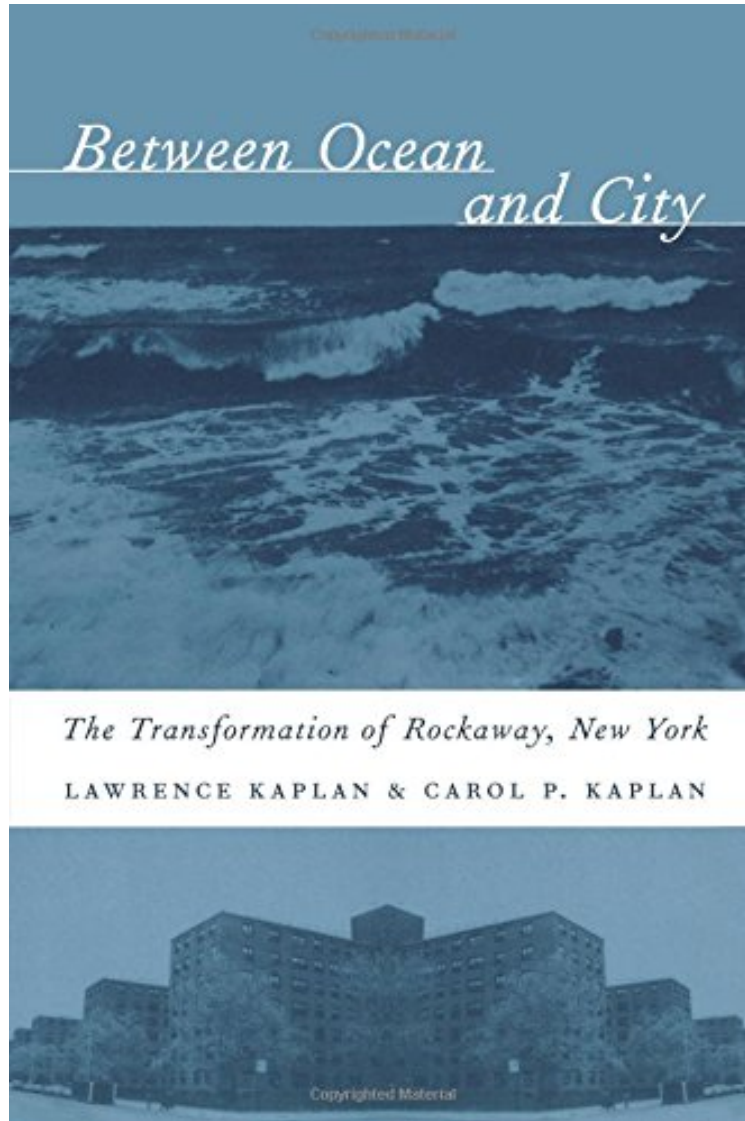


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Between Ocean and City (Columbia History of Urban Life)

Lawrence Kaplan, Carol P. Kaplan

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Lawrence Kaplan, Carol P. Kaplan : Between Ocean and City (Columbia History of Urban Life) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Between Ocean and City (Columbia History of Urban Life):

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A Diamond in the RoughBy RyanTo begin with, I must congratulate Lawrence and Carol Kaplan on being bold enough to write on the complex pressure-cooker that is Rockaway. It's a subject that has received little or no previous academic treatment, and their study opens up the door to further critical engagement of the peninsula. Now to the review:POSITIVES: It's refreshing to see an academic (read:

non-memoir) style treatment of the Rockaways. The Kaplans' sourcing is thorough and their bibliography is almost as compelling as the work itself. Writing style is at once professional and personal, engaging the reader without losing command of the serious subject matter at hand. **NEGATIVES:** The book's chronology is jumpy at best, getting mired in the 1950's and 1960's for several chapters before rushing through the 80's and 90's. This jumping makes certain portions feel repetitive: indeed, the same quotes are used to make the same points in several parts of the book. Furthermore, the authors fail to study questions of crime/drugs/gangs that make up a huge part of the peninsula's recent past; their treatment of education is cursory at best and comes too late to tie in with the rest of the work. Finally, the title--"Between Ocean and City"--introduces a fascinating idea: are Rockaway's woes a direct result of its constant limbo between urban center and resort town? Though the authors hint at the idea when they contrast Moses's stance on projects/Shorefront Parkway with the Chamber's more commercial approach, the theme is never fully elaborated, leaving readers wanting more. **TAKE-AWAY:** Read it. Despite its organizational blemishes, this study dares to go where few others do: to the heart of Rockaway's problems. For a social history, it's a page turner. Worth every cent.

Rockaway Beach was once a popular seaside resort in south Queens with a small permanent population. Shortly after World War II, large parts of this narrow peninsula between the ocean and the bay became some of New York City's worst slums. A historian who grew up in the community and his wife, a social worker, together present an illuminating account of this transformation, exploring issues of race, class, and social policy and offering a significant revision of the larger story of New York City's development. In particular, the authors qualify some of the negative assessments of Robert Moses, suggesting that the "Power Broker" attempted for many positive initiatives for Rockaway. Based on extensive archival research and hundreds of hours of interviews with residents, urban specialists, and government officials past and present, *Between Ocean and City* is a clear-eyed and harrowing story of this largely African American community's struggles and resiliency in the face of grinding poverty, urban renewal schemes gone wrong, and a forced ghettoization by the sea.

A clear-eyed and harrowing story of a largely African American community's struggles in the face of grinding poverty, urban renewal schemes gone wrong, and a forced ghettoization by the sea. (www.farrockaway.com) This study is required reading for historians... Highly recommended. (Choice) a photographic portrait through fifteen well-chosen images, each really saying more than a thousand words (Eugenie L. Birch *The Journal of American History*) Overall this is a very good book...that is worth the time of any scholar with an interest in urban development...I plan to have my doctoral students read it. (Robert K. Whelan *Journal of Urban Affairs*) About the Author Lawrence Kaplan, who has taught British and American history at the City College of New York, spent his formative years in Rockaway. Carol P. Kaplan is a practicing social worker and an associate professor at Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service.