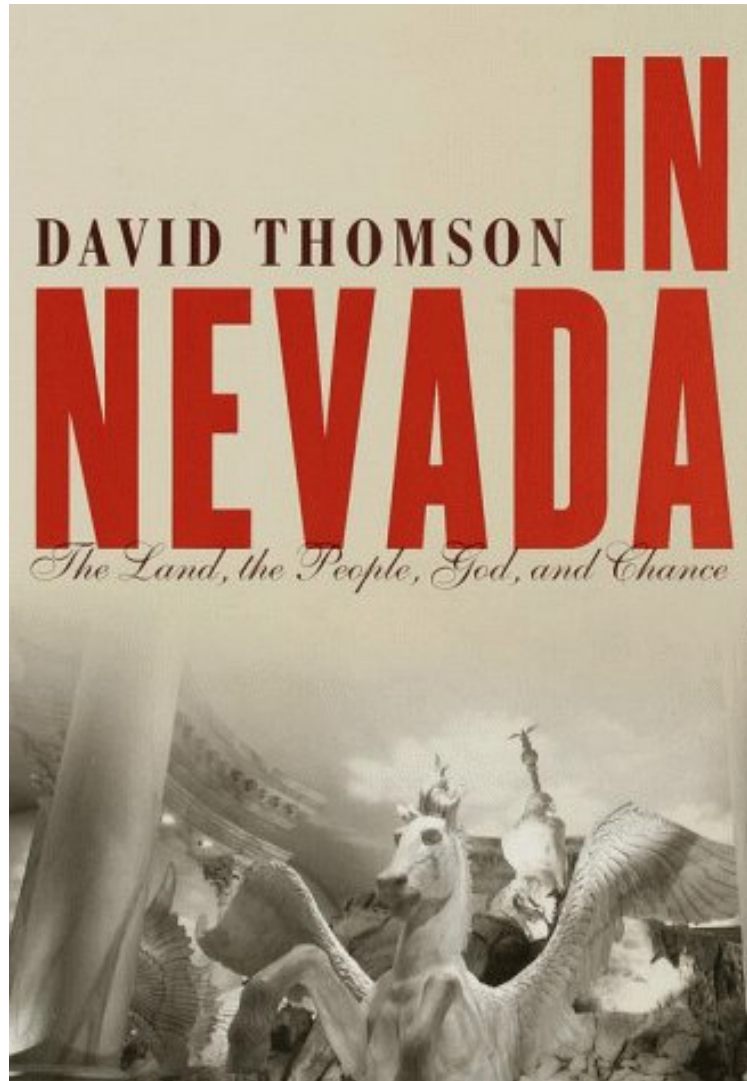


[PDF] In Nevada: The Land, the People, God, and Chance

In Nevada: The Land, the People, God, and Chance

David Thomson

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David Thomson : In Nevada: The Land, the People, God, and Chance before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In Nevada: The Land, the People, God, and Chance:

Part contemplation of an America both austere and flamboyant, part love letter to the Old West, part idiosyncratic travel guide, David Thomson's In Nevada has the unorthodox brilliance we have come to expect from this acclaimed novelist (Suspects et al.) and chronicler of the entire film world (in his A Biographical Dictionary of Film and his lives of Orson Welles and David O. Selznick). At once examining and experiencing Nevada, Thomson finds its people, its

landscape, and the unexpected questions it inspires equally provocative. He shows us the historical Nevada -- a classic Wild West, attracting Spanish missionaries, Mormons, uprooted Native Americans, explorers, and silver miners -- and the contemporary influx of cultists, druggies, survivalists, and fortune hunters whose quests lead directly to the gaming table. We see Nevada as a place of no-holds-barred experimentation, both social (gambling, prostitution, easy divorce, no taxes) and scientific (nuclear testing and storage of nuclear waste). We see suburbanites rubbing shoulders with sybarites; the natural beauty of Lake Tahoe, shadowed by the financial edifice of tourism; criminals, entertainers, and hotel impresarios sharing dreams of glory (and the memory of Bugsy Siegel and Frank Sinatra). Thomson traverses Nevada's vastness before approaching Las Vegas and its close neighbor the Nevada Test Site -- the glow of the first reflected in the skies just as the legacy of the second haunts our atmosphere. In Las Vegas we meet everyone from exhausted careerists in search of solace to outlaws seeking crowd cover. "If you were to order a summary raid on the contents of all the cars parked at all the casino hotels," writes Thomson, "no one would be amazed if the haul included several cases stuffed with money, enough AK-47s for a military mission, the manuscripts of great novels, a few bodies, and enough military-strength toxins to take out a moderate-sized South American republic." In Nevada is a revelation of the gambler's mix of hope and anxiety, of the isolation and closeness, the beauty and banality, the fact and fancy at the heart of the state -- and the state of mind -- of Nevada.