

existential authors who depicted characters whose actions were the source of their dread and anguish. But for many of these same climbers, reading Mark's climbing stories told with a similar angst elicited a sense of cognitive dissonance. It wasn't surprising that these writings earned him the nickname of "Dr. Doom."

Traditional mountaineering literature often uses climbing metaphors to uplift the reader with stories of courage and daring in the face of adversity. But the stories in this book describe a much darker emotional reaction to the stresses of difficult and committing alpine climbing. It is hard to say if the incongruity between Twight's and many other climber's descriptions of their alpine experiences is a result of differences in personal perspective, or if many of us refuse to acknowledge the inherent contradictions and dangers in climbing.

Viewing many of these stories with a 21st century perspective makes them seem tamer in the way that the 1980s punk music that influenced Twight's writing seems tame when compared to today's new music. Twight makes valid points about honesty—honesty with your emotions, honesty with what you achieved, and honesty with your level of commitment. Although those values remain constant today, time blunts the sharp edges of messages delivered in our youth. Twight is viewed by many as elitist, a stance he readily acknowledges. He claims that this book is a one-time deal; I would like to see more from him in the future to check where time takes his current uncompromising attitudes.

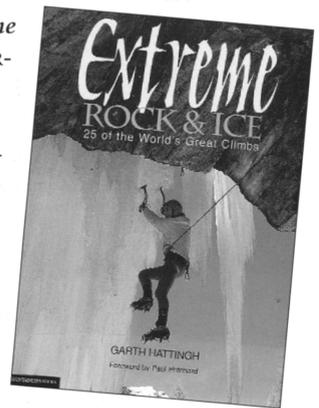
STEVE SWENSON

Extreme Rock & Ice. Garth Hattingh. Seattle: The Mountaineers Books, 2001. 160 PAGES, 200 COLOR PHOTOS, PAPERBACK. \$39.95.

Massively oversized, *Extreme Rock & Ice* is divided into five spectacular sections: Rock Climbs, Ice & Mixed Climbs, Alpine-scale Climbs, Big Wall Climbs, and Big Mountain Climbs. Page after page is filled with excellent photographs. There is hardly a throw-away in the lot, and almost all are spectacular. Even the pictures of the objective itself are well chosen for their clarity. The format is very well conceived, each route consisting of a narrative, map, numerous pictures, objective photo with topo overlaid in red, and the story of the climb. The first two pages of each climb consist of a full-page picture on the left, some text, and a map placing the climb geographically.

Captivating graphic elements such as these make it difficult to focus on the text, yet each climb's narrative tells a story, and that story provides the essence of the adventure. Some, like Twight, House, and Blitz's Alaskan epic "The Gift That Keeps On Giving," have been covered in the climbing press or in other books. Others are likely only known to a much smaller circle, like the controversial ascent of Moby Dick, in Ulamertorssuaq, Greenland. However, the already familiar accounts contain additional details and photographs, so both are well worth perusing.

The word Extreme is greatly overused these days—Extreme Mountain Biking, Extreme Programming, even Extreme Doritos. Is it appropriately attached to this title? Throughout climbing history there have always been climbs and climbers pushing the boundaries of the sport and showing the way for others, but they weren't labeled with anything other than the



ratings the first-ascensionists gave them. Some would surely argue that an X, R, or VE rating says it all. Still, these are extremely difficult climbs done by extremely bold climbers. Perhaps a better title would have been “Extremely Dangerous Rock & Ice Climbing By People With An Extremely High Tolerance For Risk,” but of course that wouldn’t have the cachet, would it?

Are these 25 climbs the most extreme in the world? That’s open to debate. I’ve been right up next to Sea Of Vapors on Mt. Rundle, and it looks like a pretty darn hard climb to me. If Mark Twight’s account in his recent book *Kiss or Kill* tells only half of the story, *The Gift* is about as out-there as you could ask for. And Mark Synnott has told me the story of his and Jared Ogden’s epic on Shipton’s Spire. It was definitely a tour de force! The Totem Pole in Tasmania, Metanoia on The Eiger, Destivelle Route on Mont Blanc, El Nino on El Cap, Grand Voyage on Great Trango, The Lightning Route on Changabang, The South Face on Lhotse, all these chapters paint pictures of danger and adversity, triumph and tragedy. These and 18 more make for a collection of great stories about challenges met and fears faced.

The stories, historical perspective, route descriptions, climber profiles, and above all the spectacular collection of photographs conspire to make *Extreme Rock & Ice* a book that you will likely come back to again and again. If you are a climber, or even an armchair mountaineer, this is a book of fabulous photographs and captivating accounts you’re certain to enjoy.

AL HOSPERS

Arctic Crossing: A Journey Through the Northwest Passage and Inuit Culture. JONATHAN WATERMAN. NEW YORK: ALFRED KNOPE, 2001. 360 PAGES, 85 BLACK-AND-WHITE ILLUSTRATIONS, 8 PAGES COLOR, ENDPAPER MAPS, HARDCOVER. \$29.95.

Arctic Crossing chronicles Jon Waterman’s 1997-99 adventure traveling under human power (kayak, foot) and other non-motorized forms of locomotion (wind, dogsled) along the northern coast of North America, via a variation of the fabled Northwest Passage. The 2,200-mile odyssey done in six stages over three summers went from Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, to the Gulf of Boothia in the new Canadian province of Nunavut. It was, according to the account (and the accompanying television documentary that Waterman produced), a wildly dramatic and dangerous journey—more committing than any of his demanding mountaineering exploits. He experienced everything from capsizing his kayak several times (deadly in such frigid northern waters) to polar bears chasing him in the open ocean (again, deadly). Huge, daily physical stresses were complemented by the even greater mental challenge of what he’d set out to do and the ever-present question of whether he had the fortitude to complete it.

Waterman’s exhaustive research, combined with his unique writing style—in which events are described slowly and with great detail—yields a story with many layers, not unlike a tapestry. Observations of the environment, Waterman’s own state of mind, the flora, fauna, weather, and seasons, are interspersed with information on the history of the area and the exploration of the Northwest Passage. Yet, there is a whole lot more to *Arctic Crossing*.

At 45, Waterman has written seven other books about adventure, most of which have been focused on his experiences with Alaskan mountaineering. *Arctic Crossing* offers more

