 (July 1915): 92; *ERJ*, 46(18 Sept. 1915): 500. Oakland, Ca, was also occasionally identified as the source of the jitney name: in 1926 Dean Locke, staff engineer for Public Service Railway of Newark, N.J., told Canadians that the first Oakland "jitney bus" carried a placard, "Will take you anywhere, will stop anywhere, for one Jitney" (see CERA, *Proceedings*, 2-4 June 1926: 50).
- <sup>22</sup> *Jitney Bus*, 1 (April 1915): 19; *ERJ*, 45(13 Feb. 1915): 324; *CRM*, March 1915, 106. See also Montreal *La Presse*, 10 April 1915: 9; The Fidelity Trust Company, Baltimore, "The Evolution of the Jitney Bus," 10 May 1915: 8; Schwantes, "Jitney Phenomenon": 308; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(March 1915): 69; OCA, Ottawa Electric Railway Scrapbooks, Reel 83, Ottawa *Free Press*, 2 April 1915; F. W. Doolittle, "The Economics of Jitney Bus Operation," *Journal of Political Economy*, 23(July 1915): 663. On Toronto's membership in the International Jitney Association and the consequent decision to give the first national jitney association in the U.S. its ambitious name see *Jitney Bus*, 1 (June 1915): 61-63.
- <sup>23</sup> CERA, *Proceedings*, 2-4 June 1926: 50; Hatcher, *Stampede Streetcars*: 9; Middleton, *Time of Trolley*: 381; *Motor Bus*, 1(Nov. 1915): 241; Saltzman and Solomon, "Jitney Operations": 63; and *Commercial Vehicle*, 12(15 March 1915): 15-16; Mallach, "Origins of Decline of Transportation": 10; Regina *Morning Leader*, 20 July 1915: 5; Angus, *Loyalist City Streetcars*: 40. The first jitney outside of Ontario (in the sense of a public automobile) may well have been operated by T. Hamer between Aldergrove and Murrayville, B.C., in 1913 (see *Canadian Motorist*, 2(Sept. 1915): 322).
- <sup>24</sup> G.W. Taylor, *The Automobile Saga of British Columbia, 1864-1914* (Victoria, 1984): 54; Roy, "British Columbia Electric Railway": 193, 206; CTA, Minutes, City Council, 1 Feb. 1915: 36; Minutes, Appendix "C", "Mayor's Inaugural Address, Jan. 10, 1916": 5; *ERJ*, 45(13 Feb. 1915): 324. Montreal awarded a bus franchise in 1912 (its fate is discussed in the Appendix).

- <sup>25</sup> *ERJ*, 45(13 Feb. 1915): 324-25, 46(10 July 1915): 82, 46(18 Sept. 1915): 501; CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915: 110.
- <sup>26</sup> CERA, *Proceedings*, 2-4 June 1926: 50; Doolittle, "Economics of Jitney Operation": 664; Ewert, "B.C. Electric Railway": 127; *ERJ*, 45(27 March 1915): 619.
- <sup>27</sup> HPL, Licence Book, City Treasurer, 1915-17.
- <sup>28</sup> For the speculative fever surrounding automobiles in 1909-15, see D.F. Davis, *Conspicuous Production: Automobiles and Elites in Detroit, 1899-1933* (Philadelphia, 1988), chapter 4; Hugh Durnford and Glenn Baechler, *Cars of Canada* (Toronto, 1973); D.F. Davis, "Dependent Motorization: Canada and the Automobile to the 1930s," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 21(Autumn 1986): 106-32; G.T. Bloomfield, " 'I can See a Car in that Crop': Motorization in Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History*, 37(Winter 1984): 3-24; and G.W. Taylor, *Automobile Saga of British Columbia*. Entries into the Detroit automobile industry peaked in 1910; the Ontario peak came in 1911. For Ontario, see I.M. Drummond, *Progress without Planning: The Economic History of Ontario from Confederation to the Second World War* (Toronto, 1987), Appendix C, Table 12.2: 419. Interest remained high after 1911, however, and as word circulated that millions were needed for successful auto manufacturing, the interests of entrepreneurs turned to jitney and bus promotion.
- <sup>29</sup> *The Automobile*, 32(8 April 1915): 651; *CRM*, Aug. 1916, 337, July 1927: 435; *ERJ*, 47(24 June 1916): 1184; Wilcox, *Electric Railway Problem*: 104; CERA, *Proceedings*, 2-4 June 1926: 51; *Jitney Bus*, 1(July 1915): 93; *Motor Bus*, 2(May 1916): 421; Toronto *Evening Telegram*, 23 Oct. 1915: 17. The editors of *ERJ* also thought (vol. 46, 3 July 1915: 2) "The bus does not appeal so strongly to the man who does not own an automobile as does the touring car. We have always maintained that one of the reasons which impelled some people to use the jitneys was the appearance of affluence which it gave, and this is shown by the requests often made by passengers to the driver to remove his route sign."
- <sup>30</sup> *Christian Guardian*, 86 (14 April 1915): 4; *ERJ*, 47(24 June 1916): 1184-85; *CRM*, Aug. 1916: 337; *Financial Post*, 15 May 1915: 5; HPL, Clipping File, "Hamilton-Taxicabs," Hamilton *Spectator*, 20 April 1915; Toronto *Daily Star*, 28 May 1915; *Jitney Bus*, 1(July 1915): 118.
- <sup>31</sup> *CRM*, March 1915: 106, April 1915: 150, May 1915: 188-89, 192, June 1915: 230, Aug. 1915: 312, Sept. 1915: 353, April 1916: 152; *Commercial Vehicle*, 12(April 1915): 16; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(Aug. 1915): 273; 2(Nov. 1915): 388; Montreal *Le Devoir*, 14 April 1915: 3; Montreal *La Presse*, 17 April 1915: 27; HPL, Clipping File, "Hamilton Taxicabs," Hamilton *Spectator*,

20 April 1915; *Saturday Night*, 3 July 1915: 10; Eckert and Hilton, "Jitneys": 297.

- <sup>32</sup> *CRM*, March 1915: 106, June 1915: 230, Sept. 1915: 353; *ERJ*, 45(20 Feb. 1915): 397, 45(29 May 1915): 1021-22, 45(19 June 1915): 1182, 46(10 July 1915): 54, 46(4 Sept. 1915): 422; Doolittle, "Economics of Jitney Operation": 679; HPL, Special Collections, Hamilton *Times* Scrapbooks, vol. S5, "Street Railway," 20 May 1915; *Motor Bus*, 1(Oct. 1915): 201; Montreal *La Presse*, 10 April 1915: 9; *Monetary Times*, 54(11 June 1915): 30; CTA, RG 2, Board of Control Records, Box 96, Gregory & Gooderham to T.L. Church, 10 March 1915; Toronto *Globe*, 25 June 1915: 4; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(March 1915): 66; *Canadian Municipal Journal*, 11(March 1915): 96; *Manitoba Free Press*, 14 April 1915: 5.
- <sup>33</sup> *CRM*, Sept. 1915: 353, Oct. 1915: 401; HPL, Clipping File, "Hamilton-Taxicabs," Hamilton *Spectator*, 15 April 1926, 20 Oct. 1928; Vancouver *Daily Province*, 20 June 1915: 15.
- <sup>34</sup> Armstrong and Nelles, *Monopoly's Moment*: 122-24.
- <sup>35</sup> On the evaluation of technology see E.W. Constant II, *The Origins of the Turbojet Revolution* (Baltimore, 1980): 17-24; H.G.J. Aitken, *The Continuous Wave: Technology and American Radio, 1900-1932* (Princeton, 1985): 11.
- <sup>36</sup> CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915: 104-19.
- <sup>37</sup> Wilcox, *Electric Railway Problem*: 104. The regulations in each city are summarized by *CRM*, March 1915-May 1918 passim; and the CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915.
- <sup>38</sup> Eckert and Hilton, "Jitneys": 309-11, 320; Toronto *Daily Star*, 28 May 1915; Vancouver *Daily Province*, 13 June 1917: 16; Gorman Gilbert and R.E. Samuels, *The Taxicab: An Urban Transportation Survivor* (Chapel Hill, 1982): 65; J.C. Thirwall, "The Jitney Problem - I," *Scientific American*, Supplement 2069, 90 (28 Aug. 1915): 143; *CRM*, June 1915: 230, Aug. 1916: 337, Oct. 1917: 404; Edmonton *Journal*, 18 May 1915: 2; *ERJ*, 45(20 Feb. 1915): 361, 45(8 May 1915): 958, 46(21 Aug. 1915): 314, 47(27 May 1916): 1020; Doolittle, "Economics of Jitney Operation": 672, 689; *Commercial Vehicle*, 12(8 May 1915): 16; *The Automobile*, 32(15 April 1915): 666; HPL, Minutes, Hamilton Municipal Council, 31 Jan. 1922: 62. The average jitneur made the same daily wage as a Montreal city labourer (as of June 1914) (see Saint John, N.B., *Semi-Weekly Telegraph and the News*, 24 June 1914: 1).
- <sup>39</sup> *Canadian Motorist*, 2(Aug. 1915): 273; *Monetary Times*, 54(11 June 1915): 9, 24, 54(18 June 1915): 35, 55(17 Dec. 1915): 20; *Jitney Bus*, 1(Aug. 1915): 143-

## Competition's Moment

44. The average accident claim for the street railway was \$100 and for the automobile \$200. The jitney average turned out to be about \$250.
- 40 *CRM*, July 1916: 299, Aug. 1916: 337; *ERJ*, 45(24 April 1915): 818, 46(10 July 1915): 82, 47(8 Jan. 1916): 104, 163; *Commercial Vehicle*, 12(15 May 1915): 17-18.
- 41 Eckert and Hilton, "Jitneys": 306; *Canadian Municipal Journal*, 11(March 1915): 96; *CRM*, May 1915: 188; Hatcher and Schwarkkopf, *Edmonton's Electric Transit*: 77; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(July 1915): 216; OCA, Ottawa Electric Railway Scrapbooks, Reel 83, *Financial Post*, 12 Jan. 1918; *Ottawa Journal*, 15 July 1919; CTA, Minutes, Toronto Board of Control, 10 April 1917, #833; *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 27 May 1915: 3; *Regina Morning Leader*, 25 May 1915: 10. See also Blaine Brownell, *The Urban Ethos in the South* (Baton Rouge, 1975): 121; *ERJ*, 45(17 April 1915): 776; and Schwantes, "Jitney Phenomenon": 320-21.
- 42 Brownell, *Urban Ethos*: 122; Eckert and Hilton, "Jitneys": 306; CTA, RG 8, Box 45, *Report to the Civic Transportation Committee on Radial Railway Entrances and Rapid Transit* (Toronto, 1915), 25.
- 43 Thomas McCarter, "From Jitney Competition to Bus Coordination," *Transit Journal*, 78(15 Sept. 1934): 341; CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915: 111, 115, 2-4 June 1926: 51; *Calgary Daily Herald*, 18 May 1915: 10, 12 June 1915: 9; *Jitney Bus*, 1(May 1915): 47; *CRM*, July 1915: 275.
- 44 HPL, Hamilton Times Scrapbook, vol. S5, "Street Railway," 30 April 1915; *Jitney Bus*, 1(April 1915): 10. See also *The Automobile*, 32(29 April 1915): 785; *Vancouver Daily Province*, 14 June 1917: 16. For further evidence of official and unofficial concern that Canadian men and women, intimates and strangers, were voluntarily sitting in each other's laps (or at least on their knees) in the public autos of 1915-17, see HPL, Clipping File, "Hamilton Taxicabs," Hamilton Spectator, 25 June 1915, HPL, Hamilton Times Scrapbooks, vol. S5, "Street Railway," Hamilton Times, 25 June 1915; *Toronto Daily Star*, 28 May 1915.
- 45 National Archives of Canada (hereafter NAC), MG 30, D 101, Adam Shortt Papers, Clipping File, M-1599, *Vancouver Daily Province*, 26 Nov. 1917. See also *Toronto Daily Star*, 28 May 1915; HPL, Clipping File, Hamilton Spectator, 25 June 1915; *Jitney Bus*, 1 (June 1915): 72; *Motor Bus*, 1(July 1915): 107.
- 46 The argument that jitney passengers were particularly exposed to pickpockets was frequently made. However, in Toronto, one of the jitney strongholds, arrests of pickpockets actually declined in 1915 and 1916. See CTA, Annual Reports of the Chief Constable, Toronto, 1915 and 1916.
- 47 *CRM*, April 1915: 150, Dec. 1915: 480, Oct. 1916: 424; HPL, Hamilton Times Scrapbooks, vol. S5, "Street Railway," 3 June 1915. In Hamilton the main concern was the the practice of women sitting on men's knees. See HPL, Hamilton Times Scrapbooks, 19, 30 April, 14 May 1915. For concerns elsewhere see *Montreal Le Devoir*, 15 April 1915: 4; CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915: 111. A small sampling of the Canadian religious and women's media for 1915 finds that they either ignored jitneys (*Women's Century*, *The Presbyterian Witness*) or else endorsed them (*The Christian Guardian*, 14 April 1915).
- 48 HPL, RG 10, Series T, Board of Police Commissioners By-laws, By-law 36, 24 June 1915; *ERJ*, 49(3 Feb 1917): 229; *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 12 July 1915: 1.
- 49 CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915: 110-11.
- 50 Toronto Police Museum, Minutes, Board of Police Commissioners, 21 Sept. 1915; *Saturday Night*, 3 July 1915: 10; Schwantes, "Jitney Phenomenon": 319; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(July 1915): 216, 2(Aug. 1915): 322; *CRM*, March 1915: 106, May 1915: 189, June 1926: 323. The Montreal jitneys set aside for women "shoppers" were owned by men, driven by women. For the U.S.A. see *Jitney Bus*, 1(May 1915): 41, 43, 49; *Motor Bus*, 1(Nov. 1915): 246, 1(March 1916): 362; *Literary Digest*, 50(13 Feb. 1915): 302; Bailey Millard, "The War on the Jitney," *Illustrated World*, 26(Oct. 1916): 181; *The Automobile*, 32(25 March 1915): 563; *Commercial Vehicle*, 12(15 April 1915): 16; *Horseless Age*, 35(24 March 1915): 410; *Motor*, 24(May 1915): 142. Eight of Washington State's 177 jitney licences were held by women in May 1915. See *ERJ*, 45(15 May 1915): 958. Hamilton's jitney by-laws in 1915 and 1923 decreed, "No female shall be permitted to drive or have charge of a "licensed omnibus"" (see HPL, RG 10, Series T, Board of Police Commissioners By-laws, By-law 36, 24 June 1915; By-law 53-A, 31 Oct. 1923).
- 51 *Saturday Night*, 3 July 1915: 13. See also Schwantes, "Jitney Phenomenon": 311.
- 52 *CRM*, Sept. 1915: 353; *Jitney Bus*, 1(May 1915): 50, 1(July 1915): 102; *ERJ*, 45(20 Feb. 1915): 375, 45(27 Feb. 1915): 422, 45(27 March 1915): 649, 45(26 June 1915): 1207.
- 53 For jitney users see CTA, *The Evolution of the Jitney Bus*, 10 May 1915: 13; Richard Rohmer, *E.P. Taylor* (Toronto, 1978): 32; Eckert and Hilton, "Jitneys": 296.
- 54 *ERJ*, 45(13 Feb. 1915): 354, 45(13 March 1915): 531, 45(27 March 1915): 620, 634, 648-50, 45(8 May 1915): 884, 919; *The Automobile*, 32(8 April 1915): 651, 32(15 April 1915): 666; *Commercial Vehicle*, 12(1 April 1915): 6; *Montreal La Presse*, 17 April 1915: 27; *Saturday Night*, 24 April 1915: 1; Schwantes, "Jitney Phenomenon": 313; *CRM*, May 1915: 192.
- 55 *ERJ*, 45(20 March 1915): 604, 45(24 April 1915): 818, 46(28 Aug. 1915): 364; *Commercial Vehicle*, 12(15 March 1915): 30, 12(1 April 1915): 7, 12(15 May 1915): 16, 12(May 1915): 38, 48; *Motor Bus*, 1(Oct. 1915): 197-98. The only important manufacturer to enthuse over jitneys was John Willys of Overland (see *Literary Digest*, 51(3 July 1915): 3). The most important company, since it provided more than half the jitneys — Ford — showed no public interest in jitneys. Ford executives in the U.S.A. in the 1913-22 period were thinking streetcars, not motorbuses (see Davis, *Conspicuous Production*; 163-83 *passim*).
- 56 *Literary Digest*, 50(13 Feb. 1915): 302; *ERJ*, 45(13 March 1915): 494; *Commercial Vehicle*, 12(1 April 1915): 5-6. Organized motorists, if one can generalize from the behaviour of the Ontario Motor League and the Winnipeg Automobile Club, saw jitneys chiefly as a competitor for road space. The Ontario league, though publicly non-committal, quietly lobbied against them, and during street railway strikes its members offered free rides in direct competition to the jitneys. As for the Winnipeg club, in 1917 it openly lobbied City Council for a \$10,000 jitney bond. (See CAA-Toronto Archives, Minutes, Board of Directors, Ontario Motor League, 22 April 1915; CTA, RG 2 B3, Box 98, Board of Control Records, W.G. Robertson, secretary-treasurer, Ontario Motor League, to G. Gregory, manager, Toronto Jitney Association, 27 April 1915, Minutes, Toronto Board of Control, 4 May 1915, #1318; *Canadian Motorist*, 4(Aug. 1917): 426, 9(Jan. 1922): 20; *Canadian Municipal Journal*, 13(June 1917): 294; *Manitoba Free Press*, 28 April 1915: 5).
- 57 Doucet, "Space and Trolleys": 375; *CRM*, May 1917: 198; *Financial Post*, 13 Feb. 1915: 15, 15 May 1915: 5; HPL, Hamilton Herald Scrapbooks, vol. S5, "Street Railway," 11 July 1914, Hamilton Times Scrapbook, vol. S5, "Street Railway," 28 May 1915, Clipping File, "Hamilton-Taxicabs," Hamilton Spectator, 15 July 1924; *British Columbia Financial Times*, 4(1 Dec. 1917): 1.
- 58 Ontario, *Statutes*, 17 Geo. V, chapter 140, "The Hamilton Street Railway Act, 1927": 931, 935; *ERJ*, 51(18 May 1918); HPL, Minutes, Hamilton Municipal Council, By-law 3336, 25 May 1926: 396-400; Toronto Police Museum, Minutes, Board of Police Commissioners, 24 April 1924; Ewert, *B.C. Electric Railway Company*: 139-40; Roy, "British Columbia Electric Railway": 248-49, 292; *CRM*, April 1918, 161-63; Donald Eldon, *The Past, Present, and Future of the London Street Railway Company* (Report prepared by London City Council, Sept. 1948): 25; London Police Archives, Minutes, Board of Police Commissioners, 19 Dec. 1929; Hatcher and Schwarkkopf, *Edmonton's Electric Transit*: 95; OCA, Minutes, Ottawa City Council, 5 Dec. 1923: 623.

## *Competition's Moment*

- <sup>59</sup> HPL, Minutes, Hamilton Municipal Council, By-law 3336, 25 May 1926: 396-400; Report of Board of Control to Municipal Council, 11 Sept. 1928: 613-14, 29 Feb. 1929: 121; Clipping File, "Hamilton-Taxicabs," *Hamilton Spectator*, 20, 23 Oct. 1928; City Solicitor's Office, Hamilton, "Notice of Appeal to the First Division Court of the County of Wentworth in the Matter of Martin Shawra, Appellant and David Coulter, Respondent," 6 July 1928; "Notice of Appeal in the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Ontario between Martin Shawra, Appellant and David Coulter, Respondent," 28 Aug. 1928; RG 10, Series M, Hamilton Police Register for 1928, Licence Book, City Treasurer, 1915-28 *passim*.
- <sup>60</sup> Margaret Canovan, *Populism* (London, 1981): 3. See also David Raby, *Populism: A Marxist Analysis* (Montreal, 1983); Steve Stein, *Populism in Peru* (Madison, Wisc., 1980): 8-15; and *Populism: Its Meaning and National Characteristics*, ed. Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner (London, 1969).
- <sup>61</sup> This paragraph owes much to Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment* (New York, 1978). Although Goodwyn discusses the United States, Canadians faced a similar choice in the 1890-1930 period: whether to organize their society along "populist," small business, cooperative lines, or along hierarchical, big business, bureaucratic lines. The debate over public and private ownership masked the real issue of the time: whether most Canadians would be their own boss or work for others. The stagnation of big business in the 1980s should cause us to re-evaluate both the inevitability and the desirability of managerial hierarchies, both public and private. See Dan Clawson, *Bureaucracy and the Labor Process* (New York, 1980); Richard Edwards, *Contested Terrain: The Transformation of the Workplace in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1979); and Sanford Jacoby, *Employing Bureaucracy: Managers, Unions, and the Transformation of Work* (New York, 1985) for an introduction to the issues.
- <sup>62</sup> Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, "The rise of civic populism in Toronto 1870-1920," in Russell, *Forging a Consensus*: 192, 210, 224-225; Armstrong and Nelles, *Monopoly's Moment*: 150.
- <sup>63</sup> Scott Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism* (New York, 1983): 282-85; Goodwyn, *Populist Moment*: 272, 290-96; Peter Wiles, "A Syndrome, Not a Doctrine: Some Elementary Theses on Populism," in Ionescu and Gellner, *Populism*: 168. See also Scott McNall, *The Road to Rebellion* (Chicago, 1988), Epilogue; Michael Schwartz, *Radical Protest and Social Structure: The Southern Farmers' Alliance and Cotton Tenancy, 1880-1890* (New York, 1976); and Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest* (New York, 1982), chapter 7.
- <sup>64</sup> Wiles, "A Syndrome": 174.
- <sup>65</sup> C.A. Schwantes, "The West Adopts the Automobile: Technology, Unemployment, and the Jitney Phenomenon of 1914-1917," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 16(1985): 307-26.
- <sup>66</sup> CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915: 106-9; *CRM*, May 1915: 189, July 1915: 275; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(Aug. 1915): 273; *Halifax Herald*, 24 June 1915: 7, 6 July 1915: 6.
- <sup>67</sup> For Calgary see *Calgary Daily Herald*, 11 May 1915: 6, 12 June 1915: 9; *CRM*, June 1915: 230, July 1915: 275; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(July 1915): 216. Inasmuch as the Calgary jitneys charged 10 cents for their six-mile journey, it could be said that Calgary never had any jitneys — in the sense of a nickel machine — but this was, of course, just one possible definition for the jitney. For the Saskatchewan cities see *CRM*, April 1915: 150, May 1915: 188. Municipal ownership also proved incompatible with jitneys in the United States (see Paul Douglas, "The Seattle Municipal Street-Railway System," *Journal of Political Economy*, 29(June 1921): 464-65; *CRM*, Aug. 1926: 442; *ERJ*, 45(20 Feb. 1915): 376; *Bus Transportation* 7(Dec. 1928): 653-55).
- <sup>68</sup> Hatcher and Schwarzkopf, *Edmonton's Electric Transit*: 77-95; *Edmonton Journal*, 18 May 1915: 2, 28 Sept. 1915: 1; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(Aug. 1915): 273, 2(Sept. 1915): 322; *Canadian Municipal Journal*, 13(March 1917): 94; *CRM*, June 1915: 230, 235, Feb. 1916: 70, May 1917: 200, Sept. 1921: 497.
- <sup>69</sup> CTA, Annual Reports of the Chief Constable, 1915-35 (microfilm); Toronto Police Museum, Board of Police Commissioners, Minutes, 24 August 1924.
- <sup>70</sup> CTA, *The Evolution of the Jitney Bus*, 10 May 1915: 9; *Ottawa Evening Citizen*, 7 April 1915: 1; 8 April 1915: 6; OCA, Ottawa Electric Railway Scrapbooks, Reel 83, *Ottawa Free Press*, 2 April 1915, *Ottawa Journal*, 12 April 1915, 3 July 1919; *Ottawa Citizen*, 27 April 1915, 15 Aug. 1918; CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915: 107, 115; *CRM*, May 1915: 188, June 1915: 230. Jitneys continued to operate in suburban Ottawa, as they had since May 1914, when a developer began operating a free service to his subdivision south of the Experimental Farm. This was not a "nickel machine," but one of these was operating in the west end in 1915. It, and others like it, were only occasionally noticed by the downtown press — chiefly when the Ottawa Electric complained. See *Ottawa-Nepean Clarion*, 27 March 1961: 4. (I would like to thank Bruce Elliott for this reference.)
- <sup>71</sup> *Report of the Federal Plan Commission on a General Plan for the Cities of Ottawa and Hull, 1915* (Ottawa, 1916): 146; *CRM*, April 1924: 191. For E.P. Taylor and other jitneyists who operated between downtown and west-end suburbs such as Britannia and Westboro see OCA, Ottawa Electric Railway Scrapbooks, Reel 83, *Ottawa Citizen*, 3 July 1919, 14 July 1922; *Carleton Record & Westender*, 15 Aug. 1922, *Ottawa Morning Journal*, 10 Aug. 1923; Harry and Oliver Walker, *Carleton Saga* (Ottawa, 1968): 109; OCA, Ottawa City Council, Reel 70, Special Street Railway Committee, Minutes, 4 Dec. 1923; Rohmer, *E.P. Taylor*: 31-32. Another notable Ottawa jitneyist in 1926 was Mrs M. Gorman, who operated a "nickel machine," 15-passenger bus connecting downtown with the southern suburbs (see *CRM*, June 1926: 323). For the unpopularity of Ottawa Electric's bus experiment in 1924-25 see Ottawa Electric Railway Scrapbooks, *Ottawa Citizen*, 9 July 1924; R.D. Tennant, "The Ottawa Electric Railway," *Canadian Rail*, 216 (December 1969): 329.
- <sup>72</sup> *Financial Times*, 1 May 1915: 4 (editorial); CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915: 115; *Montreal La Presse*, 12 April 1915: 5; *Financial Post*, 9(26 June 1915): 3; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(July 1915): 246; *Saturday Night*, 3 July 1915: 13.
- <sup>73</sup> As quoted by *Financial Post*, 9(17 July 1915): 16.
- <sup>74</sup> *CRM*, Aug. 1915: 312; *Canadian Motorist*, 2(1915): 246.
- <sup>75</sup> *CRM*, June 1915: 230; *Financial Post*, 9(22 May 1915): 2; CERA, *Proceedings*, 21-22 June 1915: 115.
- <sup>76</sup> *Montreal La Presse*, 10 April 1915: 9, 17 April 1915: 27; *CRM*, May 1915: 189.
- <sup>77</sup> Archives municipales de Montréal (hereafter AMM), Reports of Committees, vol. 18: 699-702 (for the bus by-law); Minutes, City Council, 14 Aug. 1912: 133-37, 13 Dec. 1915: 86, 18 Nov. 1915: 195; Minutes, Board of Commissioners, 29 June 1915: 123-24; *Municipal By-laws, By-law 584*, 13 Dec. 1915; *Montreal La Presse*, 30 April 1915: 9, 1 May 1915: 9, 30 June 1915: 7; *CRM*, Dec. 1915: 480. Canadian Autobus blamed its inactivity between 1912 and 1915 on a court challenge from a Montreal Tramways stockholder who claimed that the trolley company had an exclusive franchise (see Minutes, City Council, 28 Dec. 1915: 134-35). Toronto's *Saturday Night* charged (10 July 1915: 13) that two members of the Board of Commissioners (Board of Control) had accepted a total of \$500,000 in bribes from Canadian Autobus in exchange for promoting its request for a \$3 million investment from the city. For the entire, complicated story, including evidence that Canadian Autobus was a dummy corporation through which Montreal Tramways blocked bus competition in Montreal, see AMM, Second Series, City Council, *Rapports et dossiers*, #2873, especially the correspondence of the chief city attorney to council, 23 May 1917.