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In the Company of Cars

Driving as a Social and Cultural Practice

Sarah Redshaw, Macquarie University, Australia

'I strongly recommend this empirically rich book which details how different social groups live with their cars. This book makes a major contribution to developing analyses of those complex connections between social life and the machines that mobilise that life.' – *John Urry, Lancaster University, UK*

'Redshaw approaches driving as a social and cultural practice, in a highly original, theoretically and empirically informed, manner that helps us understand our relations with the car as complex, ambiguous, pleasurable, and meaningful.' – *Graeme Turner, University of Queensland, Australia*

It has long been accepted that the social and cultural meanings of the car far exceed the practical need for mobility. This book marks the first attempt to contribute to road safety, considering, in depth, these meanings and the cultures of driving that are shaped by them.

In the Company of Cars examines the perspectives that young people have on cars, and explores the broader social and cultural meanings of the car, the potential it is supposed to fulfil, and the anticipated benefits it offers to young drivers.

From focus-group research conducted in Australia, the book takes up the views of young people on a range of topics, from media to car use to gender performance. The author looks at the ways in which driving has been defined by articulations of the car that emphasize valued features of the car-driver, such as gender, youthfulness, status, age, power, raciness, sexiness, ruggedness and competitiveness. The book takes a global perspective on mobility, considering the impact of cars and road safety policy on quality of life, and the value and significance of other modes of travel, in a range of countries.

Contents: Foreword, *Tim Dant*; Preface; Introduction: cars and their associations; Enticing cars and driving styles; Inscripting driving: boredom and pleasure on the roads; Cultured drivers; Driven by desire; Dilemmas of the car; An ethical future of mobility; Bibliography; Index.

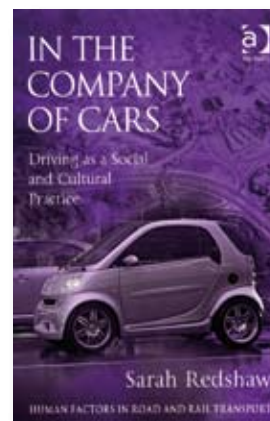
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July 2008
208 pages
Hardback
978-0-7546-7198-5
£45.00

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