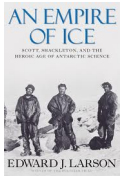


Science

An Empire of Ice: Scott, Shackleton, and the Heroic Age of Antarctic Science



While most books about the Arctic or Antarctic focus on just one thing--the indomitable quest to reach one of the poles--this book has a much broader canvas--it covers the equally arduous work of making new scientific discoveries during the age of great polar exploration.

This broader canvas allows the reader to learn about biological, geological, and meteorological phenomena but also about the cost of empire. England sponsored many of these expeditions while this country held political dominion over one quarter of the world. And as the twentieth century dawned, political power was changing rapidly. Britain had lost face in the Boer Wars in Africa and needed heroism and success to bolster its image abroad and its people's faith in the government and military as Germany, France, and the United States were becoming arch competitors.

But the book is mostly about science and adventure under the most brutal conditions. At one point Scott and Shackleton dock near an ice floe and decide it's time to use a hot-air balloon to get a better view of the landscape ahead. In this totally unpeopled land, Scott rides up into the air and views the vast white expanse. For most of us, such a view would provoke sheer terror. And Scott himself was a little nervous in the little bamboo basket. I kept thinking, what if he falls out.

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Posted by Dory L. on November 15, 2011

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Post Mortem: The death investigation crisis in America.

Everything is not what it seems. I guess I watch too much tv. I've always been under the impression that forensic investigations and death investigations were done in a highly scientific and professional manner. As it turns out, the reality is that throughout most of America the

position of Coroner is an elected position. This means that the person doing the investigation could have little to no experience at all which could then lead to a [Read more](#)

Posted by Burl C. on September 27, 2011

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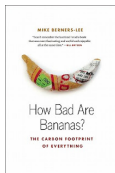
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How Bad Are Bananas?



It seems common knowledge that riding your bike to work is a low carbon activity. What

you might not know is that if you fuel your bike ride with air-freighted off season asparagus, then your carbon footprint increases dramatically and you'd be better off commuting buy Hummer. The art and science of taking into account many aspects of what constitutes a carbon footprint has often been ignored.

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Posted by sbowman on May 18, 2011

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How I Killed Pluto and Why It Had It Coming



OK, who can resist a title like [How I Killed Pluto...](#)? It promises and then delivers a light,

interesting take on the Pluto demotion from one of the nine big ones to a dwarf planet at the edge of our solar system. "My very excellent mother just served us nine pizzas." Do you remember that line from science class in grade school? The words helped us remember the planets and their order in the solar system: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto. Alas, now mother is just serving us nine___?

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Posted by Dory L. on May 5, 2011

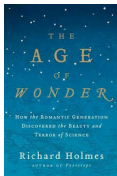
[How I killed Pluto and why it had it coming](#)

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The Age of Wonder: How the Romantic Generation Discovered the Beauty and Terror of Science



If you only read one book about science this year, let this be the one. [Richard Holmes](#)

has somehow managed to meld a compendium of 18th and 19th century scientific biographies into a compelling narrative that is part travelogue, part scientific exploration, and all magical. He begins with the story of Joseph Banks who travelled the South Seas with Captain Cook as the expedition's botanist, a position he paid for and equipped with many new instruments and two great mastiffs. Banks was one of the earliest westerners to visit Tahiti. He soon learned the language and basically abandoned his botanical studies to become an anthropologist in Paradise.

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Posted by Dory L. on March 30, 2011

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