



Reinventing the Automobile: Personal Urban Mobility for the 21st Century (MIT Press)

By William J. Mitchell, Chris E. Borroni-Bird, Lawrence D. Burns

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This book provides a long-overdue vision for a new automobile era. The cars we drive today follow the same underlying design principles as the Model Ts of a hundred years ago and the tail-finned sedans of fifty years ago. In the twenty-first century, cars are still made for twentieth-century purposes. They are inefficient for providing personal mobility within cities -- where most of the world's people now live. In this pathbreaking book, William Mitchell and two industry experts reimagine the automobile, describing vehicles of the near future that are green, smart, connected, and fun to drive. They roll out four big ideas that will make this both feasible and timely. The fundamental reinvention of the automobile won't be easy, but it is an urgent necessity -- to make urban mobility more convenient and sustainable, to make cities more livable, and to help bring the automobile industry out of crisis.

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Editorial Review

Review

The content is intelligent, well laid out, entertaining, understandable, and approachable...Often, works about the future of the automobile industry are just tools to express idealistic beliefs or anti-industry sentiments. This book is refreshing because the authors understand the whole package in terms of current problems, and their solutions, and succinctly present a glimpse of a future (and a present) that people can feel good about.

(*Choice*)

In this book, William Mitchell, perhaps the greatest urban theorist and designer of the Information Age, provides a concrete alternative to the unsustainable model of urban transportation based on the traditional automobile, and paves the way for the transformation of the automobile industry as a whole. In this time of crisis *Reinventing the Automobile* is mandatory reading, besides researchers and students, for planners, industrialists, and governments searching for a way out for the car of the industrial era.

(Manuel Castells, Professor Emeritus of City Planning, University of California, Berkeley)

Our American auto industry is at a perilous crossroads - it can adhere to the 'old ways' and perish or it can leapfrog the competition, reinvent itself, and lead the automotive world into the 21st century. Many of the ideas set forth in this book just might serve as a blueprint for this much-needed and important change of direction. Who better to lead the way than our geek brethren from MIT?

(Tom & Ray Magliozzi, aka "Click and Clack," Hosts of Car Talk)

We are at the threshold of a new era of urban transport. *Reinventing the Automobile* offers a breathtaking vista of the opportunities ahead. Mitchell, Borroni-Bird, and Burns combine their great engineering expertise, design skills, and practical experience to create a dazzling vision of a new urban transport system to support healthy, productive, safe, and environmentally sustainable cities in the 21st century. The book is consistently exciting, a wonderful chance to peer over the shoulders of masters as they sort through the complex terrain of energy systems, urban lifestyles, digital connectivity, and cutting-edge automotive engineering. This book will fascinate and inspire not only specialists in transport and engineering, but everybody interested in the new age of sustainable development.

(Jeffrey D. Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University. Special Advisor to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon)

Finally, a book that addresses the problems of carbon emissions, sustainability, transportation, city planning, and traffic, by authors who understand what the automobile industry does not -- that these issues are all interconnected and part of the same picture. This book has a great deal to offer to anyone who is interested in the green movement in architecture, in city planning, in traffic problems, in pollution, and in the challenge of making our planet more humane.

(Frank Gehry)

Mitchell, Borroni-Bird, and Burns have created a blueprint for sustainable urban mobility. *Reinventing the Automobile* will fundamentally change the way we approach transportation design. Every car company should take note: evolve or face increasing irrelevance.

(David Kelley, Founder and Chairman, IDEO, and Professor, Stanford University)

It isn't technological barriers so much as closed minds that are holding back the necessary evolution of the automobile; using calm and devastatingly inarguable logic, this is a virtual step-by-step manual that deploys an original idea on every page to show exactly how it can and should be achieved. If you care about cars, read this book: it opens your mind and lets the future in.

(Bruce McCall, artist and writer *The New Yorker*)

Visionary in its totality, it is also soberly realistic.

(Peter D. Norton *Metascience*)

Presents a fascinating and challenging model of technological possibilities.

(Martin Wachs *Issues in Science and Technology*)

About the Author

William J. Mitchell was the Alexander W. Dreyfoos, Jr., Professor of Architecture and Media Arts and Sciences and directed the Smart Cities research group at MIT's Media Lab. Christopher Borroni-Bird is GM's Director of Advanced Technology Vehicle Concepts. Lawrence D. Burns advises companies, governments, and universities on transportation, energy, and communications systems and technology. He was Vice President of Research and Development at General Motors from 1998 to 2009.

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