

# City



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Named by Newsweek magazine to its list of "Fifty Books for Our Time." For sixteen years William Whyte walked the streets of New York and other major cities. With a group of young observers, camera and notebook in hand, he conducted pioneering studies of street life, pedestrian behavior, and city dynamics. *City: Rediscovering the Center* is the result of that research, a humane, often amusing view of what is staggeringly obvious about the urban environment but seemingly invisible to those responsible for planning it. Whyte uses time-lapse photography to chart the anatomy of metropolitan congestion. Why is traffic so badly distributed on city streets? Why do New Yorkers walk so fast-and jaywalk so incorrigibly? Why aren't there more collisions on the busiest walkways? Why do people who stop to talk gravitate to the center of the pedestrian traffic stream? Why do places designed primarily for security actually worsen it? Why are public restrooms disappearing? "The city is full of vexations," Whyte avers: "Steps too steep; doors too tough to open; ledges you cannot sit on...It is difficult to design an urban space so maladroitly that people will not use it, but there are many such spaces." Yet Whyte finds encouragement in the widespread rediscovery of the city center. The future is not in the suburbs, he believes, but in that center. Like a Greek agora, the city must reassert its most ancient function as a place where people come together face-to-face.

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## 标签

城市设计

城市

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## 评论

非学者写得专业好书，思想深度超过了大多数的学术研究。而且，我怀疑很多城市设计者就是因为没有认真读过此书，才催生出一大堆糟糕的设计

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这本是2009年再版版本，加了序言，巨厚的书，一如序言所称之为“magnum opus”。内容上是Whyte经典研究的扩充综合，还是从街道观察入手，分析人、活动、体验、空间，进而分析城市中心的意义，衰退的问题，未来的可能。个人认为：研究很微观很巧妙，但是到后半部分的宏观论述显得很没底气，语境上不是很“规划”，但是也不是当时城市设计崛起的那个主流论调。结论上，认为“城市中心区”是重要的人类生活形式，这个观点可以说历久弥新，但是是一些机制的阐释并不很明晰。我自己才疏学浅不确定是我没get到，还是因为被别的理论带跑了。

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The street is a stage.  
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