Journal of Transport Geography 82 (2020) 102586

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Transport Geography

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jtrangeo

Book review

D. Metz. (Ed.), Driving Change: Travel in the Twenty-first Century, *TJ International* (2019). (ISBN 978-1-78821-120-8 (hardcover), ISBN 978-1-78821-121-5 (paperback))

This book is a very readable, engaging and thorough investigation of the factors that have driven travel change in high-income countries so far, with the aim to determine what will drive change in the future. It is a book where at times I thought, "but what about …" but before I knew it, the very thing I'd thought of would be discussed. David Metz notes transport innovations that have transformed the lives of people such as coal-fired steam trains, oil-fired motor vehicles and aeroplanes. He also recognises the transformational changes brought about by innovations in telecommunications and information technology such as the telephone, radio, television, internet and social media. To examine what the future may look like in high-income cities, Metz considers the contribution of four new technologies —electric vehicles, digital navigation, digital platforms and autonomous vehicles. He also considers the future contribution of four modes: trains, planes, buses and roads. His principal means for assessing the "success" of these technologies is based on improving the quality of people's lives. He also recognises a need to achieve more equitable outcomes.

Metz recognises that the current system is under stress and discusses undesirable consequences of the current era of mass mobility, notably, carbon emissions that contribute to climate change, air pollution and adverse effects on health, deaths and injuries from road crashes, congestion, severance of communities and transport inequalities. For each new technology for each of the four modes, Metz then assesses whether the overall speed of travel will be improved for that technology, and whether the technology will affect how and why we travel, and how and where we live. He concludes that all four new technologies are beginning to make an impact on how people in the world travel. In particular, Metz recognises that digital platforms including those with a driver where trips are paid for individually (e.g. taxis and Uber), rental bikes and various shared services are having a substantial impact on travel behaviour in urban areas. However, he also concludes that unlike transformative transport innovations of the past, neither these technologies, nor trains, planes, buses and roads, will have a large impact on the average speed of travel in high-income countries. They also will not greatly affect how and why people in these countries travel, and, accordingly, how and where they live.

Metz notes that average travel time for settled populations has remained the same, at an hour a day, for a long time. Consequently, he regards this as the least uncertain of all future aspects of travel behaviour, primarily as he states that the 24 h day limits the amount of travel people undertake. Another key theme is that of induced demand in relation to congestion. Throughout the book, Metz discusses, and refutes, the commonly held belief that building more roads will reduce congestion, and concludes that congestion is largely self-regulating. He therefore concludes that any efforts to reduce travel demand, including encouraging people to use many alternatives to the private motor vehicle, will not reduce traffic congestion — a conclusion that may be challenging for some.

The overall result is a well-structured discussion of the ability of various currently known possibilities to transform the way people in high-income countries travel, with the primary assessment being quality of journey and overall speed of travel. Prioritising aims associated with other undesirable consequences of the current era of mass mobility such as reduced human health, or negative environmental effects could however lead to alternative conclusions.

The book focusses predominantly on travel and transport in Britain. However, Metz notes that as travel is deeply ingrained in society, being a resident of Britain allows him to more fully understand the influences of society and to analyse the data. He also provides many examples from other high-income countries, particularly in Europe and North America.

This book will be of interest to anyone who is interested in the evolution and revolution of travel in the twenty-first century. It is however a book of now, and one that shouldn't be left on the shelf to be read at a future date — unless to reflect on what did and did not happen, To use a transport analogy, even as you read this the wheels of change are turning. To this end, the book definitely makes a worthy contribution to existing literature regarding the future of travel in high-income countries.

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https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2019.102586

Available online 13 November 2019
0966-6923