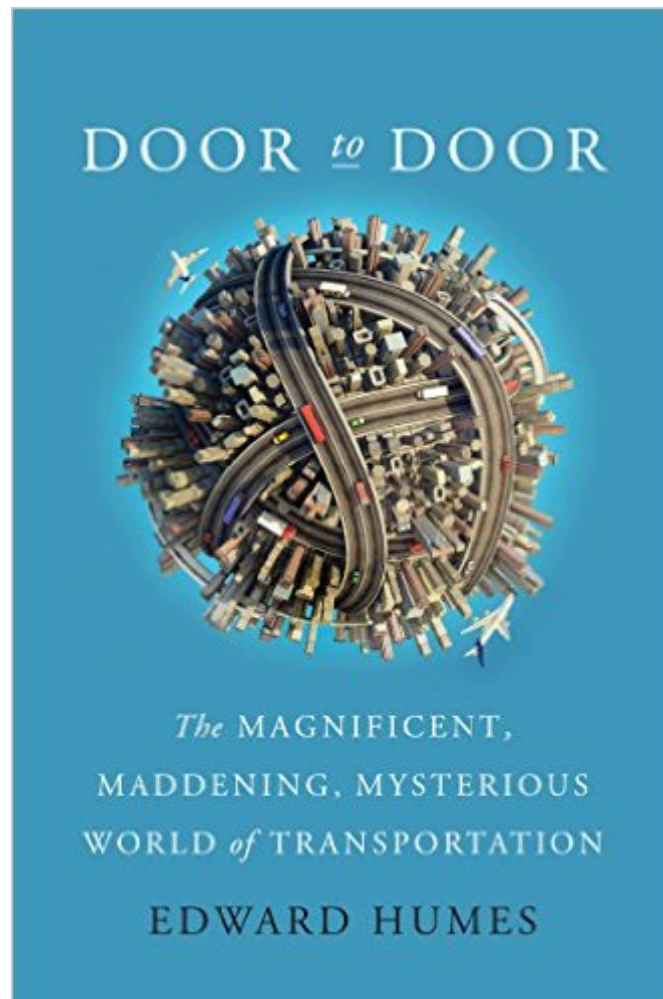


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# Door To Door: The Magnificent, Maddening, Mysterious World Of Transportation



## Synopsis

The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author of *Garbology* explores the hidden and costly wonders of our buy-it-now, get-it-today world of transportation, revealing the surprising truths, mounting challenges, and logistical magic behind every trip we take and every click we make. Transportation dominates our daily existence. Thousands, even millions, of miles are embedded in everything we do and touch. We live in a door-to-door universe that works so well most Americans are scarcely aware of it. The grand ballet in which we move ourselves and our stuff is equivalent to building the Great Pyramid, the Hoover Dam, and the Empire State Building all in a day. Every day. And yet, in the one highly visible part of the transportation world—the part we drive—we suffer grinding commutes, a violent death every fifteen minutes, a dire injury every twelve seconds, and crumbling infrastructure. Now, the way we move ourselves and our stuff is on the brink of great change, as a new mobility revolution upends the car culture that, for better and worse, built modern America. This unfolding revolution will disrupt lives and global trade, transforming our commutes, our vehicles, our cities, our jobs, and every aspect of culture, commerce, and the environment. We are, quite literally, at a fork in the road, though whether it will lead us to Carmageddon or Carmaheaven has yet to be determined. Using interviews, data and deep exploration of the hidden world of ports, traffic control centers, and the research labs defining our transportation future, acclaimed journalist Edward Humes breaks down the complex movements of humans, goods, and machines as never before, from increasingly car-less citizens to the distance UPS goes to deliver a leopard-printed phone case. Tracking one day in the life of his family in Southern California, Humes uses their commutes, traffic jams, grocery stops, and online shopping excursions as a springboard to explore the paradoxes and challenges inherent in our system. He ultimately makes clear that transportation is one of the few big things we can change—our personal choices do have a profound impact, and that fork in the road is coming up fast. *Door to Door* is a fascinating detective story, investigating the worldwide cast of supporting characters and technologies that have enabled us to move from here to there—past, present, and future.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was in the transportation business for 22 years at American President Lines, where I designed computer systems to seamlessly transfer cargo between ships, rail, and trucks for just-in-time delivery. Every few weeks I was on call 24 x 7, because if computer systems are down, cargo isn't going anywhere. Humes writes about the amazing complexity of transportation in delightful ways that will change how you look at the world around you. He begins simply, with how a morning cup of coffee has a transportation footprint of at least 100,000 miles. His 6.3 mile drive to get the coffee is just a small fraction of that journey. The car itself embodies at least 500,000 miles when you add up how many miles the raw materials for it traveled. And when you add in other miles part of a morning routine -- the orange juice, dish soap, socks -- you're talking over 3 million miles of goods moved. After reading this book, you will appreciate how pizza arrives at your door a great deal more. At a chain-pizza central distribution center in Ontario, California, 14 big rigs arrive at 4 am every day, 2 of them with Mozzarella in 2,736 15-pound bags traveling 233 miles. Other ingredients/miles: 936 cases tomato sauce/278, Pepperoni and other meat/1,400, chicken toppings/1,600, Salt/1,900 and so on. Empty pizza boxes arrive many times a day from 33 miles away (though the pizza box store got them from 2,200 miles distant). And that's just the start of how that pizza eventually arrives at your door. But pizza is nothing compared to what United Parcel Service does. I especially liked what UPS manager Noel Massie had to say about how trucks are vital to the economy and our way of life but treated like interlopers on America's roads.

"Door to Door" is an excellent book. I liked it so much I'm reading it again! Like James Joyce's "Ulysses" Edward Humes' "Door to Door" is organized around one day -- February 13, 2015 (which also happens to be the author's Anniversary). It's not "Bloomsday" but "Humesday"! As he goes through his day Humes explores the complicated, vital subject of transportation -- how we and our goods get from place to place. Among other things we learn about container ships and super busy ports, trucks, trains, planes,

cars, highways, aluminum cans, iPhones, pizza, coffee beans, our crumbling infrastructure, the overload of our systems, the enormous problem of deaths on our roads, counter-intuitive traffic fixes that work, past, present, future – driverless cars, 3-D Printers -- and lots of surprising statistics. The subtitle is apt. It IS a “Magnificent, Maddening, Mysterious World.” Especially compelling are the stories of the strong-willed people who try to make the system work. To name just a few: Geraldine Knatz, the marine biologist who transformed the Port of Los Angeles; Noel Massie, President of UPS in the Southern half of California, who keeps deliveries on time; Janette Sadik-Khan who innovated New York City streets. The book bursts with facts. Many are alarming--not just the deplorable state of our infrastructure-- but that there are 4 Traffic Deaths Every Hour (over 35,500 people are killed a year). The loss of life is the equivalent of 4 airplanes crashing every week! Where is the public outrage about this CARnage? Its causes are known – chief among them Drunk Drivers, Speeding, and Distracted Drivers. There are already devices, and the technology to create them, that could prevent a driver from speeding, using a cell phone, driving while drunk.

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