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Subwayland: Adventures In The World Beneath New York



Synopsis

Since the doors of the first subway train opened in 1904, New Yorkers and tourists alike have been fascinated, amused, amazed, repelled and bewildered by the world-within-a-world that lies beneath the city. Now, as the subway celebrates its centennial anniversary, the creator of The New York Times's award-winning "Tunnel Vision" column leads us on an extended tour of this storied subterranean land, revealing:

- * Its inhabitants: the Tango Man, the traveling magician, Mayor Bloomberg
- * Its wildlife: the subway-riding pigeons, the Fulton Street cat, the blind mules
- * Its customs, taboos and secret histories: door blocking, leg spreading, pole hugging, even, yes, token sucking
- * Its government: the sheriff of Grand Central, the Ethel Merman of the shuttle, the motorman who drove the last No. 1 train beneath the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001

Tips for the first-time traveler: how to get a seat, how to get a date, the fine art of "pre-walking"

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Customer Reviews

Randy Kennedy's "Tunnel Vision" column was the highlight of my New York Times subscription for nearly three years. It would be hokey to say that I learned more from the Times in Tuesday's Metro section than I did from every other article, op-ed and feature throughout the rest of the week. But it's also true. I love New York City, and I love the subway. It wasn't always that way -- I voluntarily fled the tri-state area at age 17 to go to college in points south, and later in points midwest. I came running back to the city eight years later, a victim of the fact that Toledo's bus system stops running at 5 PM and on Sundays, and am never leaving again. The subway is now the backbone of my NYC

experience. For \$70 a month I can take unlimited rides from the southernmost corners of Brooklyn, all the way to Union Square or the Upper East Side. Without having to save 15% or more on car insurance from GEICO. Every weekly "Tunnel Vision" column, several of which are reprinted for this book (sadly without the original photography) is either educational or, more importantly, hilarious. The most memorable columns discuss those who opt to spend their lives in the subway: as employees, performers, or, sometimes, residents. Several columns are also devoted to the rats and pigeons (if there is a difference between the two) who are an integral part of the city's 468 stations -- even more so than the vanishing token booth clerk. No contemporary book about the city would be complete without a collection of columns about 9/11. Kennedy interview the motorman who drove under the towers as the first plane struck. He inspects the damage done to the tunnels after the buildings fell.

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