

Blue Latitudes: Boldly Going Where Captain Cook Has Gone Before

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In an exhilarating tale of historic adventure, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Confederates in the Attic* retraces the voyages of Captain James Cook, the Yorkshire farm boy who drew the map of the modern world

Captain James Cook's three epic journeys in the 18th century were the last great voyages of discovery. His ships sailed 150,000 miles, from the Arctic to the Antarctic, from Tasmania to Oregon, from Easter Island to Siberia. When Cook set off for the Pacific in 1768, a third of the globe remained blank. By the time he died in Hawaii in 1779, the map of the world was substantially complete.

Tony Horwitz vividly recounts Cook's voyages and the exotic scenes the captain encountered: tropical orgies, taboo rituals, cannibal feasts, human sacrifice. He also relives Cook's adventures by following in the captain's wake to places such as Tahiti, Savage Island, and the Great Barrier Reef to discover Cook's embattled legacy in the present day. Signing on as a working crewman aboard a replica of Cook's vessel, Horwitz experiences the thrill and terror of sailing a tall ship. He also explores Cook the man: an impoverished farmboy who broke through the barriers of his class and time to become the greatest navigator in British history.

By turns harrowing and hilarious, insightful and entertaining, *BLUE LATITUDES* brings to life a man whose voyages helped create the 'global village' we know today.

Captain James Cook's three epic 18th-century explorations of the Pacific Ocean were the last of their kind, literally completing the map of the world. Yet despite his monumental discoveries, principally in the South Pacific, Cook the man has remained an enigma. In retracing key legs of the circumnavigator's journey, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Tony Horwitz chronicles the cultural and environmental havoc wrought by the captain's opening of the unspoiled Pacific to the West, as well as the alternately indifferent and passionate reactions Cook's name evokes during the writer's journeys through Polynesia, Australia, the Aleutians, and the explorer's native England. Horwitz skillfully weaves a biography and travel narrative with warm humor that is natural and human-scale, and his restless inquisitiveness quickly infects the reader. While striking dichotomies abound throughout that journey--Maori toughs who adopt Nazi imagery to symbolize their own fight against white domination, millennia-old Polynesian sexual mores that would shame the Reeperbahn, a sense that Christianity decimated native cultures at least as effectively as Western venereal diseases did--few are more poignant than the ones that abound in Cook's own life. This fine work is an adventurous reminder that answers to historical riddles are elusive at best--and seldom as compelling as the myriad new questions they pose. -- Jerry McCulley

Tony Horwitz is the bestselling author of *Midnight Rising*, *A Voyage Long and Strange*, *Blue Latitudes*, *Confederates in the Attic*, and *Baghdad Without a Map*. He is also a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who has worked for *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New Yorker*. He lives in Martha's Vineyard with his wife, Geraldine Brooks, and their two sons.

Other Books

The Pacific Muse, "While examining colonial culture in its many manifestations, from art, literature, and film to the journals of explorers and missionaries, O'Brien rereads not only the canonical texts of Pacific imperialism, but also lesser-known remnants of this cultural

heritage with an eye to what they reveal about gender, sexuality, race, and femininity. Over its long history - from the famous (and much romanticized) settlement of Tahitian women and mutineers from the Bounty on Pitcairn Island in 1789 to the South Seas romantic tradition, Gauguin, and beach culture - notions of female primitivism changed in response to the ideological watersheds of Christianity, Enlightenment science, and race theories, as well as the development of democratic nation-states, modernity, and colonialism.

Horwitz, T. *Blue Latitudes : Boldly Going Where Captain Cook Has Gone Before* . New York : Henry Holt Co. , 2002 . Howay, F. , ed. *The Voyage of the New Hazard : To the Northwest Coast , Hawaii , and China 1810-1813* . Salem , Mass . "