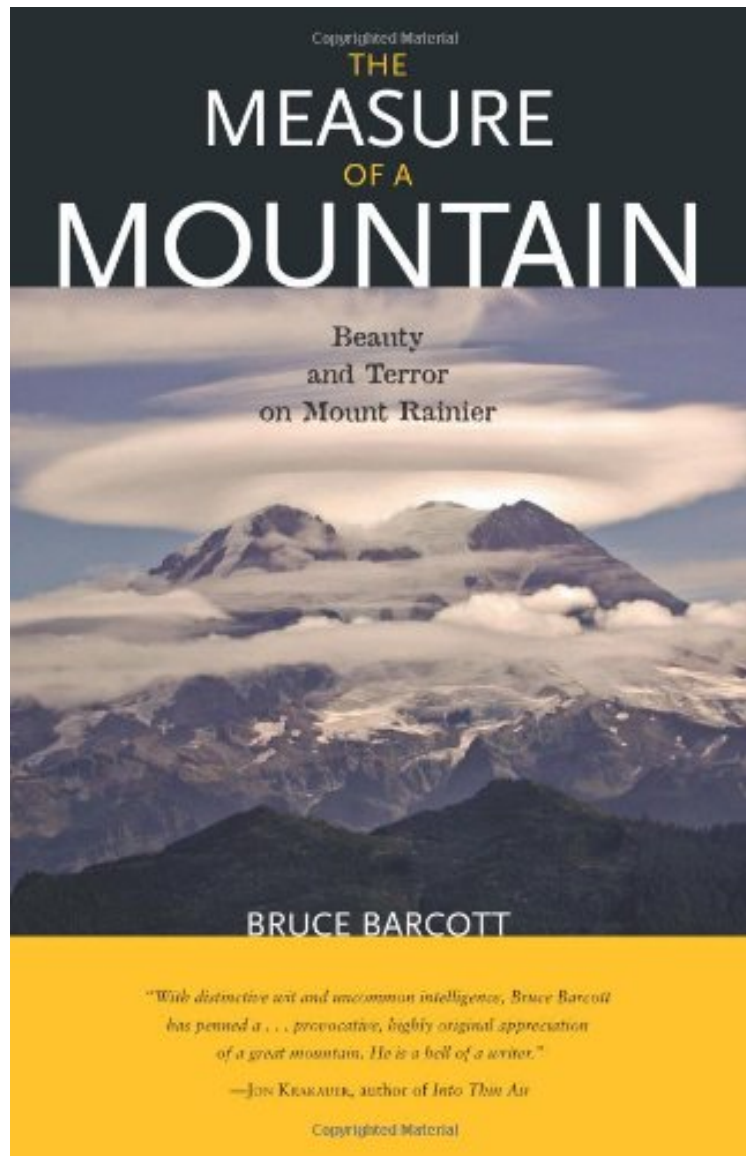


(Free) The Measure of a Mountain: Beauty and Terror on Mount Rainier

## The Measure of a Mountain: Beauty and Terror on Mount Rainier

Bruce Barcott

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#183822 in Books Bruce Barcott 2007-04-10 2007-04-10 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.50 x .60 x 5.50l, .73 #File Name: 1570615217288 pages Measure of a Mountain Beauty and Terror on Mount Rainier | File size: 55.Mb

**Bruce Barcott : The Measure of a Mountain: Beauty and Terror on Mount Rainier** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Measure of a Mountain: Beauty and Terror on Mount Rainier:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Hiking the Cascade Mountains. By JeanSoutheast of Mr. Ranier is what is now named William O. Douglas National Forest. Reading this memoir makes you feel as if you were hiking

along with Douglas. You know the paths, the terrain, the flora and fauna, and the unpredictable weather. He began to hike to overcome a childhood infirmity, but continued after he found companionable serenity hiking, fishing, and camping this part of the Cascades. As an adult, he took a break from his responsibilities as a U.S. Supreme Court Justice and returned as often as he could to these beloved mountains.<sup>3</sup> of 3 people found the following review helpful. It's about The Mountain By Brad Allen The Measure of a Mountain is a mountain climber's book in the same way that Edward Abbey's books are for the desert explorer, it is about the relationship with The Mountain not the climb. Bruce Barcott writes in a way that captures how we in the Northwest engage with Mt. Rainier. There is something about it that draws us back, renews us, and then pushes us away. The Measure of a Mountain captures this like no other book, video, or film I have ever seen or read does. I often say that a climb of Mt. Rainier starts when you decide to make the ascent and includes the training, preparation, and psychological fitness that precedes a climb. This is the story of his preparation. Part of this time before the climb is getting to know yourself and understanding the challenge you have taken on. Mr. Barcott does this by analyzing, studying, presenting, and hiking around Mt. Rainier. The Mountain is none too kind to him in the process, anyone who has been to its flanks more than a time or two will truly understand. I love the end of the fourth chapter where he says "At Mowich Lake, four days into the journey, I quit the mountain. The inexorable moist had crept into the cells of my sleeping bag.....I retired for the winter, beaten." I had been there too. This is the book to read when preparing for Mt. Rainier, not so you can self-arrest or tie a good figure-8 but so you can understand what you are doing. A must-read for anyone who approaches the grand lady of the Northwest.<sup>0</sup> of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting read. Much more than just a climbing story. By Todd I enjoyed reading this book and learning much about the various aspects about this grand mountain. Author shares personal stories of backpacking along trails on the lower portions of Rainier.

In *The Measure of a Mountain*, Seattle writer Bruce Barcott sets out to know Rainier. His method is exploratory, meandering, personal. He begins by encircling it, first by car then on foot. He finds that the mountain is a complex of moss-bearded hemlocks and old-growth firs, high meadows that blossom according to a precise natural timeclock, sheets of crumbling pumice, fractured glaciers, and unsteady magma. Its snow fields bristle with bug life, and its marmots chew rocks to keep their teeth from overgrowing. Rainier rumbles with seismic twitches and jerksome one-hundred-thirty earthquakes annually. The nightmare among geologists is the unstoppable wall of mud that will come rolling down its slopes when a hunk of mountain falls off, as it does every half century (and were fifty years overdue). Rainier is both an obsession and a temple that attracts its own passionate acolytes: scientists, priests, rangers, and mountain guides. Rainier is also a monument to death: every year someone manages just to disappear on its flanks; imperiled climbers and their rescuers perish on glaciers; a planeload of Marines remains lodged in ice since they crashed into the mountain in 1946. Referred to by locals as simply "the mountain," it is the single largest feature of the Pacific Northwest landscape provided it isn't hidden in clouds. Visible or not, though, its presence is undeniable.

.com Mount Rainier, North America's biggest volcano, looms over Seattle like an invitation to... adventure? Disaster? Discovery? It's all of the above for Bruce Barcott, a Seattle writer who captures the mountain from multiple angles in this luminous biography that defines Rainier's landscape to be like none other on the continent. By turns witty and introspective, Barcott's trip to the top of the glacier-clad peak is filled with history, scientific observation, and a divided personal attachment that struggles to make sense of the mountain and its effect on the surrounding land and people. *The Measure of a Mountain* is a literate, entertaining view of a totemic Northwest landmark. From Library Journal A Seattle journalist sets out to write a natural history of Mt. Rainier in Washington State but finds that it is a truth universally acknowledged that a man interested in mountains must want to climb to the top. While researching the mountain, Barcott happened to interview Scott Fischer, a climbing guide who shortly afterward perished in a sensationalized accident on Mt. Everest (see Jon Krakauer's *Into Thin Air*, LJ 4/1/97). Trying to make sense of Fischer's death turns the story from a standard natural history into a distinctly anti-macho example of mountaineering literature, as a bookish, gregarious man without any natural daredevil impulses contemplates climbing (or possibly not climbing) the 14,410' peak. A darkly humorous review of mountaineering memoirs notes that "once an author is on the mountain, there's no limit to what he'll suffer for his reader," but that "unlike any other sport, mountaineering demands that its players die." Although the anecdotes about Mt. Rainier will be of regional interest, this appealing adventure story about a reluctant adventurer will please many readers. ?Amy Brunvand, Univ. of Utah Lib., Salt Lake City Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus sA marvelous biography of Mt. Rainier--public symbol, sacred icon, towering Seattle presence, even when lost behind a vaporous haze--from Barcott, a staff writer for the *Seattle Weekly* and contributor to *Harper's*. At 14,410 feet, Rainier is the highest and most dangerous volcano in the US, its summit area mimicking frigid Himalayan weather conditions. Like many Seattlites, Barcott is caught in Rainier's clutches. He circumambulates it, nibbling at the flanks; ascends through alpine meadows, from one opaque cloud bank to the next, as if "approaching the gates of heaven." He gets down on his knees to scrutinize the snow flea and consider the harvestermen (a.k.a. daddy longlegs) that, astonishingly, live at 10,000 feet; takes to the mountain at night under a candent moon, the glaciers luminous. He listens to the radical silence, bathes in the spectacular eight-

week run of wildflowers: avalanche lily, paintbrush, yellowdot saxifrage, salal (which, Barcott tells us, the poet Richard Hugo said was one of the few words he loved enough to own). At full spate, Barcott writes with elegance, both thoughtful and waggish, and he has a way of making the most mundane matters--seismological readouts, say, or the marmot's daily routine--utterly absorbing. There are moments when you will guffaw out loud; at other times you will gasp or spill a tear over stories of those who have died on the mountain. Last comes the author's summit push with his father, a hellacious experience, Barcott's "legs trembling like sinners before God": perhaps a test of courage, a bow to curiosity, but also "the stupidest thing I've ever done." "We want to know mountains. . . . but they've got no story . . . We throw ourselves onto them and make the stories happen." Barcott knows his mountain, and his story is enthralling, respectful, bitingly witty, and wise. -- Copyright 1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.