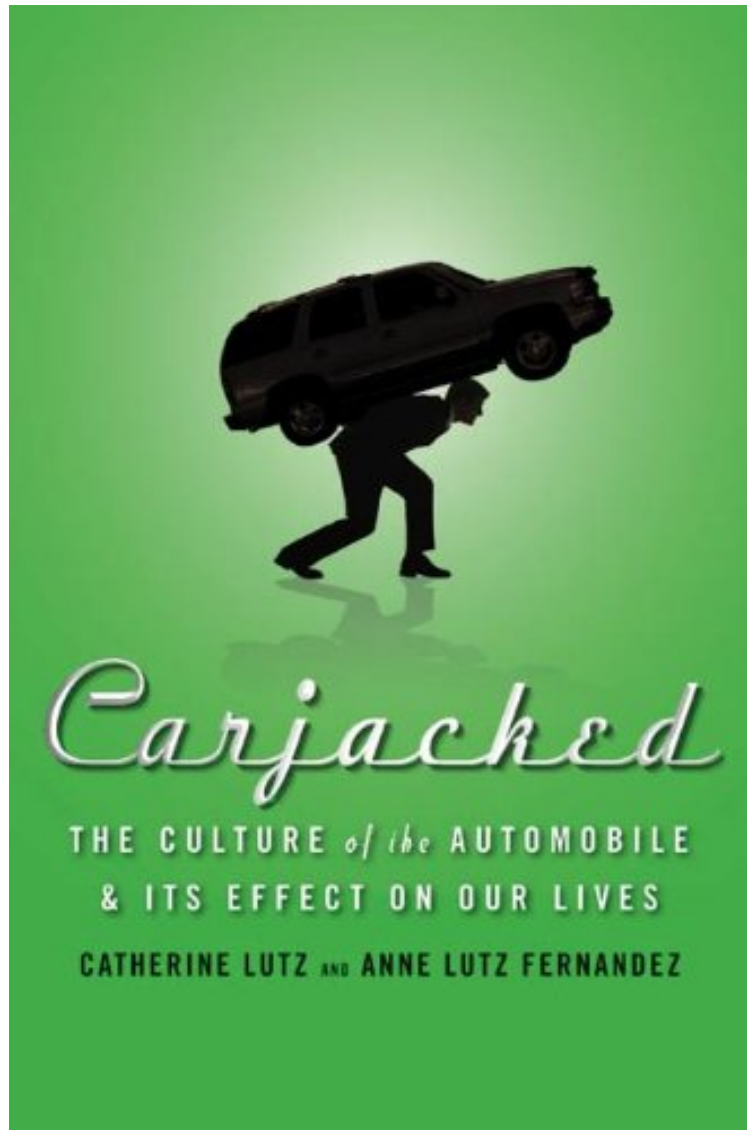


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# Carjacked: The Culture of the Automobile and Its Effect on Our Lives

*Catherine Lutz, Anne Lutz Fernandez*  
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Carjacked is an in-depth look at our obsession with cars. While the automobile's contribution to global warming and the effects of volatile gas prices are widely known, the problems we face every day because of our cars are much more widespread and yet much less known -- from the surprising \$14,000 per year that the average family pays each year for the vehicles it owns, to the increase in rates of obesity and asthma to which cars contribute, to the 40,000 deaths and 2.5 million crash injuries each and every year. Carjacked details the complex impact of the automobile on modern society and shows us how to develop a healthier, cheaper, and greener relationship with cars.

From BooklistAmericans' infatuation with their cars is critiqued in this readable treatment. Replete with the ironic and irrational aspects of owning and driving cars, it partakes of car psychology to deliver its message about the statistical costs of four-wheeled freedom. Emphasizing the attachment of values such as personal independence to car ownership, not to mention self-image and status, Lutz and Fernandez cheerily saunter through automobile advertising and movies to show how mass media exploit people's desire to buy cars. The authors offer many personal anecdotes about consumers' experiences of the showdown in the automobile showroom as a narrative illustration of how people's emotions battle it out with their finances in purchase decisions. Turning to life on the road, Lutz and Fernandez, relying on studies and interviews with about 100 drivers, look askance at public expenditure on automobile infrastructure, fractions of lives spent in cars—and lost in them by the tens of thousands annually. An agenda for personal and political action concludes the authors' knowledgeable survey of car culture. --Gilbert Taylor Praise for Carjacked: