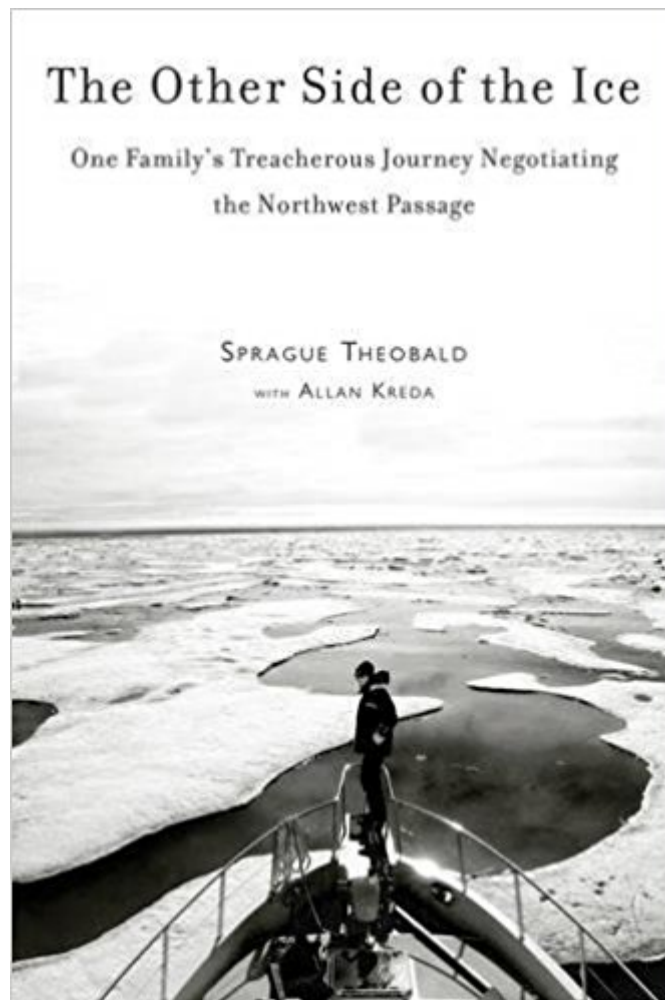




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The Other Side Of The Ice: One Family's Treacherous Journey Negotiating The Northwest Passage



Synopsis

A sailor and his family's harrowing and inspiring story of their attempt to sail the treacherous Northwest Passage. (TO WATCH THE OFFICIAL HD TEASER FOR THE EMMY AWARD WINNING "The Other Side of The Ice" [book and documentary] PLEASE GO TO: [VIMEO.COM/45526226](https://vimeo.com/45526226))

Sprague Theobald, an award-winning documentary filmmaker and expert sailor with over 40,000 offshore miles under his belt, always considered the Northwest Passage--the sea route connecting the Atlantic to the Pacific--the ultimate uncharted territory. Since Roald Amundsen completed the first successful crossing of the fabled Northwest Passage in 1906, only twenty-four pleasure craft have followed in his wake. Many more people have gone into space than have traversed the Passage, and a staggering number have died trying. From his home port of Newport, Rhode Island, through the Passage and around Alaska to Seattle, it would be an 8,500-mile trek filled with constant danger from ice, polar bears, and severe weather.

What Theobald couldn't have known was just how life-changing his journey through the Passage would be. Reuniting his children and stepchildren after a bad divorce more than fifteen years earlier, the family embarks with unanswered questions, untold hurts, and unspoken mistrusts hanging over their heads. Unrelenting cold, hungry polar bears, and a haunting landscape littered with sobering artifacts from the tragic Franklin Expedition of 1845, as well as personality clashes that threaten to tear the crew apart, make *The Other Side of the Ice* a harrowing story of survival, adventure, and, ultimately, redemption.

TO WATCH THE OFFICIAL HD TEASER FOR "The Other Side of The Ice" (book and documentary) PLEASE GO TO: [VIMEO.COM/45526226](https://vimeo.com/45526226) 50 color illustrations

Book Information

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: Skyhorse Publishing; 1 edition (August 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1616086238

ISBN-13: 978-1616086237

Product Dimensions: 6 x 6.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 238 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,158,187 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #73 in Books > Sports &

Outdoors > Outdoor Recreation > Sailing > Excursion Guides #546 in Books > Parenting &

Relationships > Family Relationships > Parent & Adult Child #891 in Books > Sports & Outdoors

Customer Reviews

BOOK LIST:Theobald writes movingly of bringing together his adult children to join him as they sail from RI, to Seattle. The trip takes themÂ into history as they revisit the last known locations of the doomed Franklin Expedition of 1845...Â revealing just how tenuous relationships can be in what is undeniably a thrilling voyage.THE ALPHA WIFE:Sprague is a talented writer and draws the reader in from the first page - and almost immediately, it's clear that this story is about more than the ocean.Â Sprague paints a vivid and honest picture of his relationship with his kids. Sprague talks just enough about the boat to educate the reader and set the stage for the story.BOOK

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Attempting to transit The Northwest Passage, in my view, is one of the last true maritime adventures to be found.Â Man has been trying to find this Nautical Grail since the 1600s and in that time hundreds of lives have been lost in the attempt.Â Sir John Franklin's attempt in 1845 ended in tragedy of untold proportions in that both his 100' ships and 120 men basically vanished without a trace.Â To this day neither he nor his ships have been found. As a documentarian and sailor with over 40,000 off-shore miles the challenge of such a transit had haunted me for most of my life.In the summer/fall of 2009, aboard my 57' Nordhavn trawler Bagan, my family and I set out from Newport, RI to attempt this remarkable challenge; to try and do something that approximately only 24 other personal craft have ever accomplished. For five months and 8,500 miles we had to deal with all that Mother Nature threw at us, many times not knowing if we were going to add to that long list of dead who have tried to find this passage between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.As the book will tell, this

was a trip that physically and emotionally changed us all. Writing *The Other Side of The Ice* was a very difficult journey back into a mind set and experience that was, at times, very dark and terrifying for me. So much was the power and desolation of the Arctic that I found it took almost two years to be able to approach my personal journals again. *The Other Side of The ice* as well as my first book, *The Reach*, reflect my deep, powerful love and respect for Mother Ocean and all of her visible and invisible denizens, benign and deadly. Both books try to express the thinking that we are simply visitors in her realm and at that, can be snuffed out in the slightest of her breaths.

It's the summer of 2009. Sprague Theobald, a filmmaker and expert sailor, decides it's time to do something interesting with his life. Hmm...What to do? What to do? O, why not take an 8,500-mile danger-filled trek across the Northwest Passage in a 57-foot boat? This happens to be one of the most treacherous trips a sailor can take, one that few have had the audacity to take, much less survive. I think knowing this alone would make the decision for me. Stay home. Watch the Discovery Channel. Not so for Sprague. Why would anyone want to go out on a limb financially to take a trip on frigid, hostile, faraway seas? Were there no warning bells? Does this man have no fear? From the minute I opened *The Other Side of the Ice*, I couldn't put it down. Sometimes it reads like a captain's log, but this captain is awake to many levels of experience. He offers a rich chronicle of life on the edge, physical, emotional and spiritual. It's not enough that he runs out of money before casting off, but he and his crew of estranged family members are dogged by white-knuckle storms, hidden icebergs, broken satellite connections, fog, hungry polar bears, underwater rocks, freezing water, ice floes and faulty equipment. Against the backdrop of profound arctic beauty, interspersed with fond reminiscences of the past, forging through impassable frozen bays, the crew deals with physical ailments, being lost, exhausted, discouraged, sibling tension and self-doubt and exceeds the limits of each other's patience. This is truly a unique, self-effacing, compelling memoir of transcendence through a life lived fully. I've ordered the movie!

This book is poorly written. Really poorly. It's abysmal. I'm guessing the authors self-published it, and that their egos foreclosed any notion of hiring an editor. My wife bought it accidentally, but I'm a sailor so I gave it a go. Read every other bad review. A common complaint is that the story isn't really about the Northwest Passage, but about the author's family drama and his angst about it. It's true. That might not have been bad if Sprague had the skill to invest you in the characters. I'm sure they're all nice people whom we'd be pleased to know, but this book is so clumsy that you never give a s*** about them. That's too bad. For sailors interested in technical highlights, be warned that

they're few and far between. If you want a better tale about the Northwest Passage, look up Matt Rutherford. If you want an interesting, well written personal history, try Lee Shore Blues, by Peter Heiberg. If you want to read some good writing about the Arctic, look up Arctic Dreams, by Barry Lopez. Barry can keep you riveted through page after page about tundra. Sprague can barely get through an anchor watch without drama. It's interesting that, in his appendix, Sprague's stepson Chauncey describes the trip as "remarkably drama free." I've seen the trailer for their documentary. The images are beautiful. If the authors brought this project to me, I'd use the stills in a coffee table book, cut out the uninteresting family bulls***, fill the pages with detail about the interesting subject--the Northwest Passage--and call it good. You'd sell lots of copies around the holidays.

As a merchant marine captain, who has sailed Arctic and Antarctic waters I find the accounts of weather and ice completely credible. The impersonal malevolence of the frozen latitudes is something one never forgets; it completely overwhelms the pristine pastel beauty. The message that is often overlooked by those who romanticize the sea are the extreme day to day difficulties of living with different personalities while under unusual stress. In addition, the debilitating effects of sleep deprivation cannot be exaggerated. Through my eyes this was a foolish venture, with a fortunate outcome. However, it is well recorded and a very good read.

I've not written a review before. This time, I'm making an exception. It is impossible to read this book and not have questions. Curiosity can lead the reader on a journey as fascinating as the book itself. Sprague's love for the water and exploration and history is expressed in his chronicles of life aboard a boat through the Northwest Passage. He records the hardships, adventures and heroism his family and crew experienced. I enjoyed his narrative style. It's candid and honest. He thinks like a regular guy you could share a Sunday Seahawks game. And yet, he's been THERE--done THAT. He's been through the Northwest Passage! His professional humility is touching. Extended-family relationships can be intense or heartbreaking. It's the stuff Lifetime Movies are made of. I'm glad Sprague didn't dwell too much on the drama in his book. It was "enough" to know how they healed their differences by the time they docked in Seattle. I get it the scenery was jaw-dropping spectacular. Pictures are worth a million words. I would have liked pictures mixed with text. I grew up in a remote corner of Washington State's San Juan Islands. I know about the isolation, year-around frigid water temperatures, currents, tides, and arctic winter storms that blow the shingles off the roof. A boat surrounded with water is very much like an island... only waaaaaay smaller. There is no escape. You're all there for the duration--in sickness or in health, in your best and at your worst.

Personal differences must be resolved quickly. Grudges are not tolerated. Physical survival requires skill, timing, quick thinking, creative aptitude, teamwork, and pure luck. After reading the book, I learn Sprague Theobald received a 2013 Best-Director Emmy nomination for his documentary, *The Other Side of the Ice*. Congratulations! His film is receiving mixed reviews. That's to be expected.

Landlubbers can't know or truly understand life aboard a boat, unless they try it. It can get on your nerves sometimes. I'd love to see this film on the History Channel and Public Broadcast channels, with closed captioning.

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