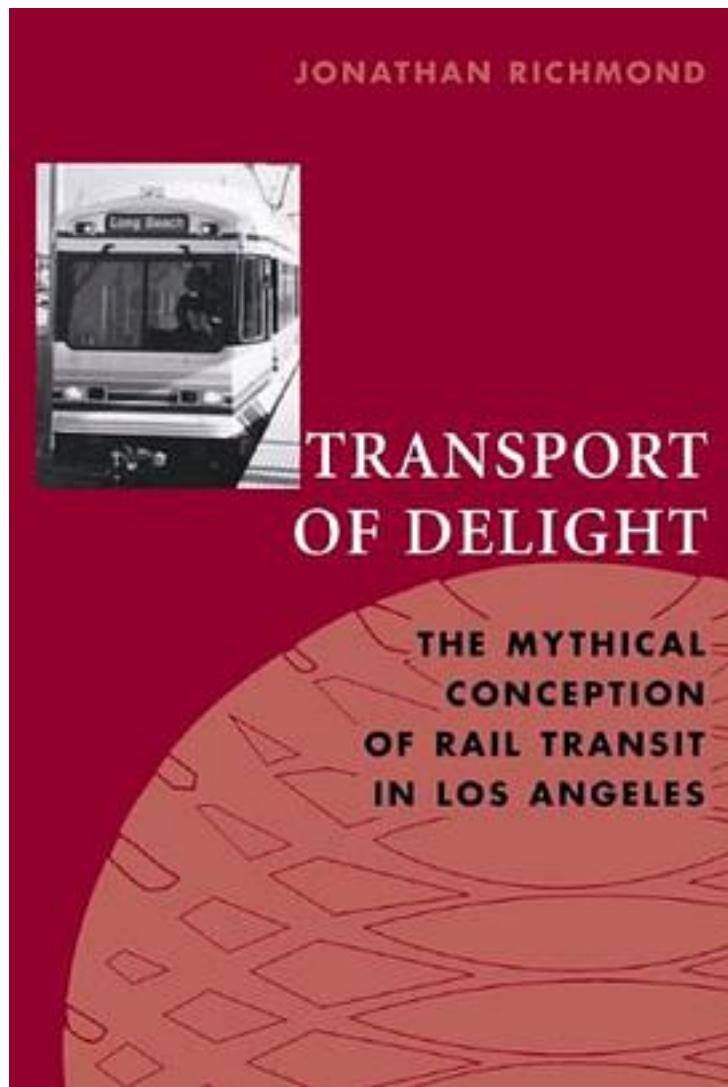


# Transport of Delight



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This is a true interdisciplinary work which includes a thorough analytical assessment of the Los Angeles rail programme, with a focus on the Long Beach Blue Line light rail-the first of the new projects to go ahead. En route, it shows that ridership forecasting for this project was not only biased and statistically invalid, but in fact done to justify decisions made on other grounds. This unusual book develops a novel theory of myth to explain the construction of rail passenger transit in Los Angeles when it had little to offer the needs of a dispersed autopolis, whose urgent but dispersed public transportation needs could have been better served by developing the regional bus system. The author conducted interviews and performed the detective work necessary to reveal an unlikely logic that held together a network of symbols, images, and metaphors that together present powerful mythical beliefs in the guise of truth. A political analysis shows how consensus was reached to proceed with the light rail to Long Beach, but political explanations are ultimately found lacking, because they cannot explain why decision-makers would want to put the rail in place. It is only when provocative metaphors-of the need to connect communities and to restore a mythical balance to a dysfunctional transportation system-and symbols-of escape from the pressure cooker of poverty, of urban success, power and, indeed sexual acumen-are surfaced, that we realise that Los Angeles' Transport of Delight is the result of the very human need to transcend complexity by providing mythical creations that appear to offer easy answers to society's deepest problems.

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