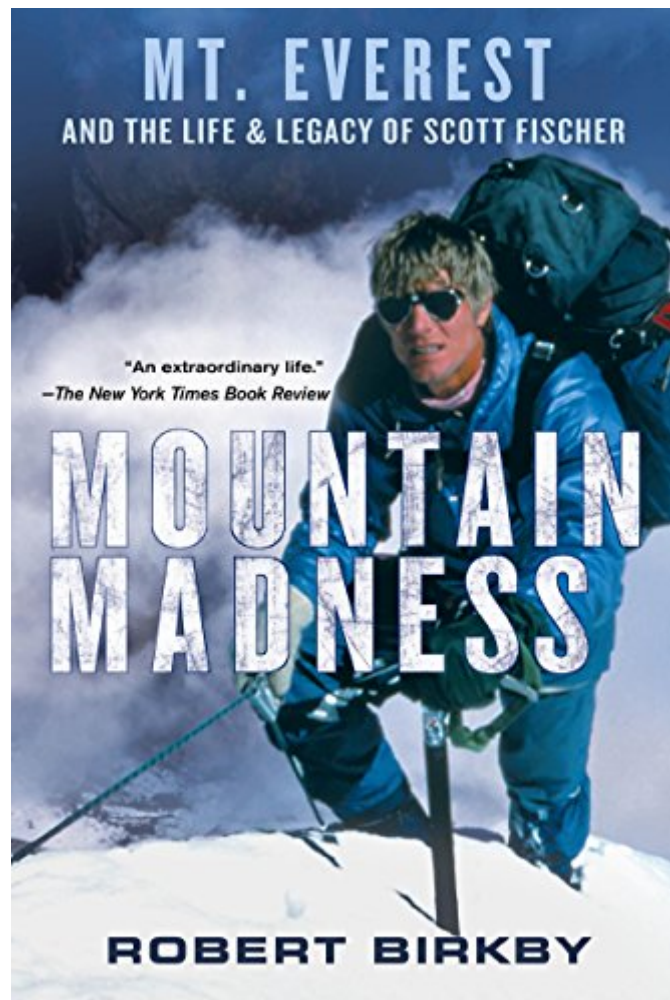




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Mountain Madness: Scott Fischer, Mount Everest, And A Life Lived On High



Synopsis

“An extraordinary life.”
•The New York Times Book Review “A fitting homage to one of the great outdoor extremists.”
•Kirkus Reviews “Legendary climber Scott Fischer found in Mount Everest a perfect landscape for his fearless spirit. Scaling the world’s highest peak tested his skills, his courage, and his endurance. His legendary final expedition and its tragic outcome are portrayed in Everest, the 3-D movie adaptation starring Jake Gyllenhaal as Scott Fischer. Robert Birkby, one of Scott’s close friends, captures in this intimate and stirring portrait who Scott Fischer really was and what led him to climb to the top of the world before he left it altogether. A personal, uncritical biography that rounds out the portrait of Fischer sketched in Krakauer’s best-seller Into Thin Air.”
•The New York Times Book Review “A much fuller picture of a climber widely critiqued in the high-profile coverage after the Everest tragedy.”
•Seattle Post Intelligencer “A vivid portrait of a superb athlete whose love of mountain climbing drove everything he did.”
•Ed Viesturs, author of No Shortcuts to the Top “Birkby succeeds in illuminating the power mountains can exert over the human soul.”
•Publishers Weekly “Updated with a New Introduction and Epilogue Plus new photos exclusive to the digital edition!”

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Customer Reviews

Robert Birkby provides a moving, sympathetic view of Scott Fischer's climbing life. It goes a long way to dispel notions of Fischer as the irresponsible party boy portrayed in so many popular sources. Birkby details Fischer's development as a climber and family man, his exuberance and charisma and his insatiable lust for mountaineering-making it sound like no other occupation could ever challenge and fulfill him except the gruelling work and inestimable satisfaction of elite mountain climbing. Birkby drops insights too, to the character flaws that gave rise to the negative and incomplete depiction that sound bite media craves, that possibly led to his ultimate demise. Fischer was so fantastically adapted physically to the sport, and so driven to push his limits, he may have lost sight of what's possible. Ironically, as Birkby describes it-tho not ironically to those who knew him, Fischer died not from arrogance, but from the impulse to help others and possibly the hubris that told him he was infinitely capable of that responsibility. In general, the book provides an inside look at the climbing world an armchair alpinist like me craves. The writing is well researched, lacks the grace and fluidity of a Krakauer, but is a solid testament to an exciting climber's life.

I liked this book because as much as I knew about the events on Everest the year Fischer died, I never knew much about the life of Fischer and the drive that sent him to his death. The writing in so many of these books is not usually particularly good, but this one is better than many. For those of us who have read a lot about that fateful year, the ending is an anti-climax and the end of Fisher's life is given very little treatment. Perhaps that's as it should be. One thing that isn't mentioned is what impact this tragic death had on his family--particularly the young children. But we have been here before with so many climbers, like John Harlin, for example. Ah, but that's a different book! And there is one out there that deals with that subject.

Great biography of a strong, driven and fearless mountaineer. Even if you are an arm chair mountain adventurer, you will be enthralled with the truth about Scott Fischer's determination and sacrifice to carve a livelihood from his gift and passion. The movies, "Into Thin Air" and Everest" are Hollywood's perverse form of defamation to Fischer's true character. To this day, his company Mountain Madness, is alive and well. A surviving tribute to the legend.

Robert Birkby was a longtime friend of Scott Fischer, and he has made it clear that his portrait cannot be unbiased. Still, I felt that he did the very best he could to see his friend without distortion despite the abiding affection for Fischer and his wife. This is not the definitive account of the 1996 Everest disaster, nor does he claim it to be, but it is a carefully drawn and intimate portrait of one of the key players and one of the victims of the tragedy. Birkby's portraits clearly show the fatal flaws -- flip sides of Fischer's greatest strengths and virtues -- that perhaps had a significant role in Fischer's part of the disaster. I highly recommend this to anyone who wants to know more about Scott Fischer, and to all who want to understand as best as humanly possible what happened high atop Everest on 10-11 May 1996.

Actually I get the feeling that we're all Friends of Scott. The book is a blast to read, even knowing how Scott Fischer met his end on Everest. Who knew mountain climbers had so much fun? Fischer is lovingly portrayed and you wish you could go on an adventure with him. If his death as described in "Into Thin Air" wasn't heartbreaking enough, this book details why he was so well known and loved. Yet the book isn't sad, more of a loving biography of an astounding climber. One of the best books I've read in a long time. Uplifting and heartening. The author patiently sought out and interviewed people who had known Scott throughout his life. The overall effect is like an entire sports stadium roaring approval. Great read. Highly recommended.

A vivid and moving account of the adventures of Scott Fischer, informed by his many friends. There is a sort of man out there who, by some goodness in their nature, can convince other people to not only take a risk but also open up to life's possibilities. Scott Fischer was such a man. "Mountain Madness" strikes a wonderful balance between psychological insight to the man and the sheer excitement of his life. The climbing anecdotes are terrific. Everyone knows what happened at the end. What I really enjoyed was reading about the beginning, and about all the 'Bruces' who no-doubt went on to make their own mark in life. Thanks go to the author for writing a clear and wholistic account, underscoring the loss for all the Friends of Scott.

I rarely give a book 5 stars, but this book deserves every single one. Definitely a good addition to the books written about the 1986 Everest tragedy.

I have read every book about the disaster on Everest in 1996 as well as almost every other book

written about the climbs (or attempts to climb) of Mt. Everest and I made the assumption this would be similar. It was not! The book was about the life and times of Scott Fischer. The book outlines his start in NOLS and continues to describe the adventures and hardships he encountered along the way to becoming a world-class mountaineer. I had no idea he and his climbing partners put in many 1st routes as well as being some of the first Americans to reach certain summits. Overall, the book was VERY well written and I would highly recommend this to anyone who enjoys reading about real-life adventures with some notable humor scattered throughout. We all know that Scott lost his life on Everest in 1996 but you may not know all the other significant mountaineering accomplishments he had under his belt prior to the tragedy. Further, Mr. Birkey interviews many of Scott's friends/climbing partners to gain a better understanding of his methods in the mountains and this helps the reader to "see" where Scott was coming from, i.e. his mindset in the business world and mountains. Again, if you are looking for a good book you may want to pick-up this one.

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