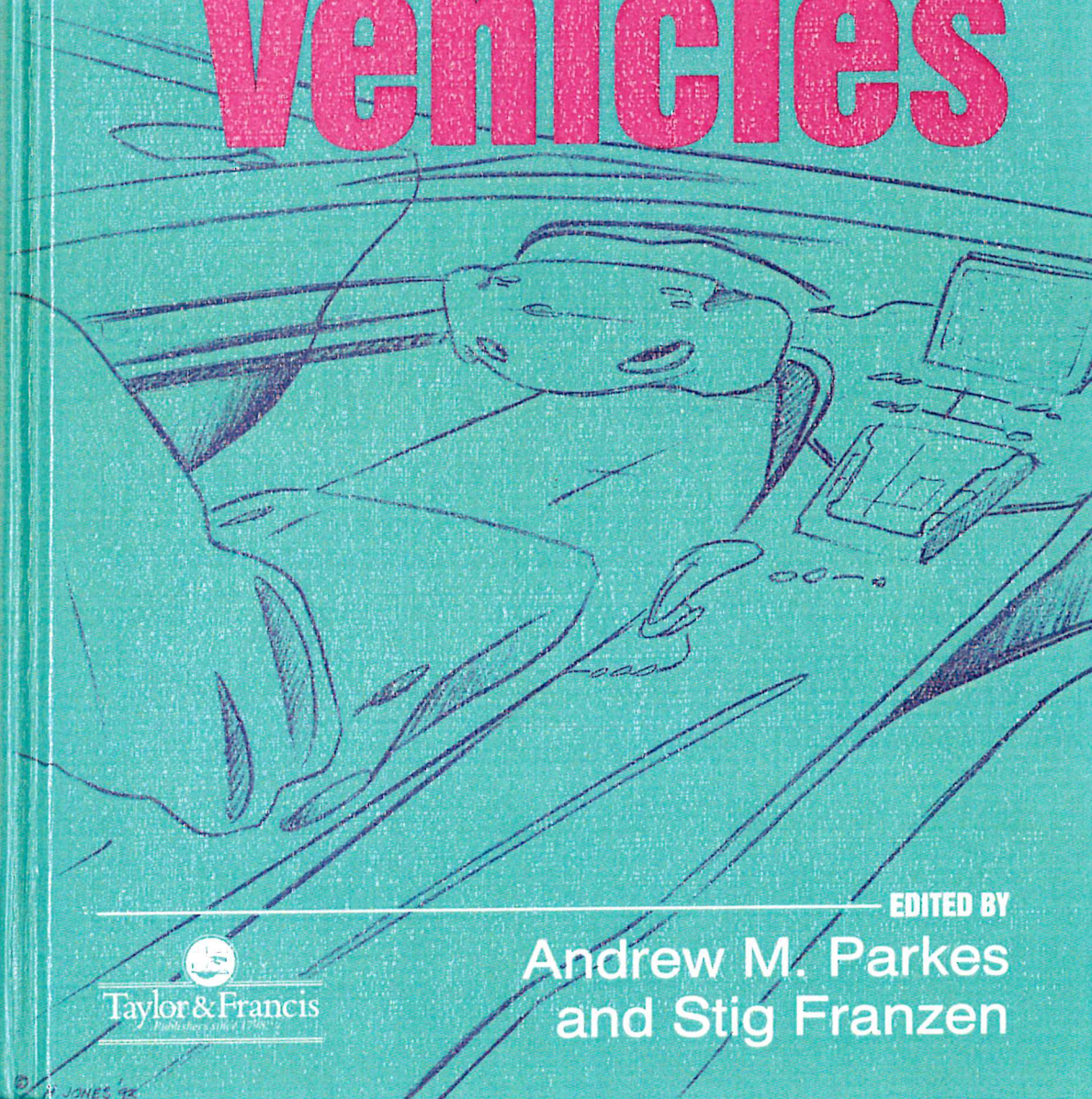


Driving Future Vehicles



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Determining information needs of the driver

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Introduction

The question, what kind of information do drivers need, seems to be very simple, namely: all information which improves safe driving. But, which kind of information is it, in which modality and in what sensory channel should it be presented?

It is quite obvious that these questions cannot be answered in an all-embracing way. Different user groups, like professional drivers, novice drivers or truck drivers need different kinds of information. Even within the same group of drivers, information needs vary from situation to situation. If, for example a driver enters a foreign town, he requires totally different information compared to the situation he is in on his way to work. A possible way out of this problem is to present as much information as possible and to transfer the problem of information selection to the user. A look inside some modern hightech cars suggests that this was the idea of the designer and manufacturer. From an ergonomics and traffic safety point of view his 'solution' is not appropriate. On the other hand it is unrealistic to mourn the 'good old times', where cars were only equipped with speedometer, signal lights and headlight control. New and helpful systems, like antilock braking or route guidance systems, need an interface to the driver.