



Goodbye to All That: Writers on Loving and Leaving New York

Sari Botton (Editor), Elisa Albert (Contributor), Karen E. Bender (Contributor), Chloe Caldwell (Contributor), Ruth Curry (Contributor), Meghan Daum (Contributor), Marcy Dermansky (Contributor), Valerie Eagle (Contributor), more... Hope Edelman (Contributor), Lauren Elkin (Contributor), Maggie Estep (Contributor), Melissa Febos (Contributor), Roxane Gay (Contributor), Emily Gould (Contributor), Ann Hood (Contributor), Dana Kinstler (Contributor), Marie Myung-Ok Lee (Contributor), Emily St. John Mandel (Contributor), Liza Monroy (Contributor), Mira Ptacin (Contributor), Emily Carter Roiphe (Contributor), Rayhane Sanders (Contributor), Dani Shapiro (Contributor), Janet Steen (Contributor), Emma Straub (Contributor), Cheryl Strayed (Contributor), Eva Tenuto (Contributor), Rebecca Wolff (Contributor) ...less

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Goodbye to All That: Writers on Loving and Leaving New York

Sari Botton (Editor) , Elisa Albert (Contributor) , Karen E. Bender (Contributor) , Chloe Caldwell (Contributor) , Ruth Curry (Contributor) , Meghan Daum (Contributor) , Marcy Dermansky (Contributor) , Valerie Eagle (Contributor) , more... Hope Edelman (Contributor) , Lauren Elkin (Contributor) , Maggie Estep (Contributor) , Melissa Febos (Contributor) , Roxane Gay (Contributor) , Emily Gould (Contributor) , Ann Hood (Contributor) , Dana Kinstler (Contributor) , Marie Myung-Ok Lee (Contributor) , Emily St. John Mandel (Contributor) , Liza Monroy (Contributor) , Mira Ptacin (Contributor) , Emily Carter Roiphe (Contributor) , Rayhane Sanders (Contributor) , Dani Shapiro (Contributor) , Janet Steen (Contributor) , Emma Straub (Contributor) , Cheryl Strayed (Contributor) , Eva Tenuto (Contributor) , Rebecca Wolff (Contributor) ...less

Goodbye to All That: Writers on Loving and Leaving New York Sari Botton (Editor) , Elisa Albert (Contributor) , Karen E. Bender (Contributor) , Chloe Caldwell (Contributor) , Ruth Curry (Contributor) , Meghan Daum (Contributor) , Marcy Dermansky (Contributor) , Valerie Eagle (Contributor) , more... Hope Edelman (Contributor) , Lauren Elkin (Contributor) , Maggie Estep (Contributor) , Melissa Febos (Contributor) , Roxane Gay (Contributor) , Emily Gould (Contributor) , Ann Hood (Contributor) , Dana Kinstler (Contributor) , Marie Myung-Ok Lee (Contributor) , Emily St. John Mandel (Contributor) , Liza Monroy (Contributor) , Mira Ptacin (Contributor) , Emily Carter Roiphe (Contributor) , Rayhane Sanders (Contributor) , Dani Shapiro (Contributor) , Janet Steen (Contributor) , Emma Straub (Contributor) , Cheryl Strayed (Contributor) , Eva Tenuto (Contributor) , Rebecca Wolff (Contributor) ...less

```
<!-- /* Font Definitions */ @font-face {font-family:"Cambria Math"; panose-1:2 4 5 3 5 4 6 3 2 4; mso-font-charset:0; mso-generic-font-family:roman; mso-font-pitch:variable; mso-font-signature:3 0 0 0 1 0;} @font-face {font-family:Calibri; panose-1:2 15 5 2 2 2 4 3 2 4; mso-font-charset:0; mso-generic-font-family:swiss; mso-font-pitch:variable; mso-font-signature:-53685
```

...more

Goodbye to All That: Writers on Loving and Leaving New York Details

Date : Published October 8th 2013 by Seal Press (first published September 24th 2013)
ISBN : 9781580054942

Author : Sari Botton (Editor) , Elisa Albert (Contributor) , Karen E. Bender (Contributor) , Chloe Caldwell (Contributor) , Ruth Curry (Contributor) , Meghan Daum (Contributor) , Marcy Dermansky (Contributor) , Valerie Eagle (Contributor) , more... Hope Edelman (Contributor) , Lauren Elkin (Contributor) , Maggie Estep (Contributor) , Melissa Febos (Contributor) , Roxane Gay (Contributor) , Emily Gould (Contributor) , Ann Hood (Contributor) , Dana Kinstler (Contributor) , Marie Myung-Ok Lee (Contributor) , Emily St. John Mandel (Contributor) , Liza Monroy (Contributor) , Mira Ptacin (Contributor) , Emily Carter Roiphe (Contributor) , Rayhane Sanders (Contributor) , Dani Shapiro (Contributor) , Janet Steen (Contributor) , Emma Straub (Contributor) , Cheryl Strayed (Contributor) , Eva Tenuto (Contributor) , Rebecca Wolff (Contributor) ...less

Format : Paperback 288 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Writing, Essays, New York, Autobiography, Memoir, Travel, Short Stories

 [Download Goodbye to All That: Writers on Loving and Leaving New ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Goodbye to All That: Writers on Loving and Leaving Ne ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Goodbye to All That: Writers on Loving and Leaving New York Sari Botton (Editor) , Elisa Albert (Contributor) , Karen E. Bender (Contributor) , Chloe Caldwell (Contributor) , Ruth Curry (Contributor) , Meghan Daum (Contributor) , Marcy Dermansky (Contributor) , Valerie Eagle (Contributor) , more... Hope Edelman (Contributor) , Lauren Elkin (Contributor) , Maggie Estep (Contributor) , Melissa Febos (Contributor) , Roxane Gay (Contributor) , Emily Gould (Contributor) , Ann Hood (Contributor) , Dana Kinstler (Contributor) , Marie Myung-Ok Lee (Contributor) , Emily St. John Mandel (Contributor) , Liza Monroy (Contributor) , Mira Ptacin (Contributor) , Emily Carter Roiphe (Contributor) , Rayhane Sanders (Contributor) , Dani Shapiro (Contributor) , Janet Steen (Contributor) , Emma Straub (Contributor) , Cheryl Strayed (Contributor) , Eva Tenuto (Contributor) , Rebecca Wolff (Contributor) ...less

From Reader Review Goodbye to All That: Writers on Loving and Leaving New York for online ebook

Ashley Bergman Carlin says

I bought this book at the Strand in New York last May, when I was there last. But at the end of the trip I was ready to come home, to say goodbye to all that, and thought that perhaps my love affair with the city was over. This book seemed like it might sit on my shelf, unread. But last week I woke up missing the city, again, and remembered that this collection was waiting for me. I picked it up and swallowed it pretty quickly, wanting each essay to go on forever but anxious to read the next. I am grateful for the glimpse into each women's lives and saw myself in almost all of them.

Perhaps it goes without saying, but I loved this book. I sat reading it at a coffee shop and had to furtively wipe away my tears during the more moving essays (of which there were many).

Disclaimer: I love almost all books about NYC, especially those written by women, especially those written by women who are clearly in love with the city. This book falls into those categories. I've also unearthed a stronger love for the personal essay-- or maybe a now defined love for the genre. I love when writers are so brutally honest and put all their feelings and experiences out there, no matter how embarrassing or raw.

So add raw, blunt, emotionally honest personal essays to enthusiastic NYC love and you've basically got the ideal reader in me. I didn't love each essay equally-- but I did enjoy most of them, probably 95% of them, which is impressive. After each essay I found myself researching the author online to find out what else she's done and where she is now. I've added a few novels to my To Read list as a result. I found that I've read some of their books already. And I think that I'll eventually have to try Emily St. John Mandel, though I haven't been thrilled by the few pages I've read of Last Night in Montreal. Her personal essay was so good and resonated with me, I have to think I'd love her novels. (And if not, that might be something worth thinking about-- can a writer write a memoir/personal essay that's wonderful and moving and a novel that falls flat? And why does that happen?)

I recommend this book to people who are like me, with an unabashed (maybe unwarranted?) love for NYC but also for anyone who has ever fallen in love with a city.

Kerry says

I was quite proud of myself (smug, really) because I had the great idea to give this to a friend who was leaving NYC for Silicon Valley. She was touched. So far so good.

Then I bought a copy for myself because I love half the writers in this collection (Roxane Gay! Dani Shapiro! Cheryl Strayed!) and was looking forward to discovering the others. So I read the book in a day, and loved it, but now I understand a little too well why most of the writers left.

I recommend this for anyone who: hates New York City, left New York City, can't afford New York City, wants to live in New York City someday or has to live in New York City for work but doesn't want to be here. Also great for people living in New York City who you're trying to convince to move to Portland, Oregon or Redondo Beach, California. Be careful about giving this book to current residents because they'll suddenly have wonderfully vivid anecdotes to rationalize why they should move.

Allan says

I loved this anthology of accounts written by women from many differing backgrounds and indeed eras of their experiences falling in love with, and then recognising the need to, leave New York at some point in their lives. Having a love for the city myself, albeit as an occasional tourist and through my reading, I enjoyed both the settings of the tales and the experience of the writers, and am delighted that I purchased the follow up to this book, Never Can Say Goodbye: Writers on Their Unshakable Love for New York at the same time as this one in The Strand just after Christmas. It won't be long until I read it, on the strength of this one...

MaryJane Brodeck says

The twenty-eight essays included in this book are inspired by the famous Joan Didion essay of the same name. Established and emerging writers share their love affair with New York, initially drawn by its manic energy and frenzied pace. As years pass, they also share the grief that blindsided them, when the city loses its magic and the pressures of New York's frenetic life wear thin on even the most resilient. After achieving success in their writing careers, the cons of living in New York outweigh the pros. As they mature, they realize that a writer doesn't need to live in NY to achieve success or prove themselves to anyone else.

The stories are varied, well written and thoughtful. The anecdotes are raw and will touch you emotionally. This book of essays is filled with brutally honest, compelling personal stories about the great, gleaming, seductive city of New York and the struggle of following your creative vision.

I enjoyed this book and would recommend it. I rated this book four stars for three reasons:

- Joan Didion's original essay wasn't included.
- Most of the essays were tightly written, but some of the essays were distracting to read because they rambled on.
- All of the essays were written by female writers. It's curious that this isn't mentioned in a blurb.

RATING: 4 STARS

*** I received an ARC in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Ayana says

I loved these memoirs. It made me remember that New York is not mine and nor do I belong to New York! There's a life out there other than what's here. When you're in New York for too long, you tend to forget that you can be successful somewhere else and looking back life in New York is hard. It's not all cracked up to be. You can never be rich enough to afford the ever changing city and sometimes with wealth comes disillusion.

All of these writers once thought that New York was theirs. Some people accomplished what they came to New York to do, others failed but ultimately we all have a metaphorical love affair while we are present in New York!

Megankellie says

Bless you citizen Kerry! I read this in one day.

Sitting very still in a Brooklyn apartment and trying not to spend money via not moving my limbs, I would google and Google and google, looking for Exactly This. I will add my search terms so hopefully versions of me trapped in despair that only a psychiatrist prescribing medical food would admit was caused by stupid New York: "people who leave New York and are happier" "why do I hate New York" "is New York terrible" "books about people who left New York and are happier"

I thought pointless poverty and the repulsive realization that the city is for rich people was my own personalized, private hell. Not true! It's hell for lots of people!

Joan Didion's essay that this collection is based on is extremely terrific (find it on the web) and the other ones let you know that beginning to simply sob all the time anywhere and everywhere is just the sign that your time in New York is ending. Like a body (New York) rejecting an organ (me). It's fun to say that slightly drunk at a wedding when all you really want to say about why you left is "why why why why why" and roll around and self-flagellate.

This book has a very narrow focus on women with writing dreams and once you read the Didion essay, you will see a tight relationship between influence and influencee. Some voices really stand out, and who knew a lady with writing/art/sex and the city-based aspirations going to the big city is such a GD trope. Maybe everyone? Har har? He he? Heh? Oh.

Welcome to articulation of feelings you didn't know you had, particularly if your sources of income come solely from the organs attached to the eyeballs you are using to read this.

I still miss that shithole.

John Treat says

Terrible book. I couldn't finish it, because it was like being trapped in a summer internship at Seventeen Magazine. Let me explain. All the contributors are women for some odd reason, and this is the effect: the contributors all "love" and "hate" New York in the same ditzzy emotional ways they love and hate the men (mostly losers) who seem to govern their choices over where to live. Look, it's just a city. No more, no less. Everyone in this book needs to get over themselves, and go live in Dubuque.

Tim says

The number of writers here who cite their sex lives as the first casualty of 9/11 is astonishing.

Jules says

Thank you to Netgalley and Sari Botton for this ARC in exchange for an honest review.

What a lovely book! Maybe that's a little sappy but for this gal who moved to NYC as a 16 y.o., left, came back, and moved away again I really knew what these contributors felt about the wonderful city of New York.

This book reveals the experiences, both positive and tragic and everything in between, of writers who moved to and from NYC at various stages of their careers. Each one was better than the previous and really opened up my mind to how others lived and loved and suffered through the city's enormous opportunities.

There is an assortment of experiences and easy to read. I found each one fascinating in its own right. Every writer had a unique perspective on life in the city and what it was like to move in and away and why. I lived vicariously through each person and how their lives passed. With each story I reminisced on life in a tiny apartment and the high activity levels that NYC has to offer. Struggling to find a career in writing wasn't my life there but I did struggle to make it. Because of this I really felt a slew of emotions for the writers.

Pick up this book if you want the real story behind life in the Big Apple. If you're an aspiring writer you'll really get a terrific notion of what you're up against.

Abbey says

Oh this book!

I picked it up in an independent book store in Brooklyn, the day before I too was leaving New York to head back home. It was only a weekend, but I felt the pain (and pangs!) described in this book accurately - as well as the fairy-tale love stories also described so wonderfully.

If you hate New York (1. i don't understand you) you will hate this book. But if you dream of it, with complexity, or if you live there, also with complexity, you will find great meaning in it. And of course, it's about all those larger themes - belonging, possibility, the changing nature of 'home', the changing nature of us as humans.

I docked a star off because it really should include the original Joan Didion essay that the title is based off. You've got to read it, if you read this book.

Terri says

“There is the ache of not having another place in the world where I might ever feel so alive and alone, invisible while visible, ever again. Alone in exactly the right kind of way.”

Goodbye to All That: Writers on Loving and Leaving New York is a collection of essays from writers who have loved, left and maybe still long for those days when they could write and live in New York.

(This review combines this essay collection with the second collection *Never Can Say Goodbye: Writers on Their Unshakable Love for New York* because both collections are so similar.)

The essays in both books represent a wide range of writers, from those who have always called the city their home to those who felt a pull or a calling to move to New York just to write, in many cases because pop culture has long established that “it’s just what you do.” They explore their lives, loves, random jobs to pay the rent, terrible places to live, and the love affair that they feel with the city—with a few referencing the movie *Manhattan* as to give some sort of a visual representation of that type of infatuation with a place.

What becomes clear in both collections is that most of the writers participating entered New York at a vastly different time than it appears today. Many talk about moving to the city in the seventies, eighties and nineties (almost all essayists arrived in the pre-9/11 era) when there were still a few reasonable rents to be found and Times Square was a danger zone. It is not at all surprising that many of these writers ended up leaving some time after 2000 with skyrocketing rents and a somewhat harder time breaking into and keeping your head above water in the writing industry.

In both collections, there are a mix of those who left and never came back, those who still visit, and those who have stayed the course because New York is the only place to be. But every single essay seems to present a longing, even if the writer stayed. There’s a longing to have that first feeling again of putting your feet on the sidewalk. There’s the longing for all-night food delivery or being able to walk to any type of establishment you want to without ever seeing the same face twice. There’s a longing for that one moment where the stars align before the city changes again.

These essays represent every reason why writers all over the world think that New York is the only place to be, but also wishing there was someplace more affordable or more forgiving than New York to thrive as a writer. Detroit keeps being recommended for those who want to have similar experiences to New York in the eighties, with just one problem—Detroit will never be New York. As one essayist puts it: “These days, being a creative person in New York is, in many cases, contingent upon inheriting the means to do it.”

But still I think these essays make a point that writers of all types should probably throw caution to the wind and have a New York period—whether that’s a decade, a summer or one really good weekend. It needs to be explored and observed to be believed, because very few people on this earth come from a place as crowded, diverse, and amazing as New York. And you can’t miss out on something like that.

Sara says

What a great collection! The essays are inspired by a Joan Didion essay of the same name. The stories are varied, well written and thoughtful. The anecdotes are raw and will touch you emotionally. These are warts and all tales of New York.

Song to listen to while reading: New York, I Love You But You’re Bringing Me Down by LCD Soundsystems.

Please leave your song of choice in the comments section.

I received an advanced reading copy from Net Galley.

Marisol says

This is a rough book to read, if you've recently hit the 5 years in New York mark and are contemplating an exit, if only to the 'burbs. It's a nostalgia ride, nostalgia for a place this is still in the present time, feeling the eventual loss before it's even happened.

But before I slip into an emotional reverie about living in or out of New York City, I want to comment on the actual collection of essays. Reading it felt a bit like an anthology version of the movie *Groundhog Day*, starting each essay anew only to follow the same cycle of Young Girl visits city, dreams of living there some day to be a Writer, does so, enjoys the challenge for awhile until debt/drugs/depression/ruined marriage(s) catch up to her, moves upstate or to a foreign country where she doesn't speak the language, reflects. Might as well hashtag the whole thing with #FirstWorldProblems.

One essay that stopped me in my tracks was Valerie Eagle's "View From the Penthouse." Eagle recounts a much different experience than all the others, telling of her struggle with drugs and homelessness that nearly took her life. Wow. Just wow. It's not to say that the other writers' experiences weren't authentic, or that an essayist has to deal with such heavy issues to produce good writing, but this is just a really powerful piece.

It leads me to wonder whether this volume would be that much better had Botton asked individuals other than female writers to include their experiences. Or if some of the authors had not penned self reflective pieces but instead interviewed (former) New Yorkers from other walks of life - chefs, first responders, finance guys, working class immigrants. Would they still wax romantic about the Subway and rent controlled apartments? What is it about this place that keeps the dreamers buying one way tickets in, and is it even possible to be a well-adjusted "lifer?" Because Didion was definitely on to something, and though I was left wanting a little more, Botton's collection is a worthy homage.

Sari Botton says

Well... full disclosure...I edited this book. And conceived of it in general. And wrote the intro, an essay, and more. So, I'm not exactly impartial.

KOMET says

My first-hand experience with New York City took place in August 1971 as a small boy on holiday to visit relatives there. In the intervening years, I've visited New York 4 other times, seeing it from a variety of angles and perspectives. But never with a desire to live there. "Too big, too crazy", I'd always say to myself. Notwithstanding that, I have had at times an overweening curiosity as to why other people (outsiders to the Big Apple, like me) have fallen so deeply, passionately IN LOVE with the metropolis that they have eagerly uprooted themselves to live and work there --- to experience "the New York state of life" and make it theirs.

Here in "GOODBYE TO ALL THAT: Writers on Loving and Leaving New York", the reader is given entrée to the heart and soul of the City through the essays of a number of writers, who, at various times in their lives, have lived there and thoroughly immersed themselves in its culture, spirit, and its seemingly inexhaustible, frenetic energy. What is also equally revelatory are the essays, whose writers are Native New Yorkers (e.g., Emily Carter Roiphe and Rebecca Wolff) who later in life left the City to live elsewhere. It is one thing to take on New York as an outsider and then to hear from someone who has known it from birth

through all its various changes and incarnations. From a city that tottered on the brink of bankruptcy and apparent irrevocable decline in the 1970s to retrenchment and steady renewal during the 1980s, to dizzying growth in corporate and personal wealth (a lot of it triggered by the dot com boom) in the 1990s, to the exponential boom in gentrification in its neighborhoods since 2000, New York seems to have now become more of a rarified, gated community for the wealthy and powerful with little space for struggling artists, actors, and writers to live comfortably and thrive there.

Reading these wonderful, insightful, and at times, deeply affecting essays --- with the exception of one essay I thoroughly disliked; the author, unlike the other essayists, spoke in the 3rd person with a smugness and arrogance that was very off-putting (to say the least) --- was one of the most thoroughly enjoyable reading experiences I've had this year. For anyone with the slightest curiosity or obsessive fascination with "the city that doesn't sleep", you won't go wrong by reading "GOODBYE TO ALL THAT."

David Wingrave says

Every essay:

I wanted to come to New York because it seemed cool, and where I'm from people wouldn't know cool if it froze their nuts! Then I did a bunch of stuff and got fed up and moved upstate because you get tired y'know? If only my younger self could see me! No, jk, they'd be proud, because this was the plan all along. And I am proud! And everyone I know is proud of me too! Including my younger self! Also, I still keep my metrocard in my wallet to remind me who I am: A person proud to have had such wonderful foresight re: metrocard in my wallet.

Ariana says

In reality, I think I'd give this a 3.5 stars. There were stories I loved, stories I liked, and some that couldn't hold my attention in the hour and a half I was waiting for my laundry to finish. However, that being said, I could definitely relate to most of the stories in here. And it made me once again nostalgic for a NYC I've never known. I wanted to be part of the NYC of the 60's 70's, and 80's. The NYC my mom grew up in. The NYC artists thrived in. I wanted to feel that kinetic energy these authors talked about. The loving and leaving of a NYC that was never going to be the same again. The problem is, I haven't left yet.

I couldn't help but feel I am part of the problem for a lot of these authors. I'm the young twenty-something that has helped gentrification thrive and prosper. I'm the one that has helped turn NYC from an edgy Beastie Boys video, into a corporate Starbucks. I'm the young artist that has, in all generality, pushed art out.

So if you want a book of stories to make you feel like you made the wrong decision by moving to NYC, but then ten seconds later, make you feel like you live in the best city in the world, definitely try your hand at this book. You will feel the entire spectrum of emotion.

Oh, and if you're looking for advice on moving here, leaving here, etc. don't bother. You will be just as confused as when you started.

Hannah Garden says

Of my friends who have left New York, most of them have left for the sort of torn, bittersweet reasons that most of the writers in this anthology have left for--more space is available elsewhere, more time, exhausted by the embarrassing rents, going to graduate school, having grown up here and wearied of it, realizing that the promise of a new self is just an inside job and you don't have to stay here to pull it off (and in some cases have to move on in order to)--and, by and large, are not dicks about it. There are exceptions, but for the most part.

This anthology is about like that--no one on the high horse about what a schmuck you are to still live here, everyone a little sad they had to let go, a lot of them missing it badly, many of them having returned since. The essays range from good to great and this is definitely worth reading if you're thinking about moving here, have moved here, or used to live here. I liked it.

Oh and also (and this is peripheral but is always for me kind of an extra gold standard gold star), it is totally the kind of book that makes you want to write your own story about New York. I love books that make you feel like you are part of the world and have things to share with it. Everyone write your essay! And send them to me i like to read.

Lauren F. says

If you've ever daydreamed about escaping the city you love, wondered how people manage to pursue creative careers in NYC, or returned from a weekend away with more reluctance than relief, read this book. The all-too-relatable topic is why I picked it up, but it turns out this is also a lovingly curated collection of some of the best contemporary writers and essayists who have—at some point—passed through the five boroughs. I read it cover to cover, and if there were a sequel, I'd read that too.

Jessica says

I thoroughly enjoyed this collection of writers' experiences living, loving, and leaving New York. Most relatable for the likes of me in terms of living here now (going on eight years), and because they are all essays in tribute to one of my favorite essays of all time, Joan Didion's "Goodbye to All That." All of these writers have lived different lives and at different times -- there's a range of ages, a range of 'New Yorks,' but every New York is the same. Perhaps I wasn't buying heroin or waving goodbye to New York as I flew to New Zealand, but there are similar threads through each essay, and it mainly has to do with that character of this city; that emotional relationship you've found yourself in with a location that lives and breathes just like that lover that loved you and dumped you and reclaimed you and sometimes you just left without looking back. Or you embraced it all the more. Almost how similar points of view can produce such different reactions.
