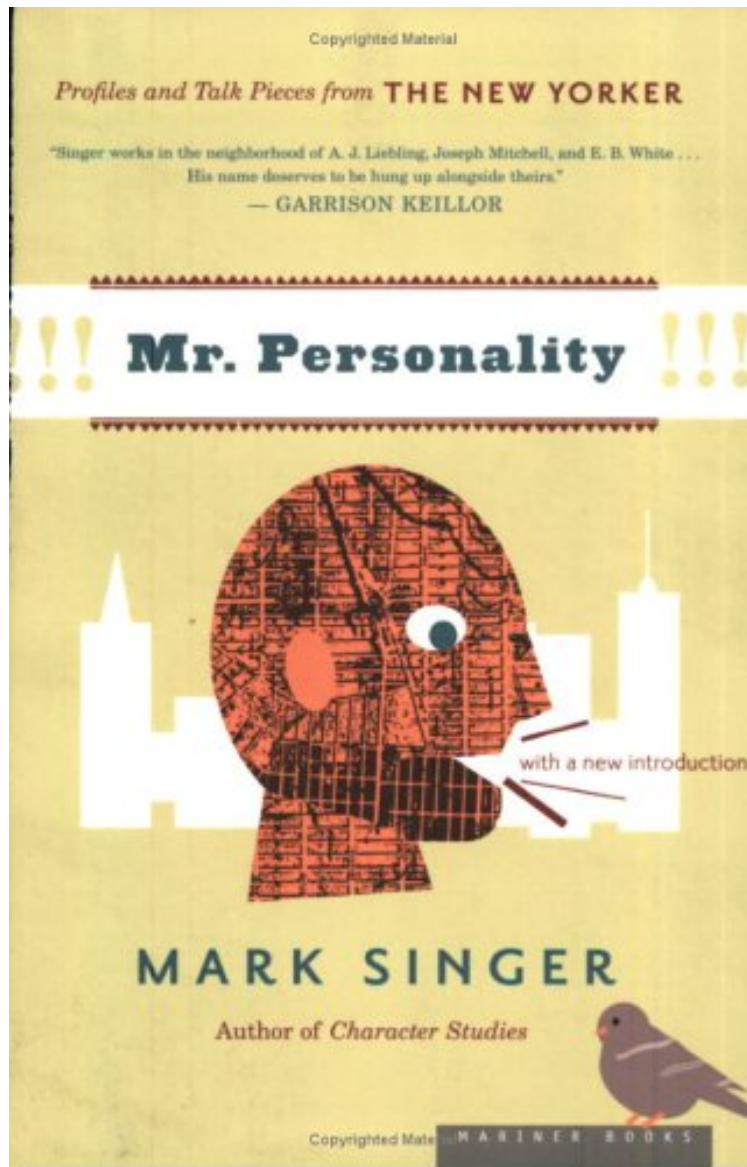


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Mr. Personality: Profiles and Talk Pieces from The New Yorker

Mark Singer

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Mark Singer : Mr. Personality: Profiles and Talk Pieces from The New Yorker before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mr. Personality: Profiles and Talk Pieces from The New Yorker:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. New Yorker pieces: wonderfully entertainingBy BomojazMark Singer is a writer for The New Yorker magazine and collected here are 25 relatively short (2-3 pages) "Talk of the Town" pieces as well as 8 much longer "Profiles" written by him during the 1970s and '80s. The Talk articles are

quirky human interest stories that spotlight unusual characters in and about the 5 boroughs of New York City: a group of handball players from Brooklyn, a street musician in Manhattan, a fruit seller named Tomato Bob, a "found objects" sculptor in SoHo. The Profiles are of the same mold, but are more leisurely developed and expansive. These include essays on the comic writer Goodman Ace, an art dealer named Graham Arader, a group of "court buffs" who as a hobby attend trials at the State Supreme Court in Brooklyn, and the Brennan brothers who are luxury apartment superintendents. Singer's style is light and humorous, and his goal is to entertain as well as to inform. If you want an inkling on why The New Yorker is often considered America's best-ever periodical, reading this collection of Mark Singer articles will help you get one. Most enjoyable.

A superb collection, Mr. Personality brings together the best of Mark Singer's profiles and Talk of the Town pieces from The New Yorker (1977-1989). In these thirty-three witty and offbeat pieces, Singer presents a slice of New York and its citizens in a way that only he can. From prolific filmmaker Errol Morris and a family of superintendents to one of the last great zipper-fixers, a court buff in Brooklyn, and Mr. Personality himself, these remarkable portraits offer something for every reader.

From Publishers Weekly Ever since William Shawn hired him, at 24, in 1974, to write Talk of the Town pieces for the New Yorker, Tulsa-born Mark Singer (Funny Money) has been a genuine New Yorker, whose delightfully whimsical interviews with fellow townspeople have brought joy to readers everywhere. Among these 31 reprinted pieces are portraits not only of three eminent retirees radio humorist Goodman Ace, TV news producer Gordon Manning and Bill Schifrin, who sold wedding rings for 40 years on W. 47th St. but also of zipper repairman Herbert Stiefel, knife sharpener Lenny Binelli, penal museum curator Joe Baranyi, pigeon mumbler Patrick Sottile and auto wreck renter Larry Cohen. Other pieces profile the five Brennan brothers, who live in and superintend East Side luxury apartment houses; former traveling bow-tie salesman and active theatrical dealmaker Sam Cohen; and sidewalk violin serenader Rubin Levine, who has a repertoire of 30,000 tunes ("if time permits"). There's something, and somebody, here for everyone. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Readers who think The New Yorker too snobby will find new pleasures in this selection from its brief "Talk-of-the-Town" sketches and more lengthy "Profiles." His tales piquant as humorous short fiction, his dialogue reminiscent of New Yorker cartoons, Singer follows some marvelous characters street musicians, apartment supers, murder trial fans through their daily rounds in New York. He gets close to a few power centers, where moxie finds its ultimate reward. But his favorite subject is a middle-class male whose simple passion for his job or hobby allows him to flourish in a hostile big-city environment. The effect can be inspirational even when the tone is not. A good choice for public libraries, certainly for those in the New York area. Donald Ray, Manhattanville Coll. Lib., Purchase, N.Y. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. About the Author Mark Singer has been a staff writer for The New Yorker since 1974. He is the author of Funny Money, Mr. Personality, Citizen K, and Somewhere in America. He lives in New York City.