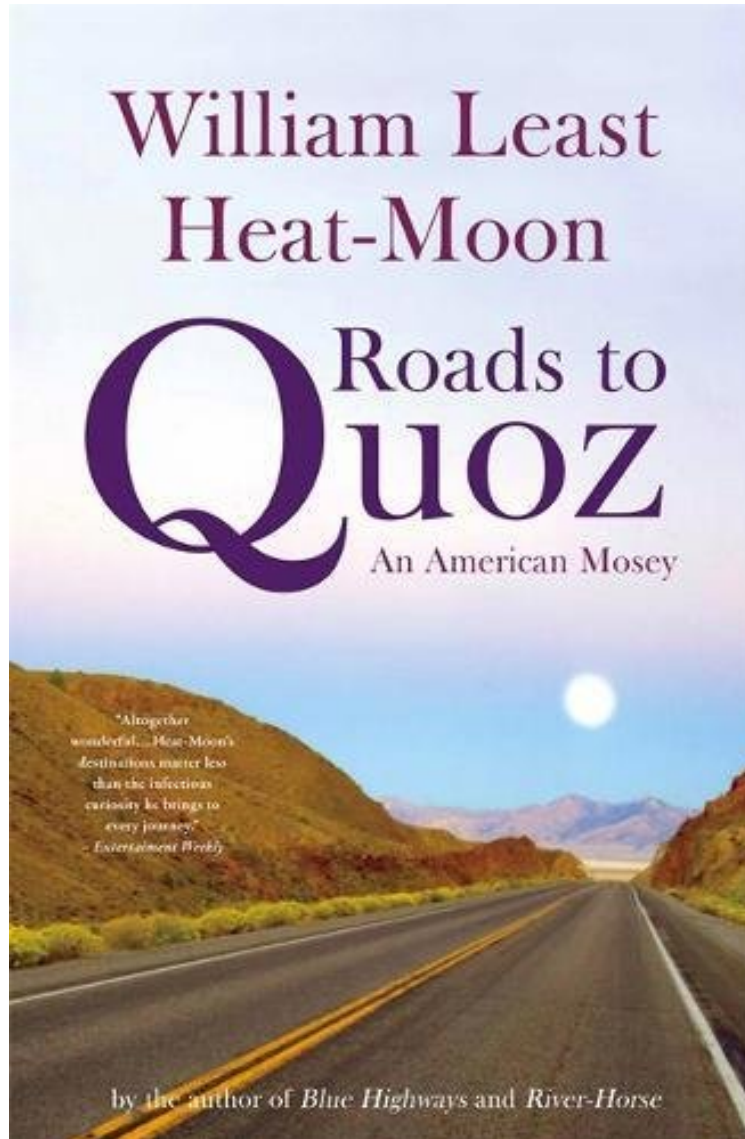


(Free) Roads to Quoz: An American Mosey

Roads to Quoz: An American Mosey

William Least Heat-Moon

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William Least Heat-Moon : Roads to Quoz: An American Mosey before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Roads to Quoz: An American Mosey:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Quoz: An American Yarn By Owl "Roads to Quoz: An American Mosey" is the fourth of William Least Heat-Moon's books about our land, its people, their stories, and his own. In "Blue Highways," we travelled the by-ways around the perimeter of our country; in "PrairyErth," Least Heat-Moon drilled down, down, down through time in the Kansas county at the center of the United States. "Riverhorse" took us

by water, mostly with Lewis and Clark, across our country. Each book has a unity, illuminated by the author's compassion for what Gerard Manley Hopkins calls "...all things counter, spare, original." Each, particularly "Blue Highways," is written with such heart, with such simplicity, and with words so beautifully put together, reading aloud feels as natural as breathing. "Blue Highways" became a part of travelling in America. Like many others, I wanted very much to like the fourth book, but have found it a bit of work to do so. A few concerns are given first, then praise for this wizard of quoz and his book. First, rarely are our children's sayings as adorable as we may think. A quote here and there can be OK, but pages pages with them can be flinch-making. Least Heat-Moon, in "The Roads to Quoz" has married his third wife, described as a slender golden-haired young woman so beautiful she stops conversations as she enters a room, with whom he seems enchanted if not besotted. Said to be brilliant, too, a lawyer and historian. "The Road to Quoz" has many of what Least Heat-Moon considers her irresistably wise, witty comments such as (in connection with tourists leaving autographed bills), "Maybe it's a new authenticity beginning." Second, it is good indeed that the author's compassionate interest in we, the people, our doings, and our home-towns still shines here and there and there. One instance is the lovely chapter on Jean Shirer Ingold, an American original living Thoreau-like near Almogordo. However, there are some not-so-good sections. One instance is the 8 chapter, 60 page inquiry into the 1900s murder of his great-greatgrand father and his grandmother's suicide. Sadly, in the 10 chapter section on his cruise down the Inland Passage from Baltimore to Florida, there doesn't seem much freshness or savor left in his world, only angers. Yet there is much to enjoy. The book is organized around many shortish road trips Least Heat-Moon took with Q, re-visiting his past, entertaining her with family stories, finding some new places and people. There are in each of the six main sections (Southwest, Southeast, and so on) about 20 brief chapters of 5 to 10 pages. (The number of stories is considerably less than the number of chapters. Sometimes, a story such as that about James Canary, curator of one of the scroll manuscripts of Kerouac's "On the Road," involves two chapters. Ditto the story of the remarkable Frank Xavier Brusca, photographer and historian of US Highway 40.) Many of these vignettes have a spontaneity, a feeling of a moseyness quoziness that is here, there, everywhere if we could see it. Examples include Canary and Brusca, and his re-telling of the history of the Great Mound. Here the topic brings out simply eloquently Least Heat-Moon's deep respect for his Native American heritage, and sorrow at its losses. "The Roads to Quoz" offers some memorable journeys with a man who can still be a very good companion. It is, perhaps, best read as if we're sitting in Swamp Guinea's place, no rush, plenty of iced tea and home-cooked food, listening to a story teller we have come to love over his lifetime and ours, following whatever comes into his mind. Some tales in such a time will be not so well-told and some, even many, will be fine indeed. Overall, then, three to four stars. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An important American voice By Suzanne E Lahr Love this book 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book didn't captivate me the way that Blue Highways ... By Elizabeth Thoms This book didn't captivate me the way that Blue Highways did, but it was still an enjoyable read. Heat-Moon has a sharp eye for detail.

About a quarter century ago, a largely unknown wanderer named William Least Heat-Moon wrote a book called Blue Highways. It was a travel book like no other, a book that revealed its author to be a chronicler of rare linguistic genius and empathy, a listener who knew that the small places can offer the biggest surprises. Heat-Moon, wrote one reader, was a travel writer as Faulkner was a country historian. Road to Quoz is Heat-Moon's long-awaited return to America's back roads. It is a lyrical, funny, and magisterially told chronicle of American passage, a journey into the heart of a nation almost desperate for meaning beyond consumerism and self-absorption, a book that invites readers to "discover America anew." (Christian Science Monitor).

From Publishers Weekly Starred . It was almost a decade ago that Least Heat-Moon (Blue Highways) followed the trail of Lewis and Clark in River Horse; in the first section of his latest peripatetic writings, he and his wife, Q, trace the lesser-known Dunbar-Hunter Expedition of 1804 through the southern half of the Louisiana Purchase, searching out the head of the Ouachita River in Arkansas. Least Heat-Moon's fans will find this territory, and that covered in the five other journeys to places a goodly portion of the American populace would call 'nowhere,' instantly familiar, as he and various companions take digressive paths from one small opolis (where anything metro was clearly missing) to the next in search of quoz (an 18th-century word meaning anything out of the ordinary). Among his many adventures, Least Heat-Moon rides a bicycle along an abandoned railroad track, discovers a road to nowhere built by a Florida county so local drug smugglers would have a landing strip, and comes up with what he believes is the real story behind the murder of his great-grandfather. Or maybe the highlights of these journeys are the people he meets along the way and their stories, like the man who tried to fund a school for disadvantaged children by providing lonely widows with special massages, or the artist who's turned his cabin into a walk-in kaleidoscope. Either way, few readers will be able to resist tagging along. (Oct. 29) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist *Starred * Heat-Moon's love for back roads, buried history, mesmerizing stories, and colorful language launched a life of inquisitive travels and meticulous writing. In his fifth book, this attentive listener and observer and sly wit in the mode of Twain reports on his quest for quoz, that is, anything strange, incongruous, or

peculiar. Accompanied by his smart, funny lawyer-historian wife, Q, Heat-Moon follows the 1804 trail of William Dunbar and George Hunter on the forgotten Jeffersonian mission along the Ouachita River through Arkansas and Louisiana. Amidst hilarious commentary on road food and uncharismatic small towns, Heat-Moon continues on to Florida, Maine, New Mexico, Missouri, Montana, Oklahoma, and Texas, writing vividly and insightfully about diverse and quirky places. But it is the people he meets, or resurrects, that give this spellbinding and immensely satisfying book its soul. From freethinker William Grayson, shot down on the street in Joplin, Missouri, in 1901 (Heat-Moon finally solves the case) to artist Indigo Rocket, a wizard of quoz; Jean Ingold, whose carbon footprint was that of a cat; conservator James Canary, guardian of Kerouacs On the Road scroll; Glenn Gore, who is dedicated to photographing every mile of the Ouachita; and Frank Xavier Brusca, who is doing the same for U.S. Highway 40. Natural, national, and personal history converge in this resplendent mosey, an inspiring antidote to hurry and a profound tribute to this good land and its people. --Donna Seaman - Dallas Morning News 'A Great American Gothic....Despite his vision of a society that has depleted far too much (forests, aquifers, coastlines) through its excesses, Heat-Moon's sense of humor remains intact * Los Angeles TIMES * - Wall Street Journal 'This is a call to get out a map and explore rural America the beautiful. If urban life makes you feel like you're losing your mind and your way, set out to your own blue highway to quoz * - Fort Worth Star-Telegram 'Mr. Heat-Moon demonstrates such a sharp intelligence, relentless curiosity and fine phrasing that nothing more could be desired' * Altogether wonderful . . . Heat-Moon loves the funky byways of America. . . . His destinations matter less than the infectious curiosity he brings to every journey * - Entertainment Weekly Mr. Heat-Moon's enthusiasm for wherever he happens to be carries the day. If Roads to 'Quoz bears a message, it is that beyond the strip malls and chain restaurants, a complex and fascinating country is still out there for those who *