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Aluminum shaped the twentieth century. It enabled high-speed travel and gravity-defying flight. It was the material of a streamlined aesthetic that came to represent modernity. And it became an essential ingredient in industrial and domestic products that ranged from airplanes and cars to designer chairs and artificial Christmas trees. It entered modern homes as packaging, foil, pots and pans and even infiltrated our bodies through food, medicine, and cosmetics. In Aluminum Dreams, Mimi Sheller describes how the materiality and meaning of aluminum transformed modern life and continues to shape the world today. Aluminum, Sheller tells us, changed mobility and mobilized modern life. It enabled air power, the space age and moon landings. Yet, as Sheller makes clear, aluminum was important not only in twentieth-century technology, innovation, architecture, and design but also in underpinning global military power, uneven development, and crucial environmental and health concerns. Sheller describes aluminum s shiny utopia but also its dark side. The unintended consequences of aluminum s widespread use include struggles for sovereignty and resource control in Africa, India, and the Caribbean; the unleashing of multinational corporations; and the pollution of the earth through mining and smelting (and the battle to save it). Using a single material as an entry point to understanding a global history of modernization and its implications for the future, Aluminum Dreams forces us to ask: How do we assemble the material culture of modernity and what are its environmental consequences? Aluminum Dreams includes a generous selection of striking images of iconic aluminum designs, many in color, drawn from advertisements by Alcoa, Bohn, Kaiser, and other major corporations, pamphlets, films, and exhibitions.