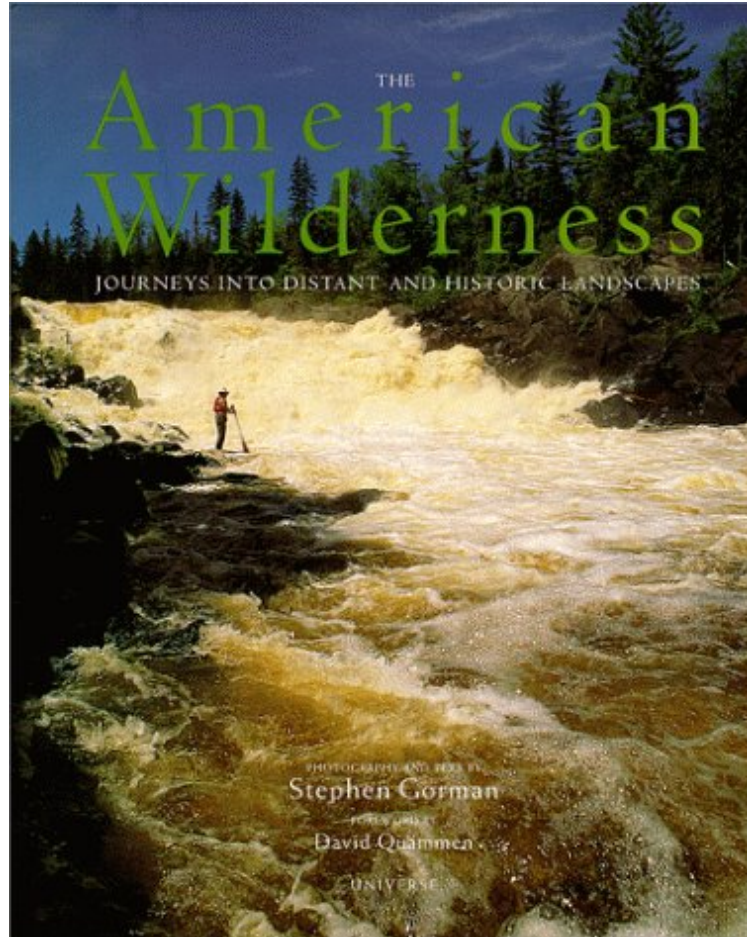


## American Wilderness

*Stephen Gorman*

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#5296744 in Books Universe 1999-09-04 1999-09-04 Original language: English PDF # 1 .76 x 8.31 x 10.26l,  
#File Name: 078930273X160 pages | File size: 79.Mb

**Stephen Gorman : American Wilderness** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Wilderness:

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Great American Storytelling By David Borah This is a wonderful book. Unlike many other photo-essay/coffee table books, the prose is of the same high quality as the photographs. Indeed Mr. Gorman's writing is as light, airy and fresh as the snow beneath his skis during one of his midwinter telemark expeditions. His narrative is peppered with poignant historical sketches on the people and events that breathe so much life into the places he visits. These diversions add life and serve to frame his writings. Witness his harrowing descriptions of valorous US servicemen staring death squarely in the eye during the Battle of Midway. Similarly, his lively profiles of the picaresque outlaws and wanderers who have found refuge in the harsh landscapes of the Everglades and the Missouri Breaks add a heartbeat to such inhospitable regions. That Mr. Gorman finds wonder and beauty in these places and their people and so successfully communicates these feelings with pen and camera is a testament to his abilities as a writer, photographer, naturalist and historian. 13 of 13 people found the following review

helpful. An insightful, timely work about the American wilderness. By A Customer Usually, I am leery, at best, about people who regard themselves as qualified to attempt to shape, influence, or form broad opinion about art. I find that more personal critiques of art (such as opinions shared by friends who have common interests) usually prove more palatable and valid. This is especially true when the art form in question is literary. An individual's collected experiences lend to a unique, and completely valid vantage or perspective when surveying literary terra incognita. Hence, more often than thinking about a book as being "bad or "good," I tend to think of books and their readers as being well- or ill-paired. After reading Ms. Ross's review of Mr. Gorman's book, *The American Wilderness: Journeys into Distant and Historic Landscapes*, I immediately thought Ms. Ross an ill-suited audience for this book. In her critique, I felt a significant injustice had been committed and felt that I would be committing a greater disservice to my fellow outdoorsmen, conservationists, and environmentalists, if I did not speak in favor of this book. Succinctly stated, Mr. Gorman's book is brilliant! The photographs are, at least, gallery quality and the prose, quite near sublime. The book is an epiphany for the wilderness aesthete, for those few who are still capable of being profoundly moved by the beauty of the simple facade and the complex underpinnings of nature. I imagine Mr. Gorman as a modern-day Thoreau, complete with zoom lens, extolling the virtues of one of our last true Public Goods (the American wilderness). Often, it seems that Wilderness Advocates, like Mr. Gorman, speak to an indifferent or hostile audience. Having said all this, I believe that one must approach such a book with some intellectual curiosity and preferably the potential for appreciation, maybe even some great love or admiration of nature. Otherwise, one's comments are strictly academic, only as valid as the observations of an atheist on the nature of faith. Those who tend to agree with Ms. Ross's assertion that "... Perhaps nature is by nature boring," would probably be better-off proceeding to the "murder-mysteries" aisle. For everyone else, this is an insightful, well-conceived survey of the American wilderness. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A beautiful, and beautifully written book. By Jonathan Lax I couldn't disagree more with the negative comments of your first reviewer. I devoured the text of this book and only hope that Mr. Gorman will continue to provide us with his thoughtful insights into the beautiful and historically important places this book makes accessible. His prose captures the imagination, and demonstrates Gorman's appreciation of and respect for the wonderful locations he has chosen for his subjects. The photographs Mr. Gorman has taken are, in a word -- spectacular. Any collector of photography, or anybody who shares Mr. Gorman's evident passion for nature and history will cherish this book. I am planning on giving copies of this book to all of my friends and family who are outdoor enthusiasts this holiday season.

Photographer and outdoor writer Stephen Gorman takes readers on an illustrated journey through eleven of the United States' most remarkable wilderness destinations. Covering this vast country literally from coast to coast and beyond, Gorman has painstakingly compiled a stunning visual travelogue that showcases the American outback in all its extremes: from Florida's ten-thousand islands, California's Death Valley, and Hawaii's Midway Atoll to Prince William Sound in Alaska, the Boundary Waters in Minnesota, and Montana's Missouri Breaks. With unsurpassed color photography, historical maps, and rich, detailed descriptions, *Wild America* resonates with history, invoking the experiences of the earliest explorers of these harsh, unspoiled landscapes. Simultaneously, Gorman's images and words, accompanied by an appendix with practical travel information on each locale, invite the reader to rediscover the American wilderness for themselves. Gorman's engaging text and photography is eloquently introduced by fellow outdoor writer and New York Times Book Review contributor David Quammen, who thoughtfully examines America's renewed rapport with nature at the turn of the millennium. Americans are awakening as never before both to the fragility and to the awesome power of this country's diverse wilderness landscapes--as is borne out by the wild popularity of books, films, and television programs that cover outdoor adventure and natural phenomena. *Wild America* offers readers a considered, reverent salute to America's immeasurably valuable natural heritage. Stephen Gorman writes and provides photographs regularly for *Outside*, *Men's Journal*, *Audubon*, *Wildlife Conservation*, *Backpacker*, *Skiing*, and the *Discovery Channel Online*, and is a contributing editor at *Sports Afield*.

.com Some people can take a trip to the gas station and make it sound wild, so surreally alive, that you can see it as a feature-length film. Others could journey to a distant sun and you'd find yourself nodding off, thinking their descriptions make the McNeil-Lehrer Report seem outrageous and riveting. Author-photographer Stephen Gorman, earnest, enthused, and talented though he is, sometimes falls into the second category of adventurer whose storytelling becomes snore-telling. Where the exact problem lies is anyone's guess. There's nothing wrong with the writing of this journalist, published in *Audubon*, *Outside*, and *Men's Journal*. In this book he travels through wilderness areas from Maine to Hawaii, some so isolated he feels guilty writing of them. There's nothing wrong with following the trails of others before him--be they of Hudson Bay traders, Lewis and Clark, or the Nez Perce--that take him through abandoned canyons, across the Everglades, into pristine waters, or old mountain "towns" so isolated that outlaws by the hundreds once went there to disappear. He canoes, he hikes, he swims; he shadows his text with historical insights and today's environmental woes. Maybe it's the font. But so many of his "adventures" come off flat regardless of the terrain: "The gully is deep and sports an impressive set of sharp, oil-pan-ripping stones.... For perhaps the tenth time

this morning, Dan jumps out to do some road work.... After he clears the path, I depress the accelerator ever so slightly, trying to gain purchase without spinning the wheels..... Fortunately, Dan has the good sense to stand off to the side." Thankfully, the book is peppered with photos--some stunning, especially those of birds--to keep you alert whenever unmoving text weights your eyelids. Another plus: the travel planner in back, which gives essential info about each of these 10 trips. Maybe there's nothing wrong with this book. Perhaps nature is by nature boring. At least that's the impression you may get when you doze off reading this take on it. --Melissa Rossi "...The most remarkable photographs and captivating narratives... a rare combination of writing and photography skills... Gorman's work is incomparable." -- Jessica Smith, Portsmouth Herald Sunday"A collection of vivid locales in which history itself adds to the meaning, the genius loci, and the charm..." -- David Quammen, author of *The Song of the Dodo* and editor at large for *Outside Magazine*"Gorman captures the heroic voices of our heritage... His journeys are an affirmation of essential beauty." -- Annie Getchell, Author Co-Host *Anyplace Wild*, a PBS Television Series"Gorman delves into the natural and social histories of the lands he visits, uncovering the soul of wilderness..." -- Lisa Gosselin, Editor-In-Chief, *Audubon Magazine*"Sublime photography... Gorman's travelogue promises to send you into a daydream or running out to follow in his footsteps." -- Sophie Sjolm, *Sports Afield Magazine*An explorer who delves into the natural and social histories of the lands he visits, uncovering the soul of wilderness. -- Lisa Gosselin, Editor-in-chief, *Audubon Magazine*If you really want to know what it's like to be in the backcountry, you'll enjoy this book. -- John Atwood, Editor-in-Chief, *Sports Afield*From the Publisher Stephen Gorman's "American Wilderness" with its stunning photographs and riveting stories provides an adventure of the spirit, bringing far off places to life. Gorman's unusual background as an accomplished photographer, wilderness guide and explorer with a master's degree in environmental studies from Yale makes him well suited to tackle the American wilds. He captures the American wilderness in words and images which resonate throughout his book, drawing praise from many noted editors and reviewers.