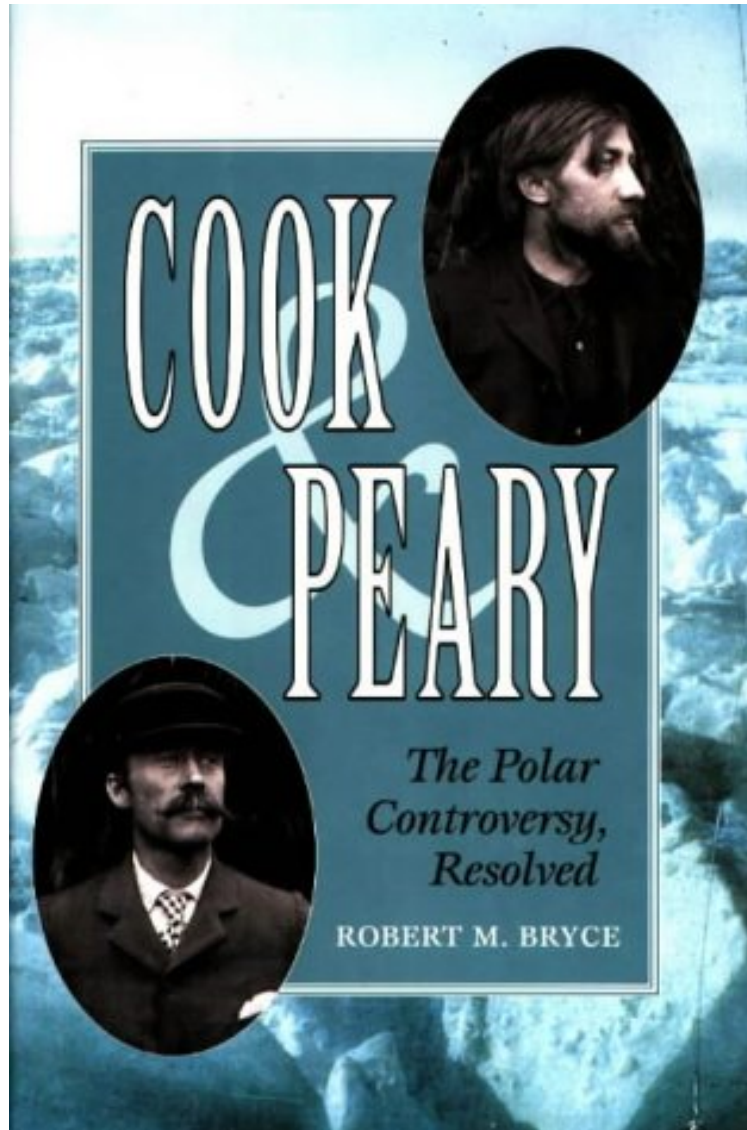


[Download] Cook and Peary

Cook and Peary

Robert M. Bryce

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Robert M. Bryce : Cook and Peary before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cook and Peary:

22 of 25 people found the following review helpful. This battle-of-the-hoaxes is a real page-turnerBy A CustomerDon't be put off by bulk: despite its 1,151 pages, "Cook and Peary" is a real page-turner. In elegant, concise language, it tells the compelling story of not one but two of the great hoaxes of all time. The story of the two men who falsely claimed to have reached the North Pole is one of mendacity and gullibility and of the victory of faith over knowledge. It highlights the shakiness of the foundations of what we think of as common knowledge. This year marks

the 90th anniversary of the start of the great polar controversy, and it shows that the balance is tipping yet again. It began favoring Cook, then swung decisively to Peary, despite many initial doubters. The idea that both men were fakers dates from the 1970s, and it seems to be finally prevailing. Today, the New York Times, once a passionate defender of Peary, reported last November, "most historians believe both explorers lied." In the first part of the book, Robert Bryce, a meticulous researcher who has the wisdom to trust absolutely no one, tells this eye-opening story without making any judgments. He leaves you to make your own. In the second part, he examines the available evidence, some of which he was the first to examine, and tries to answer the two essential questions: Did either reach the pole? He concludes that Cook's own long-hidden journals prove he turned back after 100 miles or so on the floating Arctic Ocean ice pack, or less than a quarter of the way. On Peary, he shows convincing evidence that Peary stopped short of the pole, probably between 100 and 50 miles from the northern axis of the Earth. Bryce explains how Peary used his powerful friends to press his case, while Cook relied on his charm, saying over and over, in effect, "trust me." Bryce shows how either would have been believed, even without the proofs that are ordinarily required, if the other hadn't been there to challenge him. But most amazing, he shows the phenomenal chutzpah of both and the credibility of a world before which most of the damning facts were out in plain view. "Cook and Peary" details the slow collapse of the two claims despite a still-vigorous Peary defense by the National Geographic magazine and persistent lobbying work by the Cook Society. It is this collapse that led the Guinness Book of Records to get rid of Peary, replacing him in 1997 by a 1948 Soviet airplane expeditions. The World Almanac, which once tersely reported Peary's conquest of the pole, as had virtually all world reference books since the Encyclopaedia Britannica found for Peary in 1911, now mentions that there are serious challenges to his claim. But this debate is too old to ever die, and someone will no doubt eventually come out with new facts to illuminate a partisan point of view.

18 of 23 people found the following review helpful. Absorbing slice of history
By Susan R. Matthews
The book's title promises a "resolution" to the great Cook/Peary debate, and resolution is indeed to be found: but I had so much fun along the way that I was sorry when the book ended. The author carefully and dispassionately relates and evaluates events, claims, counter-claims, and rhetoric surrounding the flamboyant career of Fred Cook, with rather less emphasis on Robert Peary. One is not really surprised to find the bulk of the text taken up with following Dr. Cook's career in light of the fact that his has been the more controversial vita. My previous exposure to this controversy has been all on the Peary side and I found this narrative to be a real eye-opener in multiple respects. My understanding of the issues, and my sympathies for both men, are quite altered as a result of having read this book. The partisan passion that Cook versus Peary still arouses in the hearts and minds of intelligent and otherwise rational people is astounding. This book is a real gem on multiple levels: not just for its careful assembly of facts, claims, and suppositions, but for what it has to say about media -- mass communications -- and the psychology of explorers and the people who support them. Finally, I found this to be an amazingly graceful read for a book of its size -- so absorbing that I found myself regretfully approaching the end of the book in half the time expected. Well written, well researched, carefully presented -- a great book to have in the library!

11 of 16 people found the following review helpful. A thoroughly detailed scholarly work
By Dr. Nancy L. Nicholson
As a piece of scholarship, this is a definitive book. I am using it and related materials in a seminar about research methods. It is not an "easy read" and the numerous relevant illustrations are sometimes smaller than is comfortable to examine. However, it is one of the few sources where you can find reams of verifiable references to the lives of Cook and Peary. Those who believe that Cook and Peary told the truth about their polar "adventures" will probably find ways to discount the mountain of evidence that Bryce has made available. The density of detail takes patient reading, but leaves a reader free to compare interpretations with Bryce's clearly marked conclusions. The author has covered the controversy thoroughly, including taking the trouble to evaluate a copy of Cook's diary archived in Denmark. Those wishing to spend time with this book will be rewarded with credible information about one of the fascinating human stories of the last two centuries.

On September 1, 1909, Frederick A. Cook announced that he had reached the North Pole. Five days later Commander Robert E. Peary claimed the honor. Through his completely documented research, author Robert Bryce reconstructs events and presents the explorers, their motivations, and their accomplishments in their own words and in the words of their contemporaries. 125 photos.

.com The North Pole is a desolate place. But it's at the top of the world and holds magnetic allure. Two explorers made mad dashes for it in 1908 and 1909. Within five days of each other, both Frederick Cook and Robert Peary claimed to have gotten there first. Together they inspired a bitter and never-ending controversy about who is the real Columbus of the Arctic. Every decade or so a new author claims to offer the "final word" on this dispute. In this massive book (1,133 pages), Robert Bryce may at last live up to the billing. His intriguing proposal: Both men failed, knew it and lied about it.