

[illegible]

“That’s what I’m trying to get at...the way that we think about the world, based on how we read what other people put on their cars.”

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To sample the kinds of messages being sent on our roads, Goettlich drove more than 10,000 miles on interstate highways throughout the eastern United States. He says one major variety of bumper sticker refers to things nearly everyone knows about—an election, a church, a social issue. But other bumper stickers may require an observer to access what Goettlich calls “outside resources.” For example, the bumper sticker that says, “The Dude Abides” might drive some people to do a quick Google search. But a few viewers may feel an instant bond, being fans of the movie The Big Lebowski.

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“So, the kinds of stickers I tend to like are the ones that don’t make sense to me, because what they do is they challenge my preconceived notions of the world.”

“???”

Another type of care sticker is a response to other stickers. For example, you know those window stickers of stick families? Some even include a stick dog or a stick cat? “And then I saw recently another example which was ‘making my family,’ and it was what were clearly male and female stick figures having sex.”

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Then there are the ones that say, “My son beat up your honor student.”

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So, when you’re on the road, check the messages sent by other cars around you. You might just connect, in a way you never expected. And without even bending a fender.

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