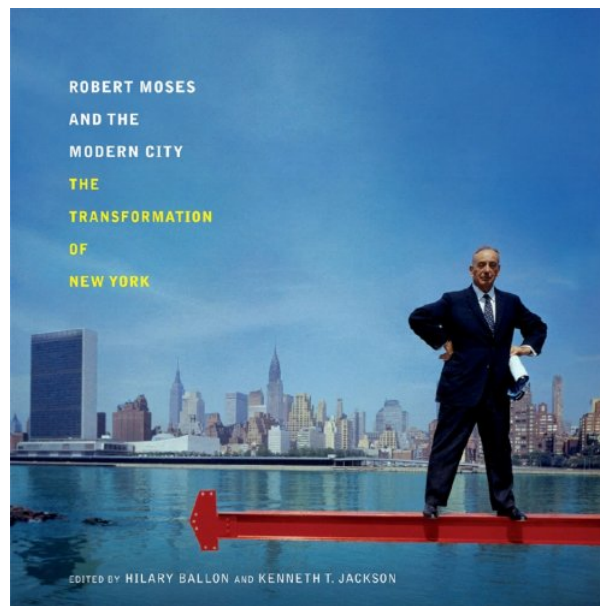
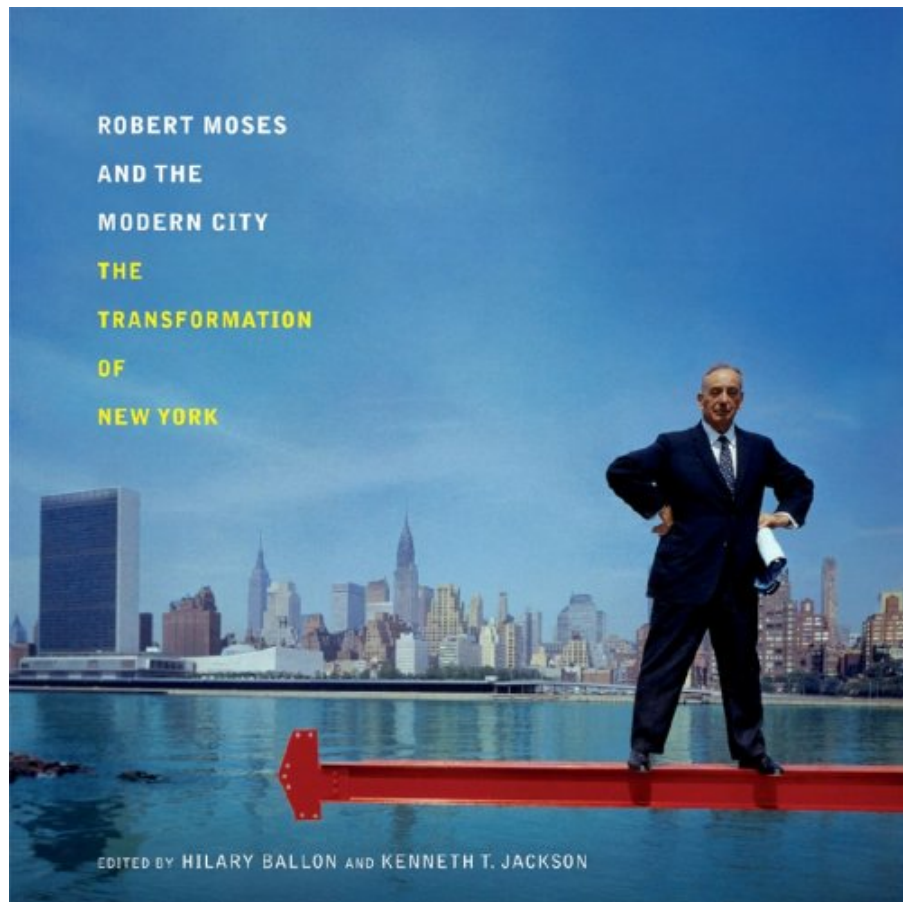


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About the Author

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A fresh look at the greatest builder in the history of New York City and one of its most controversial figures.

“We are rebuilding New York, not dispersing and abandoning it”: Robert Moses saw himself on a rescue mission to save the city from obsolescence, decentralization, and decline. His vast building program aimed to modernize urban infrastructure, expand the public realm with extensive recreational facilities, remove blight, and make the city more livable for the middle class. This book offers a fresh look at the physical transformation of New York during Moses’s nearly forty-year reign over city building from 1934 to 1968. It is hard to imagine that anyone will ever have the same impact on New York as did Robert Moses. In his various roles in city and state government, he reshaped the fabric of the city, and his legacy continues to touch the lives of all New Yorkers. Revered for most of his life, he is now one of the most controversial figures in the city’s history. *Robert Moses and the Modern City* is the first major publication devoted to him since Robert Caro’s damning 1974 biography, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*. In these pages eight short essays by leading scholars of urban history provide a revised perspective; stunning new photographs offer the first visual record of Moses’s far-reaching building program as it stands today; and a comprehensive catalog of his works is illustrated with a wealth of archival records: photographs of buildings, neighborhoods, and landscapes, of parks, pools, and playgrounds, of demolished neighborhoods and replacement housing and urban renewal projects, of bridges and highways; renderings of rejected designs and controversial projects that were defeated; and views of spectacular models that have not been seen since Moses made them for promotional purposes. *Robert Moses and the Modern City* captures research undertaken in the last three decades and will stimulate a new round of debate.

- Sales Rank: #631390 in Books
- Published on: 2008-09-17
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.00" h x 1.00" w x 10.10" l, 3.18 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 336 pages

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47 of 51 people found the following review helpful.

A modern take on the metropolis that Moses crafted

By Richard Murdocco

The Power Broker (another prominent work on Moses) is a product of the 1970s pessimism concerning the death of the city, saying that Moses helped bring about the downfall experienced in 1974 when the book was published. In Ballon's book, we have the experience that 30 years of hindsight provides, and the tone is radically different. Ballon and other essayists provide a more modern insight to Moses and his achievements. Do not be fooled, this is not a coffee table book, but almost a text book for urban planners on the practices employed by Moses. The book was inspired by the museum exhibits going on currently in New York City concerning Moses and his works, and is an excellent supplement to them. If you are interested in NYC, public works, or Urban History- this is a must buy, and will become more important as time wears on.

I also recommend *The Power Broker* and Moses' own book *Public Works: A Dangerous Trade*

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Master Map

By J-Man

Unfortunately, the essays are a bit of a drudge, but the book itself is definitive, and as a life long NY City resident I must admit - absolutely dazzling. Its less about Robert Moses, more about his hand over projects that involved countless talented Americans. Learn about highways never built, public parks on the grandest of scales, and how to clear a city slum via Title 1. You thought you knew NY City, and perhaps were even sure Manhattan was all you would ever need to know. This book shows the sophisticated development of Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island and The Bronx, as well as their more popular and over crowded, smaller brother. Simply amazing.

4 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

Did Robert Moses contribute to the rise or fall of New York City?

By L.. Oost

In 1974 Robert Caro published his damaging account of the public works of Robert Moses in the city of New York. It is a brilliant biography of Big Bob the Builder. Caro stressed the outright evils of the Moses way of

planning, his belief in auto mobility in contrast to mass transport, the slum clearance projects which evicted lower income residents, his hostility to the needs of black New Yorkers, his abuse of power. But this perspective needs reassessment. Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson collected eight short essays in a nice book titled `Robert Moses and the Modern City'. The essays provide a revised perspective on Robert Moses. Robert Moses did modernize the urban infrastructure of New York, no one will ever have the same impact. But even Big Bob the Builder had to act within a system of constraints. Moses fashioned his image of the power broker, but he didn't possess superpower. He fought other powers, other bureaucratic stakeholders, the federal government with its rules and laws. In fact, Robert Moses had the capacity to think big. He tried to preserve the middle class for New York, he fought dispersal and he promoted the inclusion of cultural and educational institutions within the city. This reappraisal of the public works of Robert Moses is a welcome contribution to the debate about the rise or fall of New York.

Luuk Oost

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