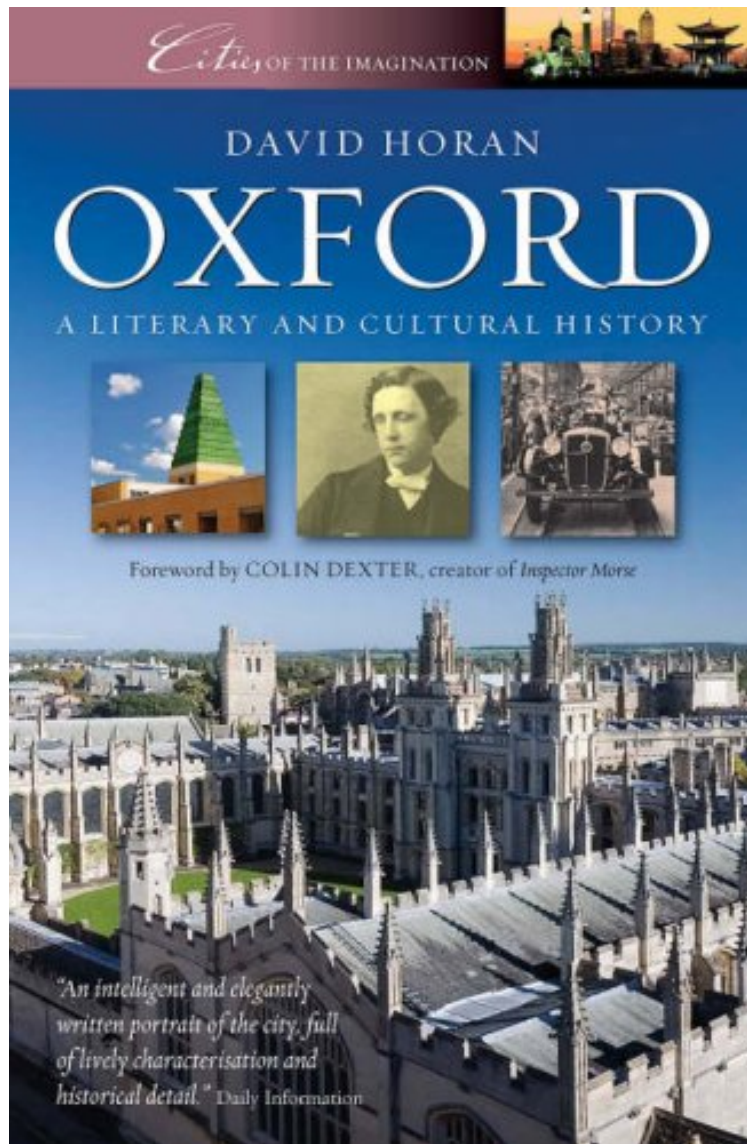


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Oxford (Cities of the Imagination)

David Horan

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David Horan : Oxford (Cities of the Imagination) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Oxford (Cities of the Imagination):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Walking the Streets beneath the dreaming Spires By Elisabeth Price There are many books and guides about Oxford. I spent the most wonderful nine years of my life there, getting degrees, getting married, and getting children, so I am extremely fussy about Oxford books, feeling they rarely do justice to the history, scholarship, and wonderful qualities of that Utopia. And Utopia it is, having been in the charge

of the most erudite personalities of each of its era, and having its youthful zest and vigor restored with each successive batch of undergraduates, each brilliant in some way or other, who arrive eager to do well and have fun and adventures in their all too brief three to four years of study for their first degrees. There are very few youngsters of an academic bent that it doesn't suit - hence the hothouse atmosphere of intense striving, ennobling ambition and the love of life, God, man and nature, that underlies the struggle to learn and teach and practice the arts and sciences in a spirit of Enlightenment and quest for truth. Not that it doesn't have its dark sides, some very dark indeed, but the mere existence of those humanistic ideals and the pursuit of them by bright young people in carefully preserved old buildings or daringly conceived new ones, makes the University seem unique and wonderful. David Horan, sometime editor of the town newspaper, has his feet on the ground, but also walks the streets and imbibes the culture of Oxford of today with plenty of knowledge of the history of the place, delight in the quirks and curiosities, and respect for the amazing and often weird minds and personalities that have shaped the University and the City so far. The "so far" is important: Horan has a sense of the possibilities of the future and shows wonder and amazement at what has been accomplished in just the last century at Oxford. The fact that he is a journalist rather than a scholar makes his book refreshing to read - he has an earthy approach to refinements of the mind, and so I relive and rejoice in a time, more than fifty years ago, that seemed to be gone forever. It is much easier to die contented if one believes that one's survivors will not only preserve good aspects of the past, but will, even more significantly, persist in the struggle for truth and beauty and enlightenment that's been the struggle of every generation. Horan makes one believe it just because he writes a book of the popular culture and seems to be considering realities. So Oxford (Cities of the Imagination) has become one of my favorite books at bedtime in my old age, and I am grateful for it. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Absolute Favorite Oxford Guidebook By M.C.D. This is my absolute favorite guidebook of Oxford. I lived there for three years, and it captured the spirit of both the place I knew, and illuminated all of the layers I knew nothing about.

Celebrated by Matthew Arnold as the "city of the dreaming spires", Oxford has a long and illustrious history as one of Europe's oldest university towns. Its colleges, libraries and museums, ranging from the medieval to the modern, testify to the city's academic traditions and the dominant influence of "gown" over "town". But there is another Oxford, the city of car factories and housing estates, high-tech research and alternative culture. The University City: the seat of learning, inside the colleges, river and gardens, dons and students, "town and gown" conflict, the other university The Writer's City: Oxford loved and hated by Dr Johnson, Oscar Wilde and CS Lewis; Alice in Wonderland, Zuleika Dobson, and Inspector Morse. The Other Oxford: cars and marmalade; saints and sinners, museums and mausoleums, tramps and tourists.

"David Horan is consistently readable, whether he is attempting to breathe fresh life into some well-known aspect of Oxford's story, or drawing our attention to some unconsidered trifle" Oxford Times "Highly recommended" Oxford Mail "Not just 'another' book about Oxford, but one that brims with unusual and unexpected delights" Colin Dexter About the Author David Horan is an Oxford-based writer and was, for ten years, literary editor of the Oxford Times.