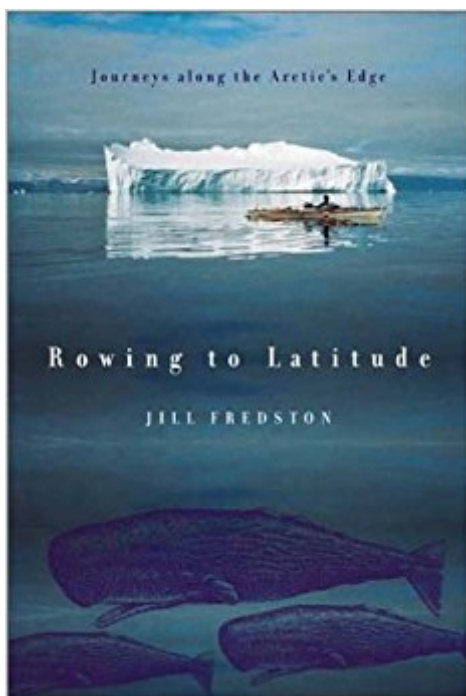


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Rowing To Latitude: Journeys Along The Arctic's Edge



Synopsis

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

In this lyrical look at rowing some of the world's most isolated and pristine coasts, Fredston focuses as much on her personal experience and her relationship with her husband, Doug Fesler, as she does on their actual journeys. The two avalanche experts, researchers and rescue trainers canoe the Arctic and sub-Arctic coastlines of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Norway and Sweden for three months out of each year. They travel together but in separate canoes: an apt metaphor for their marriage. An avid rower since childhood, Fredston ultimately landed in Alaska, drawn by its possibility and wildness. There she met Fesler, the state's leading avalanche authority. They

worked and rowed together, and eventually fell in love. Fredston ably describes both the big picture the coastline, encounters with polar bears, the high-stakes game of second-guessing storms and tides and the details of their travels. Her description of the physical act of rowing is rapturous, even sensual: "Sculling is the closest I'll ever come to being a ballerina, to creating visual music."

Fredston seems less at ease relating her mother's battle with cancer, near the book's end. Still, the book soars. "Wilderness rowing is far more than sport to me; it has been a conduit to know and trust myself," Fredston explains. "It is my way of being, of thinking, of seeing. In the process, rowing has evolved from something I do to some way that I am. Figuratively and literally I have spent years rowing to latitude." A must-read for armchair travelers, as well as a close and loving look at an intimate relationship. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Growing up in a house on the waters of Long Island, Fredston started rowing at the age of ten, when she got her first rowboat. She and her husband, Doug Fesler, are avalanche experts and codirectors of the Alaska Mountain Safety Center, but during the summer months they explore the desolate reaches of the North, traveling under their own power in oceangoing skulls and kayaks. This is the story of their 20,000-mile water journeys through Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Spitsbergen, and Norway. The pair sees the world pass by in reverse as they row, backwards, down remote rivers and along barren, rugged shorelines. They travel along many of the same routes that Jonathan Waterman detailed in *Arctic Crossing* (LJ 4/15/01), but Fredston focuses more on the trip and only respectfully mentions contacts with the indigenous people and their culture. Like Waterman, the couple encounters fierce storms, ever-present mosquitoes, and abundant wildlife, but Fredston maintains that it is worth facing all this adversity in order to see and experience the natural beauty of the North. Enjoyable and well written, this first book is sure to be popular in public libraries. John Kenny, San Francisco P.L. Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I'm not a rower and truly, I'm not much of a water person. I can barely doggy paddle, but I picked up Jill Fredston's *Rowing to Latitude* because my sense of adventure is easily satisfied by the turn of pages. I hoped for a book which would give me a peak at the Arctic and its animals without having to suffer its chill and biting winds. I was satisfied on that count as this description of her journey from Seattle to Skagway Alaska describes: The sun reappeared shortly after Petersburg. In celebration, we stopped uncharacteristically early on the end of Cape Fanshaw, a low-lying peninsula that

protrudes into Frederick Sound. Though shiny, sculpted pebbles spoke of frequent waves, the sea was docile that day. As soon as we landed, we began to turn in circles, like chickens on a rotisserie, binoculars and cameras in hand. All around us were humpback whales, at least twenty-five of them, spouting geysers of spray, swimming with gentle undulations of their dorsal fins, leaping into clear sky, and slapping the water with their fifteen-foot side flukes and broad, notched tails. A mother and calf eased by, their sides touching. Only a hundred yards away, a forty-foot whale repeatedly torpedoed free of the water, twisted sideways in midair, and landed with a cannonlike explosion. Another whale, closer to shore, continuously and deliberately beats its tail against the water like a gong. Jill Fredston was a competitive rower in college, she is an environmentalist and an avalanche expert with her husband Doug Fesler. Together they spend their summers engaging in mind boggling Arctic trips. Jill rows while her husband Doug paddles in a kayak. This works well for them as it provides them with a good 360 view with Jill rowing backwards and Doug facing forward. Rowing to Latitude is a memoir giving the reader a glimpse of the forces that shaped Fredston's life, her philosophy as well as following along on her amazing journeys. We are introduced to some of the Inuit people who she meets on her journeys, we admire the wildlife and are scared by bears during the night. Jill takes the reader through some truly scary moments she has had in her boat and we witness some extraordinary sights as a whale suspended in an iceberg high above their heads by Spitsbergen Island. For those who are fond of the environment and love tales of travel and adventure Rowing to Latitude is a great book to read

This book is amazing and inspiring. It is one of my favorite reads and I have bought it multiple times to give as gifts to friends.

This book was a great read. I especially enjoyed learning about the people they met on their journeys. It is very engaging book, keeps you interested and her descriptions of the landscape and the rowing makes you feel like you are there.

A well written adventure book. Filled with accounts of the Arctic's breathtaking beauty, interesting inhabitants, and interspersed with details about the authors 'off-adventure' life.

I first read this book in hardcopy and enjoyed it so much that I ordered it in the Kindle edition as well. This is written with humor and warmth, and is a truly enjoyable read throughout. I got it because I enjoy kayaking, and although her boat of choice is a rowboat, hey she's on the water and

going under her own power. The more I read, I realized that even if I didn't enjoy paddling or being on the water, I would have loved this book. Well done, Jill Fredston, well done.

very entertaining

I ordered this book after hearing an interview with Jill Fredston on NPR. I was intrigued by the way she told stories. This book definitely taught me so much that I didn't know about the world of rowing, especially with regards to rowing the often unforgiving coast. It was fascinating to learn about the lifestyle involved in dedicating a large part of one's life to this beautiful pursuit.

This is a well written, captivating book about a women who kayaked in the Arctic...not a forgiving territory! For most of us who kayak in warmer climates, there are so many issues we don't have to contend with; the huge currents, the isolation, and the vastness of this area. If you want a vicarious trip to the far North, this is an excellent read. I remain quite an admirer of the trips she undertook.

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