

Geist likens these things to "behavioral appendixes." One of these cravings, inherited from eons of early hunters of big game, is for a set of conditions that closely parallel those of the modern mountaineers: "Picture a man with a short flint-tipped throwing spear four paces from a mammoth. It took no small amount of courage to get that close and go through with the task . . . the foolish would hardly live to tell his tale; the coward would hardly venture within spear throwing distance, nor would he respond to the urgent need, should it arise, of distracting the quarry's attention from his endangered hunting companion. *Such an act requires self-discipline and the ability to calculate one's moves, as well as the need to keep a very level head while only inches from possible death.* These requirements had to be met, not once in a lifetime, but on every hunt, and every week, month, year of a man's life span."

No wonder we have a restless urge to climb. If Geist's theory is right, then we should finally understand why we grow neurotic if we don't see a snowy peak or a cliff for a month. His logic is impeccable. If cold climates made man human, then lack of them should make man as ornery as a polar bear in Florida, and it may accomplish exactly that with Geist's colleagues. He has joined company with Lorenz, Ardrey, and Morris in extrapolating human behavior from animal research. He's on risky ground, but if he's right, that's what made us the way we are.

GALEN ROWELL

Encyclopaedia of Mountaineering by Walt Unsworth. New York: St. Martin's. 1975. 272 pages, 34 photos. \$12.95.

This is, quite simply, the worst reference book I have ever seen. Since reference books must be accurate to be usable, the multifold errors in this book render it not only close to useless, but potentially damaging to future mountain literature if it is used as source material.

In an hour of thumbing through the pages I found literally hundreds of errors of fact and omission. Under "Vittorio Sella," we read, "in 1909 . . . Chogolisa was climbed: a height record for the time (25,110 feet)." Sella's expedition failed to reach the top of Chogolisa and I have never seen it published otherwise. Herman Buhl, the famous Austrian climber, was killed trying to make the first ascent in 1957.

We are told that Lionel Terray did not reach the top of Mount Huntington in Alaska, when, in fact, he did. Under "Barry Bishop," we are told, "On 22 May 1963, Bishop, with L. G. Jerstad, became the first American to reach the summit of Mount Everest." No one's ever called Big Jim un-American before. Whittaker reached the top of Everest twenty-one days earlier than Bishop.

Names and numbers cause considerable trouble for this author. Under "Yosemite" we learn that Harding spent 45 days climbing El Capitan the first time. Under "El Capitan," we are told that the same climb took 47 days. One index reference to Mount Logan on page 142 doesn't exist. Names suffer quite often. Leif Patterson comes out "Petterson;" Salathé becomes "Salethe;" Mount Jefferson becomes "Jeffereson. The Rocky Mountains suffer an even worse indignation. They are missing under "R," both in the index and the main text. There are short notes under "Colorado Rockies" and "The Canadian Rockies."

Missing are listings under the names of Ardito Desio and Nick Clinch, who led successful expeditions to the first and second highest peaks in the Karakoram. We do find, however, people like Francis Vaughan Hawkins, a member of the Alpine Club in London "who had a brief but interesting climbing career," before resigning from the AC in 1861.

It is hard to discover any rhyme or reason for the author's entries. Hornbein has a listing, but not Unsoeld. Gary Hemming is described, but John Harlin is missing. Sir Edmund Hillary gets half the space devoted to Ian Clough. Obscure anachronisms appear, such as: "Nai-smith's Rule . . . The rule is: allow one hour for every three miles on the map plus an additional hour for every 2,000 feet of climbing. . . . Further refinements can be made (see *Mountain Leadership* by E. Langmuir), but these spoil the essential simplicity of the calculation."

Under "K2" we find a run-down of each expedition. For the 1902, 1909, and 1938 expeditions the maximum elevation reached is listed. Not so for the 1939 expedition, which set an altitude record that stood for fifteen years until the first ascent. Heinrich Pfannl is listed under his name for ascents in the Eastern Alps, with no mention that he was on the first expedition to attempt K2.

Descriptions are often hard to follow such as this one locating Yosemite's El Capitan: "It stands on the true right bank of the river about two miles below Yosemite Village, and thus, in driving up the valley, it is one of the first cliffs to be encountered."

The cardinal sin of this book is that it is not objective. Biographies read more like gossip columns than what should be expected from a reference work. We learn that Bonington handled photo coverage of the first descent down the Blue Nile, but Reinhold Messner, currently the world's leading alpinist, is dismissed in a brief paragraph. We are told that Warren Harding's "siege tactics did not meet with universal approval. Harding has always adapted his tactics to meet the situation as he sees it." The author obviously sides with Royal Robbins, whom he describes as "the exponent of the single push theory of big wall climbing as opposed to siege tactics." Harding comes off as an opportunist; Robbins as a saint. In truth, both climbers used siege tactics during a

stage in their careers, Harding to a greater extent than Robbins, who tried to avoid them as much as possible. For the last fifteen years, neither Harding nor Robbins have used siege tactics, but this doesn't come through in the bad guy/good guy biographies.

Mixed in with biographies, famous mountains, and tiny cliffs are definitions of climbing words. These are no better than the rest of the book. "Granite," according to the definition, "varies from place to place but is *always* sound to climb upon." Quite a surprise to climbers who have turned back on friable Alaskan granite and rotten desert cliffs!

GALEN ROWELL

Himalaje-Karakorum, by Tom Piaty, ed. Warsaw, Poland, Wiedza Powszechna, 1974. 472 pages of text, with 376 pictures. Hard-bound. 140 zlotys (\$7.60).

I am quick to declare that I know no Polish, but the language is not an obstacle to understanding and enjoying this Polish book, the fifth of the collection "W. Skalach i Lodach Swiata" ("Amid the Rock and Ice of the World"). This edition covers the achievements of the Poles in the mountains of the globe from 1968 to 1974. The title of this book is therefore misleading, since it is by no means confined to the mountains of Central Asia. There are fifteen chapters, three indexes (with English and Russian summaries) and a chronology, embracing in all an unusually wide geographic area of the mountains of the world, which attests to the extraordinary activity of the Poles.

The great asset of this book, whether one knows Polish or not, is its photographs. There are 367 black and white and nine color pictures of high standards, taken by Poles among the better known ranges of the world as well as among others we rarely see photographed: Semyen (Ethiopia), Alai and Tien Shan (Russia), Altai (Mongolia), Atacama (Northern Chile), Yugoslavian and Bulgarian Alps, etc. If there is anything to complain about in this book it is the total lack of maps, a strange omission indeed. But it is a book of merits, that will please those who dream of traveling and climbing in the least known mountain ranges of the world.

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