



## Do Not Pass Go: From the Old Kent Road to Mayfair

*Tim Moore*

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A book that tells the story of London since the thirties through the 28 streets, stations and utilities of the Monopoly board. In the wonderful world of Monopoly it still only cost £50 to buy a house in Islington, you can move around London with the shake of a dice and even park your car for free.

In *Do Not Pass Go* Tim Moore, belying his reputation as a player who always paid that £10 fine rather than take a Chance, fearlessly tackles the real thing and along the way tells the story of a game and the city that frames it. Sampling the rags and the riches he stays in a hotel in Mayfair and one in the Old Kent Road, enjoys quality time with Dr Crippen in Pentonville Prison and even winds up at the wrong end of the Water Works pipe. And, solving all the mysteries you'll have pondered whilst languishing in jail and many other you certainly wouldn't, Tim Moore reveals how Pall Mall got its name, which three addresses you won't find in your A-Z and why the sorry cul-de-sac that is Vine Street has a special place in the heart of Britain's most successful Monopoly champion.

The stirring travelogue of one man's erratic progress around those 28 streets, stations and utilities, *Do Not Pass Go* is also an epic and lovingly researched history of London's wayward progress in the 66 years since the launch of the world's most popular board game

## Do Not Pass Go: From the Old Kent Road to Mayfair Details

Date : Published October 2nd 2003 by Vintage (first published 2002)

ISBN : 9780099433866

Author : Tim Moore

Format : Paperback 340 pages

Genre : Travel, Nonfiction, Humor, History



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# From Reader Review Do Not Pass Go: From the Old Kent Road to Mayfair for online ebook

## Soho Black says

Despite never really expecting to, I've long enjoyed Tony Hawks' books. The humour and invention with which he manages to make a travelogue into something that is part challenge and part joke is wonderful to read and a lot of fun to boot. He's dragged me off to places I've never been and always made sure I'd enjoy the ride.

Tim Moore, on the other hand, plans to take me somewhere I have been before. He's planning a trip around the Monopoly board and the London streets they are named after. I've played Monopoly many times, although I'd never say it's my favourite game and, as a Londoner myself, I've walked on many of the streets featured, if only because I had a reason to be there. But I've never been to a street purely because I'd seen it on the Monopoly Board and I certainly wouldn't claim to be obsessed with the game.

After discussing his own history with the game and the fascination of many with London, Moore starts his Monopoly tour hundreds of miles outside London, in Leeds. For this is where the origins of Monopoly in the UK begin, at the headquarters of John Waddington, who first bought the UK rights to the game and set about publishing a version with London streets, rather than American ones.

Moore follows the journey that Norman Watson and Marjorie Phillips of Waddington's would have taken into London to work out the names of their streets. Like them, and many travellers from Leeds since, he arrived at King's Cross. Unlike many in King's Cross, however, Moore has nothing more risqué than Monopoly on his mind, even if he does end up playing it with a pre-op Brazilian transsexual. Let the game and tour begin.

Moore's next roll is an eight, which takes him on to Whitehall. From here, the course of the book is set, as Moore travels from square to square or, more accurately from coloured set to set, investigating the history of the streets and the people that live and work on them. Not missing a trick, he also takes us on side steps through the non-street squares, visiting a prison, a water works, the electric company and the stations and also managing to test whether "Free Parking" is actually possible within the limits of Monopoly London.

Apart from a few interesting diversions, however, the majority of Moore's tour takes much the same form. He goes somewhere and talks about the past of the streets or the area. Whilst occasionally fascinating, most of this is terribly dull. Indeed, most of the past he comments upon seems to have been taken from a limited number of sources: a Mass Observation Report, the words of Harold Clunn and a 1933 Directory of London. It is only when Moore breaks from his journey around the board that things get a little more interesting and amusing.

In fairness, what seems to let Moore down is that Monopoly London is rather dull. It takes in virtually none of London's major tourist attractions, instead covering the major shopping areas, some residential but mostly business and entertainment areas. This last wouldn't be so bad if what Moore actually did was look into the entertainment. Instead, it seems that all he does is look at the buildings from the outside and bemoan their past.

Moore's writing isn't the best, either. He seems to be quite smug about the whole thing, as if he's imparting knowledge that no-one else has. It doesn't seem to occur to him that there isn't anyone else who cares enough

to have gone looking for it before him. There are some snippets of fascination, but even these seem to be presented with that same smug expression. The declaration on the book's cover that Moore is "a rare comic talent" seems to be misleading as well. His comic talent appears only rarely and when it does, it's often at the expense of someone else, rather than something genuinely funny. Again, there are exceptions to this, with the "Free Parking" chapter being perhaps the best of them, but there's little to make you laugh aloud.

Much like Keith Lowe's "Tunnel Vision", the whole book feels like a wasted opportunity. It's a wonderful idea, both for fans of Monopoly and London alike, but there feels as if there could be so much more behind it. Admittedly history was never my favourite subject and it may be that someone with more of an interest in the past than I may get more from this book than I have. But Moore's meandering journey around London lacks the sparkle and wit of a Tony Hawks book and contains little excitement or anticipation. Very quickly, you come to know roughly what's going to happen next, with only the where being undecided. It may be this aspect that makes the side trips seem more interesting by comparison.

If you're looking for information on the history of London, you may well be better off buying a history book. The information will be presented in no more interesting a fashion, but there will be more of what you're looking for. As a tourist guide or travelogue, "Do Not Pass Go" is next to useless, taking you to places that were, more often than to places that are.

If you're a fan of Tony Hawks, looking for something in a similar style but a little closer to home, as I was, I can only advise to avoid this. The differences in interest and information are enough to make Moore seem worse than he probably really is, but the whole book for me felt like a bit of a let down.

The only way this might interest you is if you're a complete Monopoly addict, which seems to be why Moore was interested in the first place. If you've wondered about the streets behind the game, but have never had the opportunity to visit, this may be of some fascination. For those Monopoly addicts living in or close to the city, you'd probably be better off buying a Travelcard and having a wander around on your own time. If you choose to read this instead, start with low expectations, as that's the only way you're likely to be rewarded.

This review may also appear under my name at any or all of [www.ciao.co.uk](http://www.ciao.co.uk), [www.thebookbag.co.uk](http://www.thebookbag.co.uk), [www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com), [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) and [www.dooyoo.co.uk](http://www.dooyoo.co.uk)

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### **Anita Crotty says**

If you love London — especially its quirky geography and wandering lanes — and appreciate dry British wit, you will enjoy the premise of this book. It's deeply marred by the casual inclusion of so many transphobic/homophobic "jokes" felt like they belonged in a book 50 years older, and were frankly shocking for a book published in 2002.

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### **Jim says**

Sometimes I feel that many travel writers look at Bill Bryson and think that maybe if they could sell half as many as he does, they'd be damn happy with their lot. So why not try and do a similar take? Enter Tim Moore. To be fair, Moore does have some original ideas for his tours and this is a cracker, touring the London of the Monopoly Board. Why didn't I think of that?! It allows him to dig up some off-beat facts, but

I couldn't help but think that I could too with a broadband connection and enough time to spare.

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### **Vaughan says**

A modern-day romp through the properties on the British (and Australian) version of Monopoly. I loved the tour through the Old Kent Road to Mayfair.

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### **Rachel Lofthouse says**

Out of the four Tim Moore books, I have read to date Do Not Pass Go is my least favourite. Though the content is well planned, researched and written, it lacked the humour of the other three books. I also found it a hard going in places and this is reflected in the time it took me to read. The main reason why I didn't enjoy Do Not Pass Go as much could be because Monopoly was not a game frequently played in my childhood. Unlike Moore, who grew up in a city, I grew up in a location with beaches, parkland, woodland and coastal paths. A place where children spent most of their time outside. Monopoly was too long-winded and there was never enough time to reach the later stages of the game. Therefore, the humour references that relate to the game may have passed me by. For me, this book reflected the game by going on a little bit too long.

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### **Tim Corke says**

One of the most original travel books I've read: following the history of the iconic Monopoly streets of London. A fascinating insight into the history of the capital by tracking the Browns, Oranges, Light Blues, Yellows, Reds, Dark Pinks, Greens, Dark Blues and not to mention the stations and the utility companies.

Yes, the research is easily accessible but the production of the final book and adventure is well thought through and very readable. I was brought up on Monopoly and whilst Moore appears to have had a capitalist and cut throat approach to the game, for me of was something to respect and enjoy for what it was. I can well understand the delight in finding out factual nuggets about each location and would expect this adventure would be one many wishes they'd thought of too.

Take a Chance with one ;)

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### **James Cridland says**

Not a big Monopoly fan, but certainly a big fan of this book. Tim Moore does his research before going to a place, so he knows the kinds of things to look out for as well as the questions to ask: which makes this book really very enjoyable. I've learnt a lot of trivia from this book too - did you know that, for example, more people shop at Selfridge's every year than live in Australia? His writing is amusing and clever; his observations all the more valid for the research he does; and he comes across as a very human writer. If you live in London, or visit regularly, you'll get a lot out of this book - probably why I read most of it on holiday in the USA.

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### **Michael says**

this book was loaned to me by a friend. I had never heard of Tim Moore before this. Tim is an English comedienne and author. This book is a few years old, coming out in 2002. The basic premise is that the author was going to travel around London by following his roll of die and going around the Monopoly board, the UK edition. I raised an eyebrow at the premise, but I did get into it, and thoroughly enjoyed his journey as he digs out the history of each of the streets and therefore an interesting backstory on the city of London itself. And a quite fun read.

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### **Robert says**

A look at the 28 addresses on the UK Monopoly board. This book was written in 2002, so it's an interesting snapshot of London after the neoliberal 90s, but before the last 15 years of real-estate feeding frenzy. (It's also a snapshot of humor writing from 2002, which can be a bit much). Moore shares the history of all the places he visited, sometimes going back to the Roman era, with special emphasis on how they would have looked and felt to a visitor in the mid 1930s, when the UK version of monopoly was developed. Do Not Pass Go is full of facts and history, and is great for provoking further research into the history of London. At times the author is clearly trying too hard to provoke a laugh, but even the clunkier chapters were full of history and lore, & I kept reading despite Moore's cringier attempts at 'humor'. The "Advance to Go", "Free Parking", & "Mr Monopoly" chapters stood out as my favorites. Finally this book has whet my appetite for board games and also a working public transit system.

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### **russell barnes says**

Second time around a whole lot more satisfying than my first effort oooh, a full 5 or 6 years ago.

There's less about the author and his parsimonious nature which my youthful (ha) self found utterly outrageous, caught in the midst of a Moore love-in as I was. I also didn't like the large format paperback.

This time - and with a much more standard size tome care of Strutton Ground's Oxfam Bookshop - found the Tim's unusual absence leaves moore (ho ho) space for the sort of interesting nuggets about London that naturally appeal to my pub quiz brain. Did you know more people shop in Selfridges each year than live in Australia, or that there are more Cypriots in London than in all but one city in Cyprus.

Throw in some loosely-framed history of Monopoly and you've got an almost-perfect holiday book to annoy your wife with by randomly reading out passages whilst she's trying to sunbathe/drink wine.

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### **Frank Jacobs says**

Highly original or tediously convoluted, opinion is firmly split on this book – but one thing is for sure: Tim Moore's attempt at dissecting the British capital by exploring the streets on its Monopoly board does provide

the tired trope of the London guidebook with a never-used-before angle, and because of this sheds some new light on the city, all of which could have been a bit more enjoyable if Mr. Moore had employed less of his ample talent trying to live up to that damning epithet splashed across the front of the book: “The new Bill Bryson”.

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### **Sean O'Reilly says**

I'm not a great reader of travel books but when I noticed it on a charity book stall it looked amusing. I'm not sure but I think there was a recommendation from Stuart Maconie on the back cover. The Foreword was laugh out loud funny in places and so I tucked into the book eagerly. Unfortunately I found the Foreword to be the best part of the book. The rest was informative and vaguely amusing in places but no better than that.

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### **Alex says**

I'm a Monopoly lover, so the premise of this book really appealed to me. I loved it more than I could have imagined. Not many books make me laugh out loud, but this one did over and over again. So, a very funny book, but also a clever one because Tim Moore uses the Monopoly board as a way of travelling around London and giving a social history of the places on the famous board.

This is just tremendous. Please read it.

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### **Gillian says**

Great if you like Monopoly, London, history and humour. Would read again

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### **Bryony says**

A great read but would love to see a revised version with illustrations to save me looking places up online every 5 minutes!!!!

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