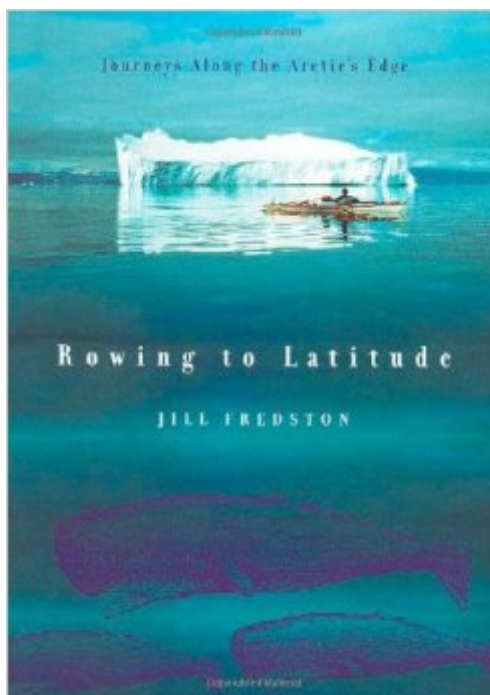


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Rowing To Latitude: Journeys Along The Arctic's Edge



Synopsis

Two by sea: A couple rows the wild coasts of the far north Jill Fredston has traveled more than twenty thousand miles of the Arctic and sub-Arctic-backwards. With her ocean-going rowing shell and her husband, Doug Fesler, in a small boat of his own, she has disappeared every summer for years, exploring the rugged shorelines of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Spitsbergen, and Norway. Carrying what they need to be self-sufficient, the two of them have battled mountainous seas and hurricane-force winds, dragged their boats across jumbles of ice, fended off grizzlies and polar bears, been serenaded by humpback whales and scrutinized by puffins, and reveled in moments of calm. As Fredston writes, these trips are "neither a vacation nor an escape, they are a way of life." Rowing to Latitude is a lyrical, vivid celebration of these northern journeys and the insights they inspired. It is a passionate testimonial to the extraordinary grace and fragility of wild places, the power of companionship, the harsh but liberating reality of risk, the lure of discovery, and the challenges and joys of living an unconventional life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This one of those books that is not only a page-turner, when you get to the end you peek under the back cover hoping there's another four hundred pages. Arctic coasts seem to have been made for Jill Fredston and her husband Doug, and they for the coasts. As if their income career as Alaskan avalanche forecasters wasn't thrill enough, in summers they airfreight his kayak and her scull from this to that spot in the Arctic, and then row - yes, oars - 900 to 1,500 miles down rivers, along coasts, around islands like Svalbard (Spitzbergen on some maps) so remote that rare few have ever

examined close-up the majesty of their unpeopled sides. They've been wined, dined, drank to, photographed, endured the insults of hostile locals, even shot at. Their litany of terrifying waveform to tremulous eddy is why this book is such a page-turner. Yet they keep going - 20,000 miles worth thus far. Arctic seas are not for everyone, nor its shores. Times of paeanic bliss are cleft short by howling ice storms from out of nowhere. The inexpressible shoreside beauty of a hundredfold pod of whales is quite another thing if you are in a nineteen-foot rowing scull surrounded by twenty-foot thrashing flukes. The utter peace of standing before a 680-year-old, six-foot-diameter cedar is, a few hours later, a gut-wrenching horror trying to navigate through sucking tidal gyres like tornadoes of the sea, dozens of yards deep and just as merciless. They routinely assail waves that would give a Hawaiian surfer pause - not eight, not ten, but fifteen to twenty feet, whose tops are being truncated to spume by the wind. The Perfect Storm without a motor.

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