

Mutispeed Cities and the Logistics of Living in the ‘Information Age’

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The paper has three starting points. First, it argues that, to understand the so-called ‘digital divides’ which mark contemporary urban life, it is necessary to analyse the interactions of multiple information and communications technologies – landline, mobile telephone and the Internet. Second, the paper suggests that such analyses must address the ways in which these cumulative interactions work across social and economic domains to influence the logistics of daily life and social experiences, and constructions, of time and space. Finally, we stress that is not enough to simply focus on the ‘digitally excluded’ as social advantages and disadvantages in cities are always relative. Thus research must address *both* relatively privileged and a relatively disadvantaged neighbourhoods within cities to capture how ICT-mediated processes are effecting the relative social and economic positions of both sets of groups. Drawing on an empirical project adopting these three starting points which has just commenced in UK city Newcastle upon Tyne, this paper argues that such a three-pronged approach is necessary if we are to go beyond the static, statistical and Internet-obsessed nature of most ‘digital divide’ research. The paper has three parts. First, we review, and criticise, the literature on the so-called ‘Digital Divide’ in cities. Second, we analyse the ways in which ICTs are being adopted to alter the logistical dynamics of everyday life. Finally, we develop a framework for theoretical and empirical research on the interactions of everyday life, ICTs and the time-space logistics of household and neighbourhood life.