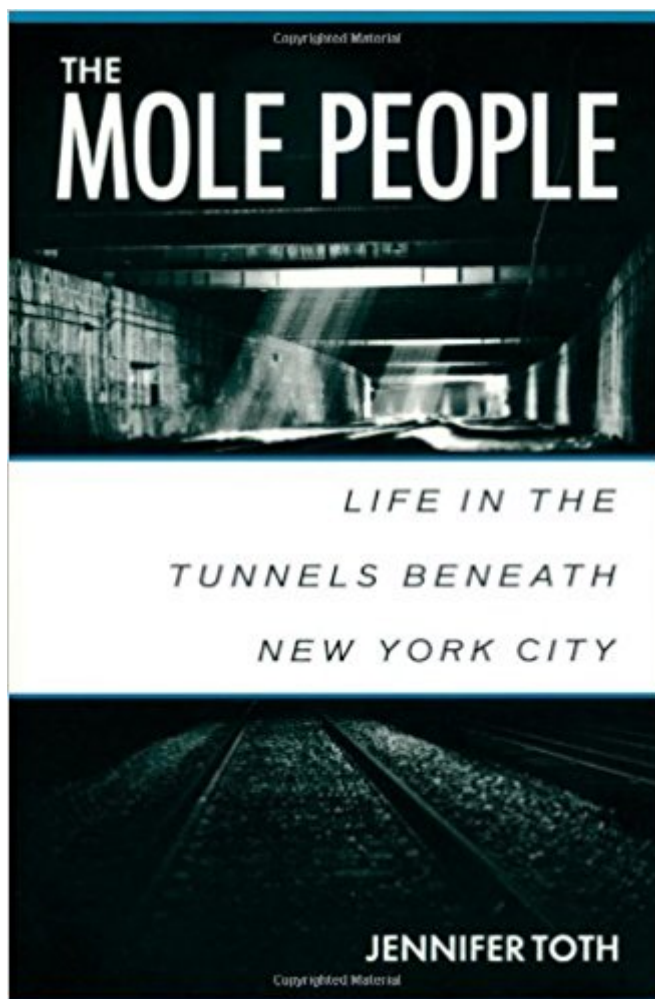


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# The Mole People: Life In The Tunnels Beneath New York City



## Synopsis

Thousands of people live in the subway, railroad, and sewage tunnels that form the bowels of New York City and this book is about them, the so-called mole people. They live alone and in communities, in subway tunnels and below subway platforms and this fascinating study presents how and why people move underground, who they are, and what they have to say about their lives and the "topside" world they've left behind.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Alligators breeding in the sewers of New York City is an urban legend; thousands of people living in the tunnels beneath New York is not. Ms. Toth has written a compelling, compassionate and extraordinary documentary about the "Mole People."

Toth's firsthand account of the sad, bizarre subculture of people who live in New York's abandoned subway tunnels and sewage lines. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

It's been two weeks since I finished my book and I still think about everything I read. Amazing book, very well written.

Worth the read.

One of my favorite books of all time.

I had been wanting to read this book for years. finally ordered it and read it. "mole people" do exist. and its an interesting account on one womans interactions with individuals living under the city and some's struggle with getting out. i read this book with great pause. thinking about the experience with each chapter's close. if you are interested in this topic i highly suggest you order your copy. it took me a few years to get to it but im super glad i did. nice work toth.

Generally quite interesting, but as the book wore on it started to read more like a sociology text than a phenomenon involving New York City's history, and the impetus that inspired and supported the construction of these amazing layers of the subterranean city. We had endless life histories of these marginal (and pretty boring) people who wound up in the tunnels, where I would much have preferred some in-depth historical/physical discussion of how those underground places came to be in the first place!

Living in NJ and visiting NYC you do not realize what goes on below the surface it is so true though homeless live someplace.

Written back in 1993, 'The Mole People' might be a little dated, but I'm certain that the underground communities still not only exist but flourish beneath NYC and other cities. Jennifer Toth has written of the colorful background of the "under-city" and the colorful people who live there. Her study is literally peppered with stories straight from the mouths of those who live below, telling in their own way of their fears, their lives, their creed, their reasons, and most of all their humanity. The tunnels are everywhere: Port Authority Station, Grand Central Station, Penn Station, Amtrak tunnels along the Hudson River in upper Manhattan, Amtrak tunnel under Hell's Kitchen along the West Side, under City Hall, below the theater district on Broadway, Lafayette Street Station, the Bowery tunnels, the Lexington Line, and more. Toth went into all of them, studying the societies as far down as seven levels underground. She found loners, families, communities (like Bernard Issac's under Riverside Park), some complete with appointed "mayors". There's the "Condos", a natural underground cavern where two hundred people live. There's an old waiting room, complete with crystal chandelier and grand piano. A ninety-two foot merchant sailing ship was found under Front Street, as part of the landfill. Toth uncovers many mysteries in the deep. Ranging from holes littered with needles and feces to vast chambers with stolen electricity, wallpaper, carpet, TV's and VCR's, kitchen utensils and food supplies, the "mole people" are a diverse people. Many suffer from mental

illness and drug abuse, others range from illegal aliens to those who have Master's Degrees from "upstairs". All seem dispossessed in one way or another, whatever the reason for their descent into the tunnels. Toth talks about the organizations to assist the tunnel people, like ADAPT and HELP, while Bernard talks about the same organizations as having their own, separate, job-saving, money-making agendas that go against what the tunnel people want or need. The book contains black-and-white photos (though not enough), footnotes, bibliography, and an index. While Toth's study is well done and documented, I liked the fact that she let the people speak for themselves, dedicating a great portion of the book to their own words. This study is interesting, especially if you are fascinated by subcultures or just like "underground stories". I liked the book and recommend it. Enjoy!

Hard to believe that this stuff is real, but the book was really well done. Even if it isn't as true as the author makes out, it's an interesting premise that there are entire societies beneath our feet.

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