

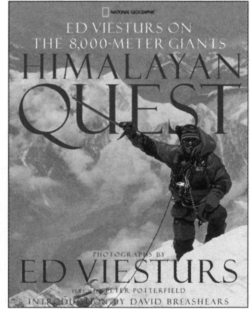
in hindsight to second-guess decisions that were deemed necessary at the height of the Cold War, the environmental legacy of the nuclear arms race is hard to overlook. Former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara devoted a whole book to explaining how many of his Cold War decisions regarding Vietnam were wrong. It is unfortunate that Kohli spends little time reexamining his decision to leave the nuclear generator on the mountain without a proper installation, a decision that may affect his countrymen well into the future.

LLOYD ATHEARN

*Himalayan Quest: Ed Viesturs on the 8,000 Meter Giants.*

ED VIESTURS. WASHINGTON D.C.: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PRESS, 2003. 159 PAGES. PAPERBACK. \$20.00.

*Himalayan Quest* is a beautiful book that provides a spectacular series of photographs depicting Ed Viesturs' expeditions to 8,000-meter peaks. Those with an interest in the Himalayan giants will find the descriptions of his trips and personal adventures fascinating, and the photography certain to excite many armchair fantasies. Indeed, the photos alone are worth the price of the book.



It also gives us insight into Ed Viesturs, the man. Over the past dozen or so years Ed has quietly and methodically become America's most accomplished Himalayan climber. His climbing style is straightforward and safe, without much in the way of flare besides a purist's insistence on not using bottled oxygen. While he has attained all of his Himalayan summits without the use of supplemental oxygen, he has always made safety his primary concern. He has been involved in heroic rescues of other climbers at high altitude, yet he has wisely been able to avoid death-defying circumstances himself. Viesturs' other main focus is the simple joy of being in the mountains and sharing the experience with friends.

Ed's writing, like his climbing style, is straightforward and unadorned. You couldn't really call him a great storyteller. His approach to climbing denies him the nail-biting life-and-death dramas that are the stock-in-trade of some climbing authors. Together, these conditions guarantee text that will be neither riveting nor especially entertaining. However, those interested in what it is like to climb above 8,000 meters will no doubt overlook such shortcomings to read Viesturs' views on the subject.

The overall effect of reading this book is to gain insight into how Viesturs approaches the big peaks, and what this phenomenal Himalayan climber is like as a person. As a matter of fact, these insights would seem to suggest an ideal role model for future mountaineers. Viesturs has produced a very good book. We are fortunate that he has shared this much of his extraordinary world with us.

GEOFF TABIN

*Good Morning Midnight: Life and Death in the Wild.* CHIP BROWN. NEW YORK: RIVERHEAD BOOKS, 2003. 300 PAGES. HARDCOVER. \$24.95.

A reviewer often struggles to separate his judgment of a book—the author's work—from his personal feelings about the subject's life. The book in the reader's hand may not be the same as the book in the writer's head. In the case of recent AAJ reviews of biographies, our readers are