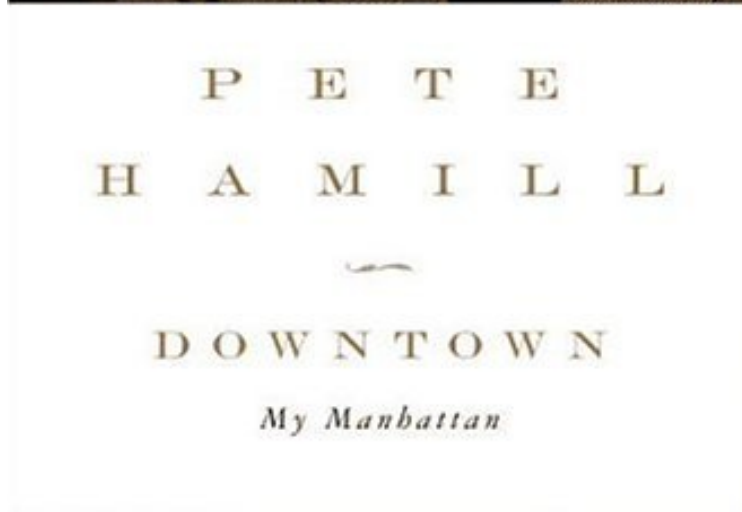


[Mobile pdf] Downtown: My Manhattan

## Downtown: My Manhattan

*Pete Hamill*

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**Pete Hamill : Downtown: My Manhattan** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Downtown: My Manhattan:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Superb history, marred a bit by personal observations that break the narrative flow for this admirer of Hamill's writing By Robert C Ross We recently took a wonderful tour of the Hard Hat section of Ellis Island, and our tour guide through this abandoned hospital, once on a par with Columbia Presbyterian

and Memorial Sloan Kettering, was wonderfully knowledgeable about lower Manhattan. He said that he found Hamill book essential for anyone wanting a very readable, fact filled, and exciting history of that part of Manhattan Island. I bought a copy as soon as I got home, it arrived in 24 hours, and I devoured it in about three hours. Wonderful stuff -- excellent writing and very reliable -- I checked it against the superb The Encyclopedia of New York City: Second Edition about 20 times. Incidentally, that encyclopedia comes in an ebook and I often check for more information when hiking around NYC or when reading a hard copy book like Hamill's -- an essential companion while exploring this fantastic city. I've taken off one star, a bit reluctantly, but I found Hamill's personal stories distracting. I think a more careful editor might have moved those personal sections into either a Forward or preferably an Afterword, and referenced Hamill's experience with footnotes in the main text. Nevertheless, this is superb history, very well told, and highly reliable. Robert C. Ross September 2015 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I'm not sure how I felt on this one. By Ollie Ray I'm not entirely sure how much I liked this book. There were parts in where Pete Hamill really raised my brow on some insightful tidbits on the history of Manhattan, but there were a lot of lulls where it was hard to keep reading. In the end I figured this read jumped between a five star book and a three that it was good enough. Hamill has a great writing style and can play up nostalgia very well. He made me feel like some of the things that no one alive today could be old enough to remember seem like something that happened yesterday. In a sense it almost did in terms of relative time, when the Dutch carved out the first settlement on the island, to when the British captured the city in the war, to when the bums got the boot on the lower east side. Walking around knowing what I know now from this book really is fascinating that way. I also did a bit of fact checking myself on some of the specific details he mentioned, and it would seem didn't skimp on the research. This is no wikipedia research paper, his dates and facts check out. Another thing that I like is that he kind put my mind to ease a bit. This change quickly here in New York, especially the things you love. Veselka is mentioned, a wonderful Polish diner, one that I do care about, and I want it to be around forever like it seemingly has been. But nothing lasts forever, as Hamill points out. The trick is to not anguish over the loss and accept it. Veselka will be gone one day, but hopefully by then I will have found something else to move my love to. I always felt especially angry at what happened to my home in Manhattan, Tribeca, because of how real estate fiends came in and essentially forced everyone out to make way for Bed Bath and Beyond as well as over paid yuppies. After reading Downtown, and seeing how change like this is part of my home town history, and to appreciate being there when it was beautiful made me a little less upset. The reason this book want a life changing five star knock out is that sometimes I managed to get bored. The sentimental parts do kind of drone on and on. I think when Hamill wrote about the parts where he wasn't around to witness the events were more interesting simply because more of the facts but still delivered in a clever way. Then you get to the point where he is born. From there it gets mushy. I liked it better when he was able to remove himself a little more and focus on the shared history rather than his personal one. Sometimes it was interesting, but often it wasn't. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent telling of a brief history of downtown Manhattan By Bruce Kaufman Excellent telling of a brief history of downtown Manhattan. Hamill has spent most of his life here and is so convincing in this telling that you would think he was actually here in previous centuries. For those who do not know, downtown Manhattan is usually not the Manhattan you see in movies and TV. That would be midtown Manhattan. An exception was the "Law and Order" shows which were usually filmed in downtown Manhattan. I worked there for over 30 years and it was especially enjoyable for me.

In Downtown, Hamill leads us on an unforgettable journey through the city he loves, from the island's southern tip to 42nd Street, combining a moving memoir of his days and nights in New York with a passionate history of its most enduring places and people. From the Battery's traces of the early port to Washington Square's ghosts of executed convicts and well-heeled Knickerbockers; from the Five Points, once the most dangerous and squalid slum in America, to the mansions of the robber barons on "the Fifth Avenue"; from the Bowery of the 1860s, the vibrant heart of the city's theater world, to the Village of the 1960s, with its festival-like street life, this is downtown as we've never seen it before. Hamill weaves his own memories of Manhattan with the liveliest moments from its past, and points out the hints of that past living on in the city of today, fueling the ever-present nostalgia of its inhabitants. Hamill introduces us to the New Yorkers who have left indelible marks: Peter Stuyvesant and John Jacob Astor, Stanford White and George Templeton Strong, Edith Wharton and Henry James, Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst, W. H. Auden and Allen Ginsberg, Boss Tweed and Fiorello La Guardia, Jimi Hendrix and Thelonious Monk, and scores of others. And he takes us to the eateries, saloons, theaters, movie houses, bookstores, and street corners they, and he, once frequented, whether still standing or existing only in memory. Through the city's transformations, the pulse of Pete Hamill's brilliant voice melds with the pulse that drives New York, that mixture of daring, greed, anger, rebellion, hope, entrepreneurialism, and longing that never fades. Written by native son who has lived through some of New York City's most historic moments, Downtown is an extraordinary celebration of the magnificent, haunted place that Hamill continues to call home, and that people from all over the country and the world have come to call their own.

From Publishers Weekly Hamill has spent most of his life in New York City, and he knows its history and its pulse

intimately. In this paean to his hometown, he moves from southernmost Manhattan to its center, and from the city's origins to its current state. Each CD focuses on one area, beginning with Battery Park and working through Trinity Church, the Bowery and the Villages before jumping to the city's heart: Times Square. The only sound effects (brief jazzy riffs) can be heard at the beginning and end of each disc, and the stark quiet of Hamill's narration seems odd for a book about such a noisy city. However, his gruff, seen-it-all voice, filled alternately with wonder at the beauty of a building, disdain for modern trends and indignation at how some worthy historical character has been forgotten, is that of a wise older relative revealing the true past of a place he loves. He speaks often of the "human alloy" of new and old immigrants that comprises Manhattan, and intersperses his own experiences growing up in Brooklyn and coming of age in the Lower East Side. Hamill's narration is somewhat monotonous, but his way of traveling seamlessly through neighborhoods and years, relating fascinating anecdotes and little-known facts, keeps the tour lively. Simultaneous release with the Little, Brown hardcover (Forecasts, Nov. 15, 2004). (Dec.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist Hamill is an excellent novelist (see in particular *Snow* in August, 1997), but in his latest book, he wears his hat as one of the last of the old-time newspapermen whose life and work simply define New York City. He calls this book an "essay . . . based on memory, reporting, and reading." What that amounts to is a delightfully personal, robustly informative portrait of New York, Manhattan in particular (and Lower Manhattan more specifically). Having been in the newspaper biz for four decades, he knows how to keep his eyes and ears open for the good story, the telling detail, and the quirky but exemplary character. As he escorts readers around the island of Manhattan, he takes heavy glances back into history--insisting that New Yorkers constantly experience "aching nostalgia"--as he not so much classifies but revels in the distinctions of NYC both as a "concrete place and as an idea." A marvelous read for anyone who has a hometown. Brad Hooper Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved.

About the Author Pete Hamill is a novelist, essayist and journalist whose career has endured for more than forty years. He was born in Brooklyn, N. Y. in 1935, the oldest of seven children of immigrants from Belfast, Northern Ireland. He attended Catholic schools as a child. He left school at 16 to work in the Brooklyn Navy Yard as a sheetmetal worker, and then went on to the United States Navy. While serving in the Navy, he completed his high school education. Then, using the educational benefits of the G.I. Bill of Rights, he attended Mexico City College in 1956-1957, studying painting and writing, and later went to Pratt Institute. For several years, he worked as a graphic designer. Then in 1960, he went to work as a reporter for the New York Post. A long career in journalism followed. He has been a columnist for the New York Post, the New York Daily News, and New York Newsday, the Village Voice, New York magazine and Esquire. He has served as editor-in-chief of both the Post and the Daily News.. As a journalist, he has covered wars in Vietnam, Nicaragua, Lebanon and Northern Ireland, and has lived for extended periods in Mexico City, Dublin, Barcelona, San Juan and Rome. From his base in New York he has also covered murders, fires, World Series, championship fights and the great domestic disturbances of the 1960s, and has written extensively on art, jazz, immigration and politics. He witnessed the events of September 11, 2001 and its aftermath and wrote about them for the Daily News. At the same time, Hamill has written much fiction, including movie and TV scripts. He has published nine novels and two collections of short stories. His 1997 novel, *Snow* in August, was on the New York Times bestseller list for four months. His memoir, *A Drinking Life*, was on the same New York Times list for 13 weeks. He has published two collections of his journalism (*Irrational Ravings* and *Piecework*), an extended essay on journalism called *News Is A Verb*, a book about the relationship of tools to art, a biographical essay called *Why Sinatra Matters*, dealing with the music of the late singer and the social forces that made his work unique. In 1999, Harry N. Abrams published his acclaimed book on the Mexican painter Diego Rivera. His latest novel, *Forever*, was published by Little, Brown in January 2003 and became a New York Times bestseller. In 2004, he published *Downtown: My Manhattan*, a non-fiction account of his love affair with New York and received much critical acclaim. Hamill is the father of two daughters, and has a seven-year-old grandson. He is married to the Japanese journalist, Fukiko Aoki, and they divide their time between New York City and Cuernavaca, Mexico. He is a Distinguished Writer in Residence at New York University and is writing a new novel.