



How the Canyon Became Grand: A Short History

Stephen J. Pyne

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Dismissed by the first Spanish explorers as a wasteland, the Grand Canyon lay virtually unnoticed for three centuries until nineteenth-century America rediscovered it and seized it as a national emblem. This extraordinary work of intellectual and environmental history tells two tales of the Canyon: the discovery and exploration of the physical Canyon and the invention and evolution of the cultural Canyon--how we learned to endow it with mythic significance. Acclaimed historian **Stephen Pyne** examines the major shifts in Western attitudes toward nature, and recounts the achievements of explorers, geologists, artists, and writers, from **John Wesley Powell** to **Wallace Stegner**, and how they transformed the Canyon into a fixture of national identity. This groundbreaking book takes us on a completely original journey through the Canyon toward a new understanding of its niche in the American psyche, a journey that mirrors the making of the nation itself.

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