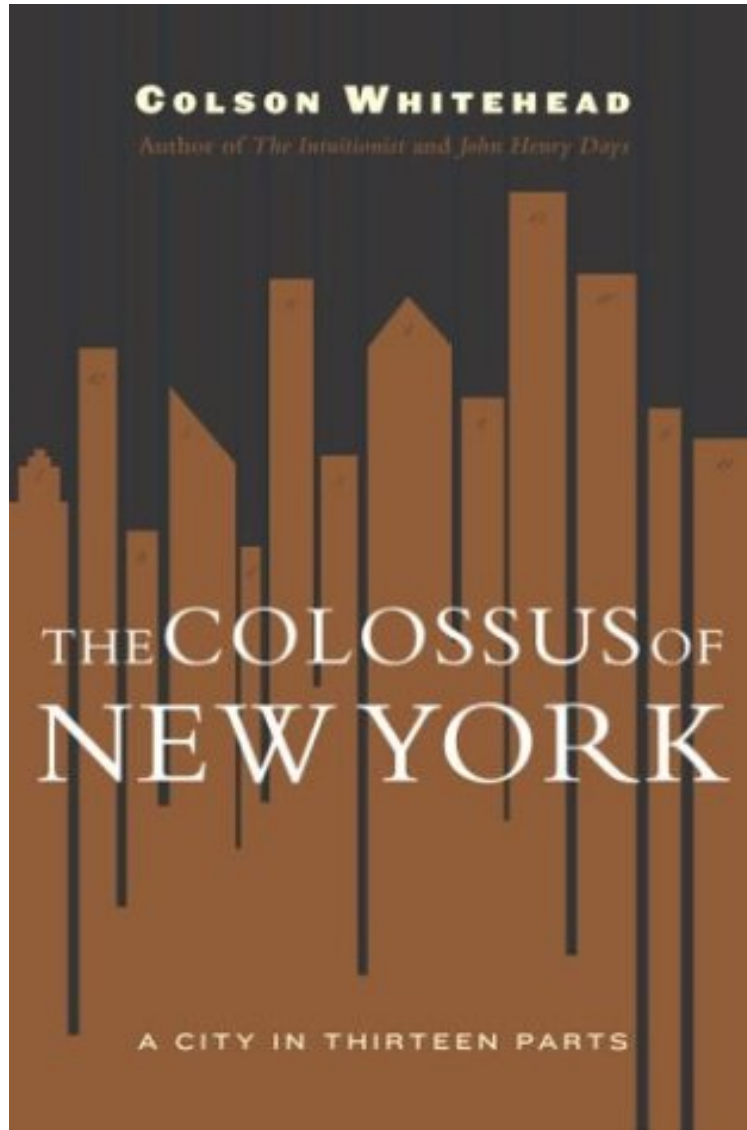


[E-BOOK] The Colossus of New York: A City in 13 Parts

## The Colossus of New York: A City in 13 Parts

Colson Whitehead

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**Colson Whitehead : The Colossus of New York: A City in 13 Parts** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Colossus of New York: A City in 13 Parts:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. such love, such funBy Alice R. FriedmanSuch style, such energy, such love, such fun. Thank you Mr. Whitehead. Definitely on my gift lists.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Some great writing hereBy PotterSome great writing here, but not all. Some truly great passages/chapters and some duds. For a better example of Whitehead's power, read Underground Railroad.6 of 7 people found the following

review helpful. Very good but not colossal  
By Rocco Dormarunno  
This little sort of tone poem captures some of the beauty and some of the meanness of New York life. I didn't come away from *THE COLOSSUS OF NEW YORK* as being negative toward the city, but even if Mr. Whitehead were, we New Yorkers need our cranks and curmudgeons. It makes us part of who we are, after all. The free style works MOST of the time. When it doesn't, it really doesn't. (It is no coincidence that the most straight-forward section, the introduction, is the most superb!) *THE COLOSSUS OF NEW YORK* doesn't have the lyricism of E.B. White's *THIS IS NEW YORK*, but it doesn't pretend to want to be like it, anyway. Colson Whitehead's piece is more like Whitman's poetry, as he rambled along the old downtown streets and piers, and recorded his scenes and his feelings about them. Yes, this book could have been greater, but it doesn't take away from the power much of it has. So if you're looking for a history of or guidebook to New York City, this is not the book. But if you're looking for the evocative power of New York, written in a personal, lyrical style, you won't find many better than *THE COLOSSUS OF NEW YORK*.

In a dazzlingly original work of nonfiction, the award-winning novelist Colson Whitehead re-creates the exuberance, the chaos, the promise, and the heartbreak of New York. Here is a literary love song that will entrance anyone who has lived in or spent time in the greatest of American cities. A masterful evocation of the city that never sleeps, *The Colossus of New York* captures the city's inner and outer landscapes in a series of vignettes, meditations, and personal memories. Colson Whitehead conveys with almost uncanny immediacy the feelings and thoughts of longtime residents and of newcomers who dream of making it their home; of those who have conquered its challenges; and of those who struggle against its cruelties. Whitehead's style is as multilayered and multifarious as New York itself: Switching from third person, to first person, to second person, he weaves individual voices into a jazzy musical composition that perfectly reflects the way we experience the city. There is a funny, knowing riff on what it feels like to arrive in New York for the first time; a lyrical meditation on how the city is transformed by an unexpected rain shower; and a wry look at the ferocious battle that is commuting. The plaintive notes of the lonely and dispossessed resound in one passage, while another captures those magical moments when the city seems to be talking directly to you, inviting you to become one with its rhythms. *The Colossus of New York* is a remarkable portrait of life in the big city. Ambitious in scope, gemlike in its details, it is at once an unparalleled tribute to New York and the ideal introduction to one of the most exciting writers working today.

From Publishers Weekly  
Whitehead (*The Intuitionist*; *John Henry Days*) lays out a wildly creative view of New York City. To out-of-towners, Gotham is about famous places, but Whitehead's New York is not. It's more about a way of seeing. For example, "No matter how long you have been here, you are a New Yorker the first time you say, 'That used to be Munsey's, or That used to be the Tic Toc Lounge...' when what was there before is more real and solid than what is here now." Whitehead begins with the bus ride into Port Authority, complete with impossibly heavy baggage, bathrooms braved by only the desperate and the seating strategies of experienced bus riders. He cuts to city feelings: the morning's garbage truck noises; the problem of rain; coping with rush hour. When he does write of celebrated places—Central Park, Coney Island, the Brooklyn Bridge—it's for the role they play in our ritual life: when we go, how we are when we're there and how it feels to leave. Whitehead is a master of the minutiae of the mundane. He takes you to the moment of a subway train leaving without you: could you have made it if you'd left a few seconds earlier? Should you take a taxi? You check the tunnel for the next train, fusing with thoughts of time as new passengers accumulate on the platform. This 13-part lyric symphony is like E.B. White's *Here Is New York* set to the beat of Ellington or Cage.  
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From Booklist  
Lovers of adventurous literary fiction relished Whitehead's novels, *The Intuitionist* (1998) and *John Henry Days* (2001), recognizing him as an original, sardonic, yet compassionate writer. Anointed with a MacArthur "genius" grant, Whitehead now presents a ravishing cycle of imaginative and evocative prose poems in tribute to his home, New York City, the quintessential metropolis of dreams. Writing in short, emphatic sentences, Whitehead riffs poignantly and playfully on myriad strategies for urban survival as he incisively distills the kaleidoscopic frenzy of the city into startlingly vital metaphors and cartoon-crisp analogies. Intensely sensory in his details, wistful and funny in his psychological disclosures, he makes everything come to mythic life, from the fury of rush hour to the strained etiquette of subway riders to Central Park, Times Square, Coney Island, and the Brooklyn Bridge. The mad choreography a rainstorm puts into motion, the rituals of downtown nightclubs, the horrors of the 9-to-5 routine, the waxing and waning of the self against the backdrop of so many other souls are all given a sharp, metaphysical twist in Whitehead's gorgeous rendering of New York as a colossal, ever-metamorphosing phantasm.  
Donna Seaman  
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A tour de force. Luc Sante, *The New York Times* Book Pitch-perfect. . . . Utterly authentic. . . . *The Colossus of New York* is quite simply the most delicious 13 bites of the Big Apple I've taken in ages. --Grace Lichenstein, *The Washington Post*  
A love letter to New York. . . . *Colossus* illuminates innumerable little moments that define the city.  
*San Francisco Chronicle*  
The cheapest, most stylish ticket to the Big Apple between two covers. . . . It's as if Whitehead scooped his pen into the collective unconscious of everyone who's ever visited New York. *Pittsburg Post-Gazette*  
A revelatory ode to Gotham. . . . Whitehead's engaged eyes and precise prose show us the small details we

overlook and the large ones we fail to absorb. The Miami Herald Smooth, dazzling, evocative. . . . [Whitehead] writes wonderfully, commanding a lush, poetic, mellifluous prose instrument. The Nation [Whitehead is] a scientist of metropolitan encounters, he surveys places where the masses collide, knitting together hundreds of observations and calculations that usually remain unspoken. . . . The musical prose thrums with urban momentum. The Village Voice [Whitheads] New York, like Walt Whitmans or Thomas Pynchons or Woody Allens, is full of incantatory potential. Even the subway, ordinary, noisy, gruddy inevitability, becomes a ferry to the Underworld. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution [A] rhapsodic ode to Gotham. Time Out Jazzlike. . . . A vivid impressionistic montage of Manhattan. The Seattle Times Whiteheads series of vignettes and remembrances paint a perfect visual landscape. . . . A heartfelt tribute to Whiteheads home. The Oregonian Lyrical. . . . Lean and full of longing. . . . The kind of book that will be . . . passed around, dog-eared, library-tagged, resold, from reader to reader. . . . Whitehead takes a known and specific place and universalizes it, insinuating it into the meshwork of our thoughts in a manner impervious to time and trend. Minneapolis Star Tribune Thrums with anxious excitement and excited anxiety accommodating the noirish, the reportorial, and the epigrammatic. . . . The best passages deserve comparison with E.B. Whites Here is New York. Entertainment Weekly Whitehead [is] one of the citys and countrys finest young writers. . . . [A] guided tour de force. Chicago Tribune Jazzlike. . . . A vivid impressionistic montage of Manhattan. The Seattle Times A revelatory ode to Gotham. . . . Whiteheads engaged eyes and precise prose show us the small details we overlook and the large ones we fail to absorb. Miami Herald Profound and playful. Los Angeles Times Whiteheads series of vignettes and remembrances paint a perfect visual landscape. . . . A heartfelt tribute to Whiteheads home. The Oregonian Rhapsodic love letters . . . elegant, ambitious essays. New York Post Impressionistic . . . [an] affecting homage to E.B. White. New York Magazine (Top Fall Book Pick) From the Trade Paperback edition.