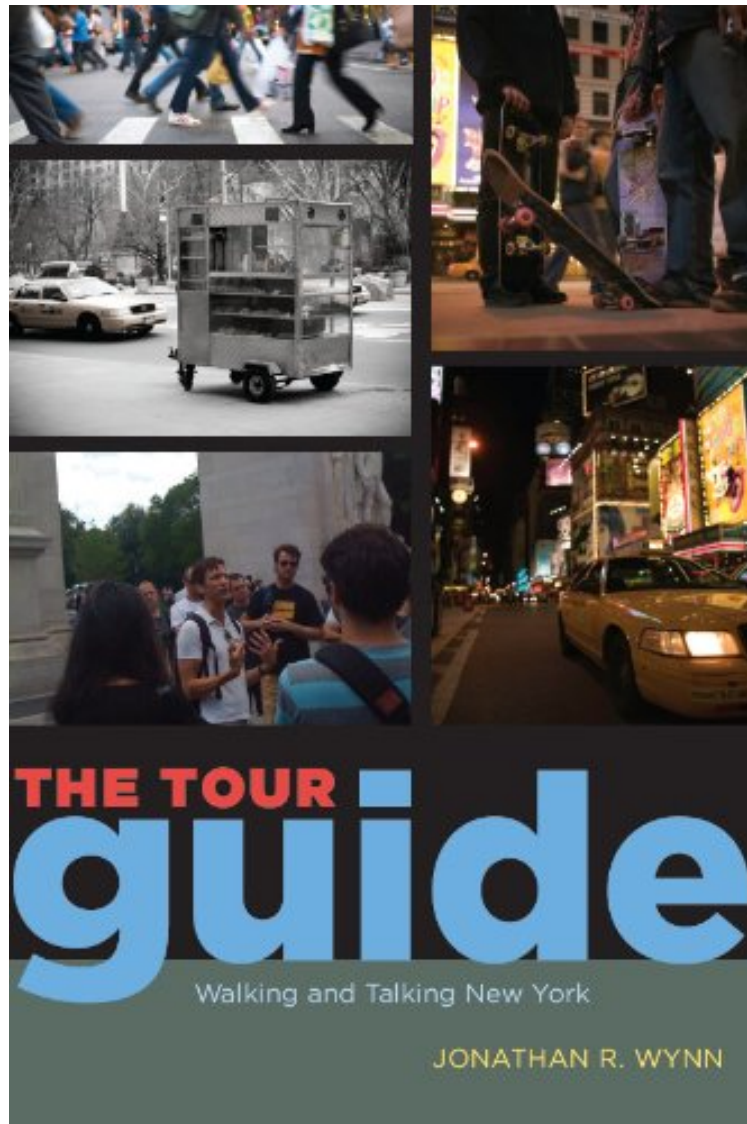


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## The Tour Guide: Walking and Talking New York (Fieldwork Encounters and Discoveries)

Jonathan R. Wynn

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**Jonathan R. Wynn : The Tour Guide: Walking and Talking New York (Fieldwork Encounters and Discoveries)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Tour Guide: Walking and Talking New York (Fieldwork Encounters and Discoveries):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Take The TourBy East LovejoyThe tour guides of New York are as fascinating and varied as the tours they give - and the city itself. The author intersperses his description and analysis with lively stories to take us on his own unique and entertaining "tour" of their world.5 of 5 people found the

following review helpful. The Tour Guide By Colin Jerolmack Great book! Each chapter revolves around a specific tour, teaching you about the city as well as the tour guides themselves. Wynn writes with passion, simplicity, and humor. He develops the idea of "urban alchemy" to describe how guides transform the mundane and free resources of the street--through stories and history--into a magical realm. In the end, he helps us understand why it is that New York is so enchanting.

Everyone wants to visit New York at least once. The Big Apple is a global tourist destination with a dizzying array of attractions throughout the five boroughs. The only problem is figuring out where to start—and that's where the city's tour guides come in. These guides are a vital part of New York's raucous sidewalk culture, and, as The Tour Guide reveals, the tours they offer are as fascinatingly diverse—and eccentric—as the city itself. Visitors can take tours that cover Manhattan before the arrival of European settlers, the nineteenth-century Irish gangs of Five Points, the culinary traditions of Queens, the culture of Harlem, or even the surveillance cameras of Chelsea—in short, there are tours to satisfy anyone's curiosity about the city's past or present. And the guides are as intriguing as the subjects, we learn, as Jonathan R. Wynn explores the lives of the people behind the tours, introducing us to office workers looking for a diversion from their desk jobs, unemployed actors honing their vocal skills, and struggling retirees searching for a second calling. Matching years of research with his own experiences as a guide, Wynn also lays bare the grueling process of acquiring an official license and offers a how-to guide to designing and leading a tour. Touching on the long history of tour-giving across the globe as well as the ups and downs of New York's tour guide industry in the wake of 9/11, The Tour Guide is as informative and insightful as the chatty, charming, and colorful characters at its heart.

Based on masterful fieldwork, The Tour Guide is an enormously interesting book. Wynn's extensive interviews and observation show us a variety of people giving tours of New York in a variety of ways, and by the time you finish the book you've learned a great deal about them, how they work, and why they do it. While The Tour Guide intersects with other classic books on urban life, Wynn's major accomplishment here is to provide a unique way of looking at cities you would never have arrived at just by thinking about them yourself. (Howard S. Becker, author of Outsiders) Baudelaire identified walking in the city as an art. In that spirit, Jonathan Wynn guides us through the contemporary art of New York City walking tours, which, against the pressures of commodification and homogenization, construct crafty and sometimes subversive narratives of the urban experience. A great guide, of course, has an eye for the small details and the big picture, as well as the weave between them. So does Wynn, demonstrating through richly textured accounts how a city's identity is made and remade by real people every day. (Richard Lloyd, author of Neo-Bohemia: Art and Commerce in the Postindustrial City) I read Jonathan Wynn's investigation of the work and identities of New York City walking tour guides with marvel and delight. Wynn has found an intriguing topic which he creatively explores through ethnographic research. His book offers an artful analysis of this gripping facet of contemporary urban life. (Margarethe Kusenbach, University of South Florida) About the Author