Título:

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Cities speak, and this little book helps us understand their language. Considering the urban landscape not from the abstract perspective of an urban planner but from the viewpoint of an attentive observer, Urban Code offers 100 "lessons"--maxims, observations, and bite-size truths, followed by short essays--that teach us how to read the city. This is a user's guide to the city, a primer of urban literacy, at the pedestrian level. The reader (like the observant city stroller) can move from "People walk in the sunshine" (lesson 1) to "Street vendors are positioned according to the path of the sun" (lesson 2); consider possible connections between the fact that "Locals and tourists use the streets at different times" (lesson 41) and "Tourists stand still when they're looking at something" (lesson 68); and weigh the apparent contradiction of lesson 73, "Nightlife hotspots increase pedestrian traffic" and lesson 74, "People are afraid of the dark."

 A lesson may seem self-evident ("Grocery stores are important local destinations"--of course they are!) but considered in the context of other lessons, it becomes part of a natural logic. With Urban Code, we learn what to notice if we want to understand the city. We learn to detect patterns in the relationships between people and the urban environment. Each lesson is accompanied by an icon-like image; in addition to these 100 drawings, thirty photographs of street scenes illustrate the text. The photographs are stills from films shot in the Manhattan neighborhood of SoHo; the lessons are inspired by the authors' observations of SoHo, but hold true for any cityscape.