



## Central Park: An Anthology

*Andrew Blauner (Editor) , Adrian Benepe (Introduction) , Adam Gopnik (Contributor) , Brooks Hansen (Contributor) , Mark Helprin (Contributor) , Donald Knowler (Contributor) , David Michaelis (Contributor) , Francine Prose (Contributor) , more... Nathaniel Rich (Contributor) , Susan Sheehan (Contributor) , John Burnham Schwartz (Contributor) , Colson Whitehead (Contributor) , Doug Blonsky (Epilogue) , Alec Wilkinson (Contributor) , Marie Winn (Contributor) , Paul Auster (Contributor) , Thomas Beller (Contributor) , H.G. Bissinger (Contributor) , Bill Buford (Contributor) , Susan Cheever (Contributor) , Ben Dolnick (Contributor) , Jonathan Safran Foer (Contributor) ...less*

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A wild night outdoors with Bill Buford. A football tradition with Nathaniel Rich. A jog around the reservoir with Mark Helprin as he "protects" Jacqueline Onassis from imagined harm. The 843 carefully planned acres of Central Park have not only crept into the hearts of its 38 million annual visitors, but also into the life and work of a diverse array of writers who come to revel in its natural remedy for urban chaos.

In *Central Park*, a dozen exclusive pieces commissioned especially for this book are accompanied by a handful of beloved classics. Francine Prose reflects on open-air performances by Nina Simone and James Brown; Jonathan Safran Foer writes a creation myth of the park; Buzz Bissinger meditates on how the park defined his early life; and Marie Winn definitively answers Holden Caulfield's question of where the ducks go when the ponds freeze over.

This vibrant collection presents Central Park in all its diverse glory, with an ode on every page to a fifty-one-block swath of special New York magic. A must-read for the thousands who consider the park their own, and a keepsake for the many more who visit, it will be a standard for years to come.

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Introduction by Adrian Benepe  
The meadow by John Burnham Schwartz  
Goodnight moon by Ben Dolnick  
Through the Children's Gate by Adam Gopnik  
Framed in silver by Mark Helprin  
Carp in the park by David Michaelis  
The Colossus of New York by Colson Whitehead  
Some music in the park by Francine Prose  
The sixth Borough by Jonathan Safran Foer  
Squawkeye and gang on the Dendur Plateau by Nathaniel Rich  
Fogg in the Park by Paul Auster  
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Negative space by Thomas Beller

The hidden life by Alec Wilkinson  
My little bit of country by Susan Cheever  
The falconer of Central Park by Donald Knowler  
About those ducks, Holden by Marie Winn  
Lions and tigers and bears by Bill Buford  
Beastie by Brooks Hansen  
The goodbye by Buzz Bissinger  
Epilogue by Doug Blonsky

## Central Park: An Anthology Details

Date : Published April 24th 2012 by Bloomsbury USA

ISBN : 9781608196005

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Format : Paperback 240 pages

Genre : New York, Nonfiction, Short Stories, Writing, Essays, History

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# From Reader Review Central Park: An Anthology for online ebook

## Sue says

\*Note: I won this advance copy in one of the Goodreads giveaways.

I enjoyed the anthology. It looks like I took forever to read it, but the last few months were really busy at work, and it was actually perfect for that time period - small stories/reflections/essays, usually written very well. I don't live in NYC, but whenever I have visited I usually end going to Central Park, and I love it. I appreciated that the editor had the Director of Parks and Recreation (and former director of Central Park) write the forward piece - perfect choice. Highly recommend for anyone that enjoys the park, frequently or not, or someone who enjoys reading short travel essays.

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## Frank says

A Wonderful Anthology recommended to be read by any New Yorker who has lived in the City and enjoyed Central Park during their youth. Having been born and raised in the City, we lived in a two bedroom walk-up apartment, on the fifth floor, overlooking the park on Central Park West between 103rd and 104th Street for about 10 years during the late 30's through the 40's. I thoroughly enjoyed reading the remembrances of the contributors to this Anthology as it brought back memories of many childhood days I spent in the park, playing ball, ice skating on the pond, sledding down the slopes or just wandering around. In those days, the rent was only \$38,00 per month, rising to \$40.00 per month by 1948.

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## Paul Clarke says

The book sounds like a great idea - having a group of New York writers pen memory pieces and stories about an icon as dynamic as Central Park. The implementation of the idea didn't wow me as much as the concept. I enjoyed the introduction by Adrian Benepe, former Commissioner of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, and the epilogue by Doug Blonsky, president of the Central Park Conservancy. Their words reinforced why Central Park is important. What lay in between underwhelmed me except for some enjoyable pieces by John Burnham Schwartz, Bill Buford, Nathaniel Rich, Susan Cheever and Buzz Bissinger. Central Park is very much a reference point for just about any memory I have about Manhattan but I found this book fades quickly from memory.

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## Kim-Lost-In-A-Book says

I had such hope for this book. I love Central Park, it's one of my favorite places in the world. I so wanted to love this book and hoped it would bring back wonderful memories for me. Sadly, it fell far short. A couple of the stories were cute or okay (but clearly not enough for me to remember their names), but most of them were just odd or had no purpose and some were hardly about Central Park at all.

Very disappointed.

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**Lulu says**

This is a WONDERFUL anthology of short stories about Central Park, a must-read for anyone who likes New York! Highlights are Marie Winn's "About Those Ducks, Holden" that answers his recurring question about where the ducks go when the lakes freeze over (under Balcony Bridge, for the record) and "Goodnight Moon" by Ben Dolnick, about his short tenure as a keeper at the Central Park Zoo.

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**Daniel says**

This is a nice anthology. It makes me wish I had spent more than just a couple of hours in Central Park. Maybe I will get another chance to see it someday preferably on a day that is a touch cooler than 97 degrees.

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**Phoenix Carvelli says**

Review copy won on Goodreads.com on 4-20-12.

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**Pamela Hale says**

Bill and I (rubes to the core) once took a long trip into New York JUST to see Central Park. It was wonderful, even though we only saw about 3 of the 843 acres. This anthology has some marvelous stories by really terrific writers and also some not so good stories by some pretty mediocre authors. Hey, that's life isn't it? This one is worth the read.

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**Lisa Valentine says**

I received this book from Goodreads. I did enjoy all the many stories of Central Park. I got a sense of the history and many faces of the Park over the Years. 20 plus stories telling of the parks history, the people swwho go the specifically and as a whole.

Nicely done I want to go there.

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**Karla says**

A wonderful collection of short stories- all of them about Central Park. As a New Yorker born and bred, each story touched my heart, even if the storytellers experience was greatly different from my own.

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## **Julie says**

Very good collection of mostly essays (some short stories) about growing up near Central Park

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## **Abbie says**

Perfect anthology!

Took me forever to finish, not because it is in any way laborious but because I refused to read any of the stories when I wasn't actually sitting IN Central Park. Because I'm a purist like that.

Anyway, this book is the absolute ultimate blend of education, humor, heart and New York, and I love the girl in me whose very proud to be a New Yorker was so happy to read it. I am one of those people who finds the park genuinely magical - there are always signs of unity and hope and eccentricity lurking somewhere there - and I was so happy to read stories from the points of view of people, indeed authors, who felt the same way. Sure, there were some stories I loved more than others - currently blanking on my favorite one(s) - but the whole book is definitely worth reading.

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## **Brent Soderstrum says**

I won this book through GoodReads First Read program.

Like any anthology this one was like the Clint Eastwood movie "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly". First the Bad: The Colossus of New York by Colson Whitehead and The Sixth Borough by Jonathon Safran Foer were so bad they were difficult to even finish. I was thankful they were short stories. The Good: Fogg in the Park by Paul Auster and The Goodbye by Buzz Bissinger. The others could be added to each category but to lesser degrees.

I have walked through Central Park a few times as a visitor. I enjoyed hearing about other peoples' memories of this New York institution.

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## **Sabine says**

Exalts the magic of Central Park while offering snapshots of its evolution. An impressive list of contributors - Francine Prose, Adam Gopnik, and Colson Whitehead, among others. Definitely would recommend, especially to New Yorkers.

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## **Marion says**

I loved this collection of short essays and stories centered on Central Park. The Park is definitely my favorite part of the City and I loved reading different perspectives and learning about different experiences people

have had with and in the Park and the transformational impact the Park has had on this city and community.

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