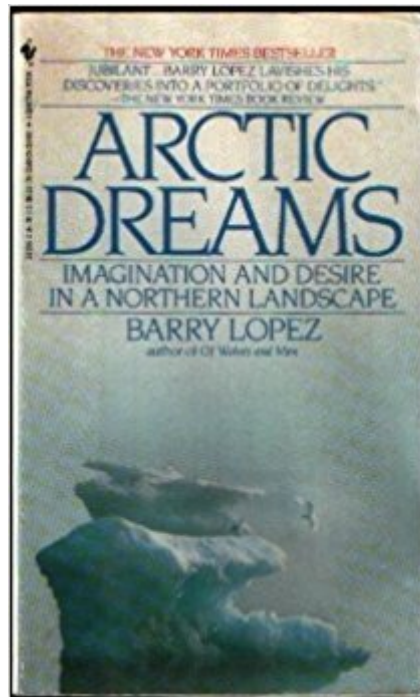




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Arctic Dreams: Imagination And Desire In A Northern Landscape



Synopsis

An odyssey across an arctic landscape celebrates earth, sea, ice, and the animals and people who live there and discusses human beings' fascination with the area's wonders. Reissue. NYT.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Based on 15 extended trips to the Canadian far north over a five-year period, *Arctic Dreams* celebrates the mysteries of what documentarians fondly call "last frontiers." Such places are everywhere in danger of destruction in the interest of ever-elusive economic progress, but Lopez writes no jeremiads. Instead, he aims to foster a kind of learned understanding of wild places, in this case the vast, scarcely knowable northern landscape. Writing of the natural history of the Arctic and its inhabitants--narwhals, polar bears, beluga whales, musk oxen, and caribou among them--Lopez draws powerful lessons from the land and imparts them assuredly and gracefully. *Arctic Dreams* deservedly won a National Book Award in 1986 when it was first published. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This is one of the finest books ever written about the Far North, warmly appreciative and understanding of the natural forces that shape life in an austere landscape. The prize-winning author (*Of Wolves and Men* spent four years in Arctic regions: traveling between Davis Strait in the east and Bering Strait in the west, hunting with Eskimos and accompanying archeologists, biologists and geologists in the field. Lopez became enthralled by the power of the Arctic, a power he observes derives from "the tension between its beauty and its capacity to take life." This is a story of

light, darkness and ice; of animal migrations and Eskimos; of the specter of development and the cultural perception of a region. Examining the literature of 19th century exploration, Lopez finds a disassociation from the actual landscape; explorers have tended to see the Arctic as an adversary. Peary and Stefansson left as a troubling legacy the attitude that the landscape could be labeled, then manipulated. Today, he contends, an imaginative, emotional approach to the Arctic is as important as a rational, scientific one. Lopez has written a wonderful, compelling defense of the Arctic wilderness. Illustrations. BOMC main selection. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Barry Lopez has put together a fascinating and pleasurable journey of the arctic. If you've ever been drawn to stories of arctic exploration or what it means to live and survive in the arctic then this is the book for you. Lopez has cobbled together a combination of stories of arctic exploration from long ago with in depth studies of certain species that survive and thrive in the arctic to give a deeply moving and interesting sense of the entire region. Lopez is a fluid and engaging writer and he masterfully paints appealing pictures that move you through a region of our planet that is underappreciated and sometimes misunderstood by most. If any of what I've mentioned sounds even remotely interesting then please do not pass up this wonderful book.

People sometimes ask me "what is your favorite book?" Or "what is the best book you have ever read?". Since first reading this book in 1999 to the present (2015), having just finished reading "Arctic Dreams" for the 3rd time, I don't even hesitate to answer. Arctic Dreams is about the North, its people, its history, its biology, its geology, its exploitation, waters, animals, plants, ice, islands, the "north pole", and everything else "north" you might think of. It sucks you in. In the end, as you step back to gain some perspective, it is about you, and me, and life, and life on earth. Another reviewer noted Lopez brings the mind of a scientist together with the pen of a poet. I concur. And I feel privileged once again to have experienced this wonderful book.

Beautifully written! Full of vivid imagery, stories and the amazing history of the land, the animals, the native people and the first arctic explorers. Fantastic read!

Anthropologists, biologists, historians, sociologists all would find a wealth of information in this book written with sensibility to the environment.

I'm glad I bought the Kindle edition of this book. There are so many pithy and/or inspirational passages in this book I've found my self going back and re-reading it a section at a time. The book is not just about the arctic, although of course it is. There are plenty of facts and historical tidbits relating to arctic climate, arctic people, arctic exploration. But at least as important is Mr Lopez's comments on the effects various cultures have on one another when they begin to blend, and the difficulties societies have trying to understand one another. I have to say, for whatever reason, it took me a couple chapters for this book to grab me. I almost quit reading it. Now I believe it is one of the more important books I've ever read.

I bought this and a slew of arctic book for my 90 year old mother who had just broken her arm. I live in the Arctic and wanted her to glimpse what life can be like here. She loved this book. She adores reading about Alaska. Barry Lopez is a consummate story teller that allows the reader to feel "first person" what he has experienced.

It is just an amazing achievement. Lopez is such a deep human being and his writing helps you understand the earth and where we fit in the universe. Just one example: When you think about polar bears, do you feel like weeping for their predicament? Maybe, but Lopez helped me understand that these creatures are sooooo intelligent that they may well find their way out of this situation and it will almost certainly be without our help. We're perhaps not smart enough or compassionate enough to help them, but we can get a lot wiser if we just observe the cyclical comings and goings of the creatures with whom we share our world. And we can see God in that ebb and flow.

Excellent book - Very well written. Good technical data written from the heart. I have been on two expeditions to the High Arctic and absolutely fell in love with the place. Barry Lopez fills in a lot of "Gaps" in my knowledge that I didn't even know existed. The High Arctic is a wonderful, magical place and Barry brings it all to life in the nicest manner. Good technical information written in such a manner that EVERYONE can enjoy and learn from it.

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