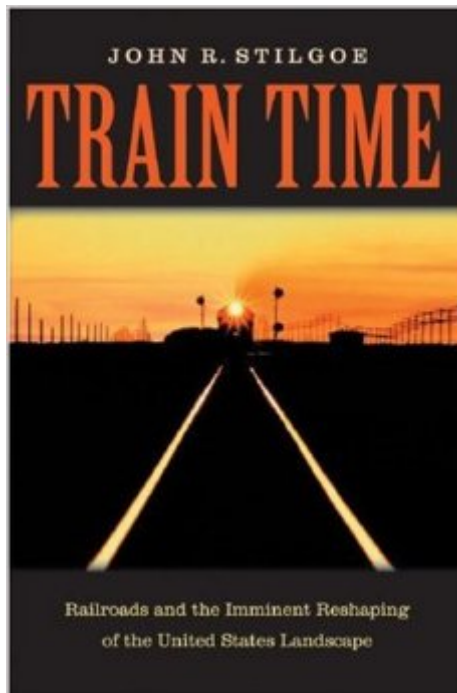


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# Train Time: Railroads And The Imminent Reshaping Of The United States Landscape



## Synopsis

Unlike many United States industries, railroads are intrinsically linked to American soil and particular regions. Yet few Americans pay attention to rail lines, even though millions of them live in an economy and culture "waiting for the train." In *Train Time: Railroads and the Imminent Reshaping of the United States Landscape*, John R. Stilgoe picks up where his acclaimed work *Metropolitan Corridor* left off, carrying his ideas about the spatial consequences of railways up to the present moment. Arguing that the train is returning, "an economic and cultural tsunami about to transform the United States," Stilgoe posits a future for railways as powerful shapers of American life. Divided into sections that focus on particular aspects of the impending impact of railroads on the landscape, *Train Time* moves seamlessly between historical and contemporary analysis. From his reading of what prompted investors to reorient their thinking about the railroad industry in the late 1970s, to his exploration of creative solutions to transportation problems and land use planning and development in the present, Stilgoe expands our perspective of an industry normally associated with bad news. Urging us that "the magic moment is now," he observes, "Now a train is often only a whistle heard far off on a sleepless night. But romantic or foreboding or empowering, the whistle announces return and change to those who listen." For scholars with an interest in American history in general and railroad and transit history in particular, as well as general readers concerned about the future of transportation in the United States, *Train Time* is an engaging look at the future of our railroads.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

March 24, 2008 Just in case citizens hadn't noticed, 2007, the year "Train Time" was published, was marked by the convergence of three major crises: an infrastructure crisis, heralded by a major report by the Urban Land Institute documenting a \$3.5 trillion dollar backlog for repair, which noted that auto-centric transportation systems will have trouble meeting future transportation needs and punctuated by the August 1st collapse of the I-35 bridge in Minneapolis; a Global Warming Crisis where the melting at the poles is arriving ahead of schedule and Dr. James Hansen, dean of GW scientists, has lowered the triggering threshold for bad events kicking in from the 450-550 range to 350 ppm of CO<sub>2</sub>, which we have already exceeded; and an intensifying crisis in US and world financial markets, driven by a bursting housing bubble but spread dramatically by the risky new financial architecture that even the architects don't seem to understand very well. (And oil prices pushed to record highs, staying over 100 dollars per barrel well into early 2008.) The rumbles of impending change - and their visual clues as well, are being detected by some other very acute observers. John R. Stilgoe, a Professor of Visual and Environmental Studies at Harvard, and author, most recently, of a book "Train Time: Railroads and the Imminent Reshaping of the United States Landscape (Univ. of Virginia Press, 2007), is a popular lecturer whose unconventional courses teach students to see in their surroundings what their too casual first glances gloss over. He also has a reputation of being one of the nation's great repositories of knowledge on American railroads in their heyday years, 1880-1935.

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