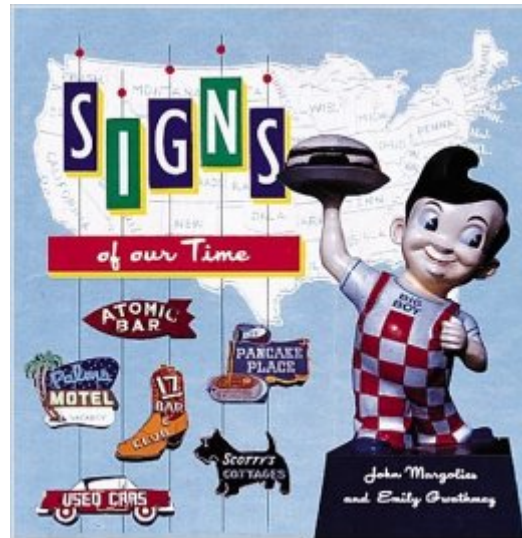


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# Signs Of Our Times



## Synopsis

This is an illustrated, survey of the best in America outdoor signs, ranging from the 1920s to the 1960s. Signage is now widely recognized as an important category in the history of American graphic arts. Vintage signs of any kind are exceedingly rare in today's marketplace and command increasingly high prices. In addition to attracting a large body of scholars and collectors, signs are also avidly snapped up by decorators, who have used them for their bold graphic presence in interior decoration ranging from trendy bars and restaurants to yuppie kitchens and studies. Some well-known signs have early origins like the pawnbroker's three golden balls, the cigar store's wooden Indian, and the barber's striped pole, but in signage history the greatest design ingenuity came with the introduction and proliferation of the motor car: Burma-Shave ditties, Chew Mail Pouch barns, See Rock City birdhouses, and Wall Drug mileage markers, to name but a few outstanding examples. This book concentrates on what has been visible through the windshield: All-American commercial icons organized into categories such as Transportation, Main Street, Food and Drink, Roadside Attractions, and Motels. A special feature of this volume is its coverage of unusual roadside structures that in themselves have functioned as signs, disguised as huge ducks, elephants, hot dogs, teapots, beer barrels, Southern mammies, and gigantic fish, among other things.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A nicely designed book about the visual fun along the nation's roads and small towns. By the nature

of these signs a lot of them shown in this book have probably disappeared by now. How many barns are still standing with a Chew Mail Pouch Tabacco painted on them? The author's note that as companies merge and expand one part of America can now look very much like any other part but surely this has always been the case, a Coke sign looked the same anywhere, Holiday Inn used their 'Great Sign' coast to coast. Perhaps what they regret is the decline of originality (and fun) many small-time businesses put into attention getting signs. Most of the hundred or so photos in the book are external signs but there are some vintage postcards, matchbook covers and architectural photos. The chapter on motel signs shows the art of the signmaker at its best, arrows, lettering and animal shapes made out of neon, revolving stars, in fact anything to attract the eye of the passing motorist. John Margolies earlier book 'The End of the Road' covers the same subject but concentrated more on buildings rather than signs, both books capture a vanishing America. Nostalgia fans will love these books.\*\*\*FOR AN INSIDE LOOK click 'customer images' under the cover.

What a lovely book to just LOOK at! Seeing so many of these images brought back so many memories - I am grateful to the author who took the time to forever record places so fondly remembered.... Excellent!

excellent

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