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Richard V. Francaviglia

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Richard V. Francaviglia : Believing In Place: A Spiritual Geography Of The Great Basin before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Believing In Place: A Spiritual Geography Of The Great Basin:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Joseph Campbell meets Barry LopezBy dan noyesThis book held my attention and is a rich experience in the geography, history, comparative religion and spirituality of the Great Basin. If the mythologist Joseph Campbell sat down with the poet Barry Lopez the resulting discussion might look a

lot like this book. Yet the book is richer than such a discussion because of Francaviglia's rich nuances and deeply personal take on the Great Basin. This is a stunning book and taught me a great deal about appreciating the many levels of the Great Basin.

This publication explores how spiritual beliefs affect both the environment and the human spirit in the vast region between California's Sierra Nevada and Utah's Wasatch Mountains. It is a reflection on the ways in which human needs and spiritual traditions can shape perceptions of the land.

From BooklistThe Great Basin encompasses the vast deserts and mountains of Utah and Nevada and a complex overlay of faiths. Historical geographer Francaviglia has been traversing and contemplating this austere, mysterious, and majestic land for four decades and creates a palimpsest similar to George Johnson's portrait of New Mexico, *Fire in the Mind* (1995), as he illuminates the interplay between landscape and the imagination. Fluently scientific yet open to other modes of perception, he parses the region's natural history in connection with Native American spirituality, Mormon beliefs and culture, and the apocalyptic presence of nuclear weapons, which dramatize as nothing ever has before the cosmic dance between creation and destruction. Plainspoken yet eloquent, Francaviglia is at once awed by, for example, the startling phenomenon known as dust devils, conversant in their physical dynamics, attuned to their mystical aspects, and intrigued by the implications of their name, which is part of the desert's remarkably religious lexicon. An exceptionally illuminating travelogue, Francaviglia's many-faceted inquiry reveals the genius loci of a unique and powerful place. Donna SeamanCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Richard V. Francaviglia has given us a nuanced and multidisciplinary reading of landscape as religious text, and situates the Great Basin within the larger history of human spirituality. "Believing in Place is not only an important addition to the literature of the region, but an essential study in how we construct intimate place out of the great space of the American West."About the AuthorRichard V. Francaviglia is professor of history and geography and director of the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography at the University of Texas in Arlington. As both historian and geographer, he is especially interested in the way places change through time, and how that change is depicted in maps, literature, art, and popular culture. His administrative interests include working with university faculty and staff to develop proposals, and to secure outside funding, for innovative educational programs. Francaviglia received his A.A. from Foothill College, Los Altos Hills, California with highest honors (1965), B.A. from University of California at Riverside with high honors (1967), and M.A. and Ph.D. (1970) from the University of Oregon (Geography major, Art History minor). He taught at the University of Minnesota, Antioch College, University of Arizona, and Wittenberg University, and is currently a Professor of History and Geography at the University of Texas at Arlington. He teaches courses in historical geography, the history of cartography, environmental history, geography of the West, historical methods, public history, history and film, and natural history images and scientific illustration. His research interests include the role of maps and natural history illustrations in the history of discoveries; the ways in which environments are shaped by individuals, corporations, and religious groups; mining and transportation history; cartographic history; the history of geology, geomorphology, and mineralogy.