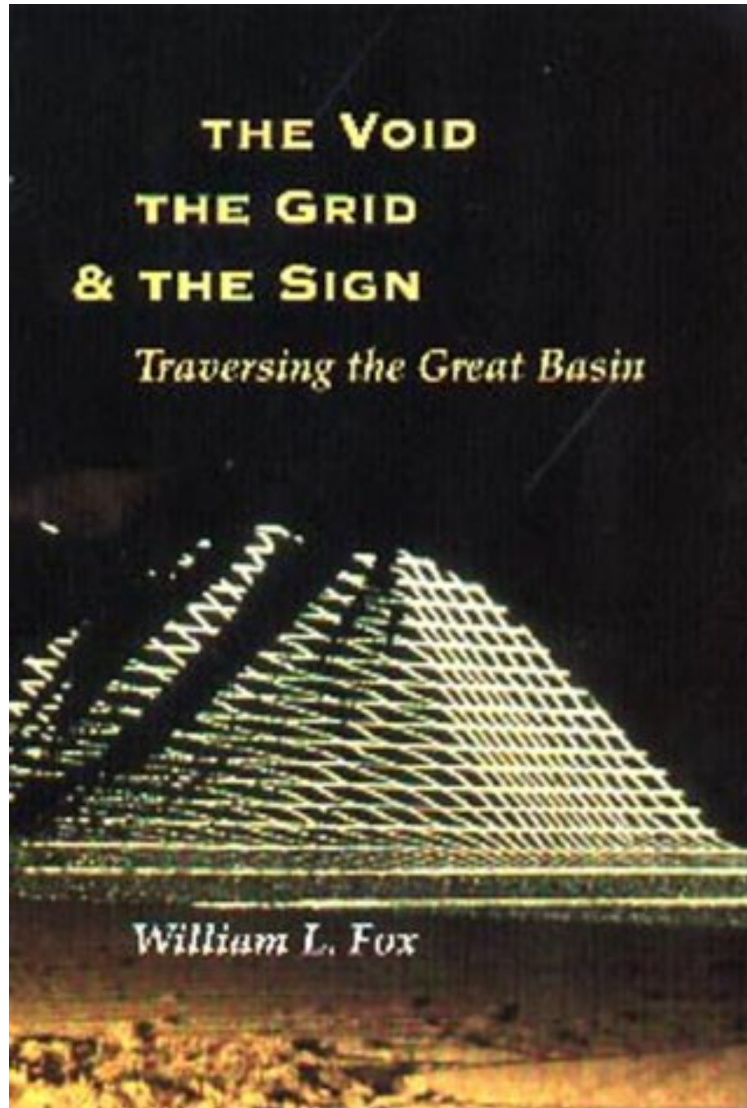


[Free] The Void,Grid Sign

The Void,Grid Sign

William L Fox

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William L Fox : The Void,Grid Sign before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Void,Grid Sign:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. equal parts science, philosphy and outback travelogueBy Delite Rancher"The Void, The Grid The Sign: Traversing The Great Basin" is a superb read. The book is composed of three essays, each of which form the book's main title. Each part is a curious weaving of both travelogue and intellectual inquiry. 'The Void' is arguably the book's most important third. The intellectual inquiry examines the way humans perceive the desert. The travelogue component consists of the author's stay at City. City may be the world's largest

work of art, currently under construction by earthwork artist Michael Heizer. After establishing the premise of the void, Fox uses the next chapter to describe how people have rationalized and mapped the void. As a travelogue, 'The Grid' documents an interesting trip to the Black Rock Desert with now deceased rock art legend Alvin R. McLane. As an intellectual inquiry, this section looks at the history of cartography. More specifically, Fox documents the mapping of the Great Basin. 'The Sign' features similar themes to those covered in the previous sections and as a travelogue, it continues the author's visits to various petroglyph sites. "The Void, The Grid The Sign" is an erudite and sometimes dense read that incorporates anthropology, psychology, history, archaeology and biology. Above all, it is a philosophical journey. In addition to a tendency to over-intellectualize, the author is sometimes long-winded and redundant. Either William L. Fox is too smart for his own good or I'm not educated enough to understand all of this work. My guess is that the truth is a little of both. While the Great Basin reaches five states, so much of the book's scope covers Nevada that it is surprising that the title was published through the University of Utah instead of Stephen's or the University of Nevada Press. On a personal level, I had a few epiphanies reading this book. I enjoyed all three sections but the 'The Void' has forever changed the way I think and feel about the desert. Fox has given me a new vocabulary and insight into the way various people think about the desert and my place in it. Additionally, the author describes how Double Negative (DN) is a smaller scaled predecessor to City. Since City is closed to the public, curiosity brought me out to the remote DN. My visit to the earthwork was epiphanous as both an art and desert experience; it may now be my favorite work of art. This read has put many places onto my Silver State adventure radar. After reading this work, I look forward to reading William L. Fox's other desert books like "In The Desert Of Desire," "The Black Rock Desert" and "Driving by Memory." "The Void, The Grid The Sign" is a fantastic book for desert rats with a penchant for science and philosophy. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Loved it By Mimi What a delightful read! Fox has a wonderful ability to relate such interesting scientific information in an almost lyrical way. When I finished the book, I looked at the list of other books he has written and discovered he has also written poetry. No wonder his writing is so engaging. For me it was a page turner. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By weendii Nevada is not an empty state, but rather a land rich in history.

What Barry Lopez did in expanding our vision of the frozen North in *Arctic Dreams*, William Fox has done in broadening our perceptions of the desert expanses of the West's Great Basin. Roughly a quarter of a million acres of land spanning much of Utah and most of Nevada, the Great Basin is the highest and driest of the American deserts, a vast empty tract on the nineteenth-century maps of our continent. Explorers and cartographers found it imponderable; pioneers and settlers found it uninhabitable. And today the Great Basin remains a largely unknown and forbidding landscape, one that continues to exercise a powerful influence on human desire and imagination. *The Void, the Grid, the Sign* guides us to a place so unusual and disorienting that it can overcome rationality and become the locus for our most fanciful and fearsome projections: mythical rivers, mammoth artistic earthworks, alien spaceships, jet-propelled race cars, and weapons of mass annihilation. In *The Void*, Fox walks us through this landscape, investigating our responses to the Great Basin's appearance -- a pattern of mountains and valleys on a scale so large, so empty and undifferentiated by shape and form and color, that the visual and cognitive expectations of the human mind are confounded and impaired. *The Grid* focuses on the evolution of cartography in the nineteenth century and the explorations of John Charles Fremont in his search for the legendary Buenaventura River. Fox invites us on a Great Basin road trip, tracing the net of maps, section markers, railroads, telegraph lines, and highways that humans have thrown across the void throughout history. *The Sign* considers the language and the metaphors we continue to place around and over the void, revealing the Great Basin as a vast palimpsest where the neon-lined boulevards of Las Vegas overlay and interplay with millennia-old petroglyphs and pictographs. Through vivid and arresting prose drawing from the disciplines of natural history, art history, cognitive psychology, western history, archaeology and anthropology, *The Void, the Grid, the Sign* traverses the knowns and the unknowns of the Great Basin, offering a tour de force of inquiry and thought.

"... not only excellent also captivating one of the most significant [books] written about the region in decades." -- Tooele Transcript Bulletin 26 December 2000 Jeff Schmerker "an engaging book, full of lucid theories about the stories and misrepresentations that we build around foreign landscapes." -- Francie Lin, associate editor of *Threepenny* "a creative and penetrating look Fox's work is fascinating, studded with rich deposits of fact, revelation, and speculation." -- *Western American Literature* Spring 2002 Jonathan Cook About the Author William L. Fox has been an arts consultant, curator, and visiting scholar at the Getty Research Institute. He is the author of several books including *Driving By Memory* (1999), *Mapping the Empty: Eight Artists and Nevada* (1997), and *Playa Works: The Myth of the Empty* (2002). His work on cognition and the landscape includes a trip to the Antarctic as a visiting writer with the National Science Foundation and work in the Arctic with NASA on Houghton-Mars Project. He currently resides in Los Angeles.