



## The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles in the City

By William B. Helmreich

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As a child growing up in Manhattan, William Helmreich played a game with his father called "Last Stop." They would pick a subway line, ride it to its final destination, and explore the neighborhood. Decades later, his love for exploring the city is as strong as ever.

Putting his feet to the test, he decided that the only way to truly understand New York was to walk virtually every block of all five boroughs--an astonishing 6,000 miles. His journey took him to every corner of Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Staten Island. Helmreich spoke with hundreds of New Yorkers from every part of the globe and all walks of life. He finds that to be a New Yorker is to struggle to understand the place and to make a life that is as highly local as it is dynamically cosmopolitan.

Truly unforgettable, *The New York Nobody Knows* will forever change how you view the world's greatest city.

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

From 2008 to 2012, City College of New York sociologist Helmreich systematically walked almost every street in the city, including those in the four outer boroughs—the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. Helmreich (*What Was I Thinking?*) traverses the wide world located in a city whose population appears to come from every nation on the planet. His gaze is wide—sometimes doing ethnography, sometimes taking a nostalgic look at places he lived—and he engages with issues such as immigration, gentrification, and ethnic identity. The result comes close to providing an everything you wanted to know, but didn't know who to ask, as the author visits parks, projects, schools, restaurants, and stores, observing the city's active life (parades, street musicians, chess players) and still life (shop signs, street art, community gardens, building facades). Along the way, Helmreich chats with sundry people as well as the city's last four mayors. Rigorous scholarly and journalistic research underpins his work. Though the narrative meanders, this is appropriate in a book that takes readers through the balkanized collection of towns that constitute New York City. The book's maps (one of the entire city, and one for each borough) and a useful neighborhood glossary make the journey yet more vivid. 30 halftones, 6 maps. (Nov.)

Review

**Winner of the 2015 GANYC Award for Outstanding Achievement in Book Writing, The Guides Association of New York City**

**Honorable Mention for the 2013 PROSE Award in Sociology & Social Work, Association of American Publishers**

"The delight is definitely in the details in William B. Helmreich's *The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles in the City*. Professor Helmreich, a sociologist at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, invites readers on a romp through largely unexplored neighborhoods that is as entertaining as it is enlightening."--**Sam Roberts, *New York Times***

"Helmreich set himself a formidable task: he walked every block in New York City over a four-year period, producing what he calls an 'ethnographic study' comprised of vignettes based on interviews with hundreds of residents on sidewalks, streets, and even in private homes. The result: a magisterial work that examines how people live in this large, complex, and evolving urban landscape. . . . This is a landmark achievement, for those wanting to dig deeper than *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, edited by Kenneth T. Jackson. Highly recommended to sociologists, urban demographers, New York historians, and all walking enthusiasts in the city."--**Richard Drezen, *Library Journal* starred review**

"An excellent introduction to one of the most ethnically diverse and vibrant cities in the world, and a model of urban sociology."--**Christian Century**

"The author exudes great love and admiration for his hometown on every page, and this collection of anecdotes brings New York to life with unprecedented humanity and detail. This book is pure joy; even the most dyed-in-the-wool New Yorker will learn something new about this vibrant city."--**Kirkus Reviews (starred review)**

"To know a man, you have to walk a mile in his shoes. To truly know New York, you may have to walk 6,000. Or, you can just read Helmreich's account of visiting every inch of the city. His journey from the

Bronx to Staten Island allowed him to mingle with plenty of fellow flâneurs, like Mayors Bloomberg and Ed Koch."--**New York Observer**

"[The book] recognises the fact that the everyday experience of the city--the people you meet, the odd things that happen--are important. . . . For me, the best bits are Helmreich's detailed descriptions of chance encounters. . . . He gives a powerful depiction of the numbing dullness of some people's jobs, from the security guard in the museum to the man waving a flag outside a garage. These are described with tenderness and not a little wry humour."--**Flora Samuel, Times Higher Education**

"Fascinating."--**Michael Potemra, National Review**

"An uncommon portrait of the city in 2013: a look at its diverse neighborhoods and the urban issues--like immigration, community, use of public space and gentrification--that run through all of them. The book is not a guidebook, but a very accessible sociological study, full of color and anecdote."--**Sandee Brawarsky, Jewish Week**

"By necessity, given the size of the city, Helmreich calls his book no more than a much-needed 'introductory work' to the diversity of New York City. His method is, in some ways, a throw back to a much earlier form of social criticism, when walking was curiously in vogue for the self-styled intellectuals and elites of 19th century Europe. Think of Charles Dickens's night walks through London or the well-dressed flâneurs of Paris. And it's one that anyone can learn from. 'If I accomplish anything besides sociology,' Helmreich says, 'it's to encourage people to walk through what I call the greatest museum in the world.'"--**Stephanie Garlock, The Atlantic**

"*The New York Nobody Knows* is not a walking tour or a mere list of city highlights. The book is a 450-page sociological examination of New York through the eyes of a keen observer. It is segmented into parts on the city's ethnic composition, gentrification, environs and what the future may hold for America's melting pot. And yes, there's a section on what makes New York fun, too. . . . *The New York Nobody Knows* is gratifyingly deep with analysis on the city's history and demographics while also reading like a survival guide at times."--**Colin Devries, Daily News**

"[E]xcellent. . . . [T]he voices and stories of the people [Helmreich] encounters are what make this book so memorable. . . . It's refreshing to read a book that celebrates so unreservedly the ethnic diversity of a city and entirely fitting that it should be about a metropolis that has always been defined by its cosmopolitan culture."--**PD Smith, The Guardian**

"It's a story of Helmreich's encounters with hundreds of New Yorkers from every walk of life and from every part of the globe, including Mayors Ed Koch, David Dinkins, Rudy Giuliani and Michael Bloomberg. His observations--all touching on various aspects of the multifarious lives of the estimated 8.3 million people who live, work, survive and thrive in the world's greatest metropolitan city--are poignant and insightful, heartfelt and charming."--**Amsterdam News**

"In the genre of 'books tallying mammoth heroic self-imposed feats' comes William B. Helmreich's engaging account of how he logged 6,000 miles on foot through all the boroughs of NYC, accumulating many insights into the eternal, multi-ethnic metropolis."--**Barnes and Noble Review**

"If Walt Whitman contained 'multitudes' within himself, this fine book contains multitudes more--the beating, dynamic heart of New York is here."--**City-litcafe**

"Helmreich's shoe leather was worth it; the book is a thorough study."--**Grace Lichtenstein, *PopMatters***

"[E]ngaging . . . easily-read and nicely-paced."--**Tommy Barker, *Irish Examiner***

"This exploration of New York City is built from the souvenirs of a formidable journey. Sociologist Helmreich presents the city as a richly diverse place whose residents are eager to share insights and opinions. At its best, the volume reflects the author's willingness to listen, to observe, and to be amazed. . . . [T]his is an original study, and one that will inspire others to set out to walk, and talk, their way across the city."--**Choice**

"*The New York Nobody Knows* really does (socially) traverse the New York nobody knows; while in so doing, invariably opening a menagerie of colourful doors I suspect most people didn't even know existed. Myself wholeheartedly included."--**David Marx, *davidmarx.co.uk***

"Helmreich's book is clearly a labor of love for both the city as a collective project and the city of individual human lives and stories."--**Michael Minn, *Geographical Reviews***

"*The New York Nobody Knows* exemplifies the richness that the ethnographic approach affords. . . . It must be read with a flexible mind-set, but once read that way, can be revisited and mined for its rich data. Helmreich added to the knowledge base typically gleaned from categorical analysis, and overcame many of the blind spots usually present in such research. Helmreich's work inspires social scientists to lace-them-up and do it elsewhere."--**David B. Broad, Ph.D., *International Social Science Review***

From the Back Cover

"A modern-day flaneur, ethnographer William Helmreich moves engagingly through the streets and neighborhoods of New York, making pithy and substantive observations that place the everyday lives of the city's diverse peoples in a peculiarly revealing light. *The New York Nobody Knows* is a brilliant representation of everyday lives of New Yorkers, and as such--what Baudelaire did for Paris, Helmreich's work promises for New York."--**Elijah Anderson, author of *The Cosmopolitan Canopy: Race and Civility in Everyday Life***

"Helmreich's original and incredible book shows what every nook and cranny of this city looks like from the inside. I have never seen a work that amasses so many observations from so many scenes and deploys them with such elegance. It is a monumental and inspiring achievement."--**Mitchell Duneier, author of *Sidewalk***

"William Helmreich has walked everywhere and read everything pertinent on New York, and has many astute observations about both the essential spirit of the Big Apple and its rapid changes. Recommended to all lovers of this particular city, and cities in general."--**Phillip Lopate, author of *Waterfront: A Walk around Manhattan***

"The book offers an intriguing journey through the jagged patchwork of New York neighborhoods. Helmreich is a native son who has never lost his love for the city, its unusual characters, and its capacity to absorb change."--**Sharon Zukin, author of *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places***

"Original and important, *The New York Nobody Knows* presents a picture of the inner life of the city, bit by delightful bit, as a complete whole. The book is enchanting in a wonderfully old-fashioned way."--**Peter Moskos, author of *Cop in the Hood: My Year Policing Baltimore's Eastern District***

"In a clear storytelling manner, Helmreich makes the case that New York is a vibrant, complex, and diverse

municipality grappling with a range of social conditions and different forms of social change, all of which are affecting America's major cities. I know of no other work comparable in scope."--**Alford A. Young Jr., author of *The Minds of Marginalized Black Men: Making Sense of Mobility, Opportunity, and Future Life Chances***

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Kathe Waller:**

As people who live in the actual modest era should be update about what going on or facts even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era that is certainly always change and move ahead. Some of you maybe may update themselves by examining books. It is a good choice for yourself but the problems coming to an individual is you don't know what type you should start with. This The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles in the City is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and want in this era.

#### **Michael Clark:**

The book with title The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles in the City has lot of information that you can study it. You can get a lot of gain after read this book. This book exist new knowledge the information that exist in this e-book represented the condition of the world today. That is important to yo7u to be aware of how the improvement of the world. This kind of book will bring you throughout new era of the syndication. You can read the e-book on your smart phone, so you can read the item anywhere you want.

#### **James Butler:**

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#### **Dina Hirsch:**

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