

McKay, John P. *Tramways and Trolleys: The Rise of Urban Mass Transport in Europe*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976. Pp. 266. \$14.50

John H. Taylor

Number 1-77, June 1977

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1019605ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1019605ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine

ISSN

0703-0428 (print)

1918-5138 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this review

Taylor, J. H. (1977). Review of [McKay, John P. *Tramways and Trolleys: The Rise of Urban Mass Transport in Europe*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976. Pp. 266. \$14.50]. *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine*, (1-77), 119–119. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1019605ar>

framework within which urban policy was made, and the outlines of its imprint can still be seen in the appearance, structure, and problems of southern cities for several decades after the 1920's. [A.F.J. Artibise, University of Victoria].

* * *

McKay, John P. Tramways and Trolleys: The Rise of Urban Mass Transport in Europe. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976. Pp. 266. \$14.50.

This volume is a study of the introduction and impact of the electric "trolley" car on European cities at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. The author argues that this technological innovation was revolutionary. In effect, it provided the working classes with wheels and thereby enabled them to escape the increasingly crowded centres of their industrial cities. And the cities, as a result, were for the first time able to expand beyond their medieval limits. In addition, the "streetcar" created a revolution in recreation for the working class, and a significant improvement in wages and working conditions for transit workers.

Additional themes focus on the development, diffusion and management of the new technology and the relationship of the public and private sector in the process. As a final important facet, the author sets out some of the dicta on which comparative investigation might be made. A number of possibilities for the Canadian urban scene spring immediately to mind. The volume is near essential background reading for study of both "trolleys" and cities. [John H. Taylor, Carleton University].