

External assessment 2023

Stimulus book

Philosophy & Reason

General instruction

- Work in this book will not be marked.



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Stimulus 1

Make way for the wealthy? Autonomous vehicles and markets in mobility

In societies like Australia, the use of roads is a public good available to all people. Regardless of whether one drives a vehicle that is luxurious or economical, all have access to the roads, and share them equally by following the same set of rules and sitting in the same traffic queues. In this respect, present road use is egalitarian: once on the road, we all meet as equals in the public environment.

Technological developments have the potential to challenge this social framework.

Imagine a future of autonomous, self-driving vehicles, capable of communicating with each other and controlled by a central network. In such a future, rather than owning a car, people undertake journeys through ride-share services, calling up a vehicle whenever one is needed.

This environment is one that could see privileged road access for those prepared to pay more. Different pricing structures could determine who gets priority through intersections and faster routes reserved for higher-paying customers. The cars of those who pay lower prices could be made to slow down and move aside in order to allow the cars of those who paid higher prices to pass, making the mobility privileges purchased by the wealthy obvious to those less wealthy.

A positive development?

Reference

Stimulus 1

QCAA summary of

Sparrow R & Howard M 2020, 'Make Way For The Wealthy? Autonomous vehicles, markets in mobility, and social justice, *Mobilities*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2020.1739832>.



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