



## No Horizon Is So Far: Two Women And Their Extraordinary Journey Across Antarctica

By Ann Bancroft, Liv Arnesen

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In February 2001, former schoolteachers Ann Bancroft and Liv Arnesen became the first women to cross the Antarctic continent on foot. Against all odds, they walked, skied, or ice-sailed for nearly three months in temperatures as cold as -35°F, towing their 250-pound supply sledges across 1700 miles of terrain riddled with rotten ice and deadly, hidden crevasses. Haunted by the failures of those who had attempted the crossing before them, they raced to complete the journey before the harsh Antarctic winter set in and 24 hours of daylight became 24 hours of impenetrable darkness. Though modern technology could not ensure rescue should they need it, website transmissions and satellite phone calls enabled more than 3 million children from 65 countries to bear witness to the journey. In accomplishing the seemingly impossible, Ann and Liv inspired classrooms and re-ignited the aspirations of more than twenty-thousand adults who wrote to thank and encourage them. Chronicling the dramatic details of this historic expedition, *No Horizon Is So Far* explores what drove Ann and Liv across the ice and ultimately into hearts and history books around the world. It traces the birth of their dream, its re-emergence when they were adults, their tenacious work to assemble the necessary money and gear, and their brutally taxing trek from the Norwegian sector to the American base at McMurdo Bay. About journeys both literal and figurative, each marked with suspense, danger, and incredible endurance *No Horizon Is So Far* celebrates two modern-day heroines and that which is heroic in all of us.

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### Editorial Review

#### From Publishers Weekly

In February 2001, Bancroft and Arnesen, "total stranger[s]," became the first women to cross Antarctica on foot. The women-Bancroft, 48, of Minnesota, was the first woman to cross the ice to both the North and South Poles; Arnesen, 50, an Oslo resident, was the first woman to ski solo to the South Pole-met in 1998 and set to work finding corporate sponsors and undergoing intensive physical training. International educators and millions of students in 116 countries participated in an online curriculum as the two ex-schoolteachers, inspired by Shackleton and other explorers, began their grueling 2,300-mile journey in mid-November 2000. They walked, skied and ice-sailed through bitter cold (temperatures sank as low as -35 degrees Farenheit) while hauling 250-pound fiberglass sledges filled with food, medications and electronic equipment, including handheld GPS units and a laptop. Along the way, they did regularly scheduled satellite phone interviews with CNN. Their high-tech trek turned into a physical and emotional ordeal as they survived injuries, blizzards, accidents and anxious moments, crossing crevasses to emerge triumphant three months later. Although the triple-track format of three different writers interrupting one another is sometimes jarring, the authors' descriptive details and vivid writing bring the adventure alive. In addition to a lengthy "what they carried" equipment list, the book's finale features interviews with people who were caught up in the expedition or directly involved. Maps, 16-page color insert.

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#### From School Library Journal

Adult/High School-Two middle-aged schoolteachers, an American and a Norwegian, set out in November 2000 to become the first women to travel across Antarctica on foot. Both women had extensive experience traveling on polar ice under very difficult conditions, but this journey was the ultimate test of their endurance. Arnesen and Bancroft relate that as children they both searched unsuccessfully for stories of girls having adventures and overcoming physical dangers. As adults they wanted to share their accomplishments in a way that would encourage others, especially children, to cultivate dreams and strive to attain them. They recruited teachers to develop a curriculum based on their expedition that could be used in art, science, mathematics, and literature classes. Cell phones, cameras, and a laptop computer allowed teachers and students to follow their progress as they dashed across the ice to reach their destination before winter darkness set in. And what an exciting trip it was. They often used skis with sails to glide over the ice. Each woman pulled a sled with up to 80 pounds of food and gear. They were in constant danger from fluky winds, deep crevasses, and temperatures as low as minus 35 degrees. The authors chronicle their daily life with a realistic yet inspiring attitude and reveal many intimate details. Color photos of the women training and of their expedition enhance the text. Teens will be inspired to live out their dreams, thus accomplishing the women's goal in writing this firsthand account.-*Penny Stevens, Andover College, Portland, ME*

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#### From Booklist

Thwarted in a 1993 attempt to become the first women's team to traverse Antarctica (Bancroft and three others ended their trek at the South Pole due to financial problems), the author partnered with Norwegian adventurer Liv Arnesen to try again in 2000-01. They formed a company and cultivated the press to promote their effort, which they regarded not only as personal attainment of a "first" but also as an inspirational example for female students (both Bancroft and Arnesen were teachers). Thus, in addition to the straightforward adventuring component of this chronicle of their journey, the authors recount their satellite uplinks en route to reporters, classrooms, and their Web site (<http://www.yourexpedition.com>). Refined in

book form, the authors' journey will remind readers of how perilous Antarctica remains, in spite of instant communication and, in this case, the knowledge that rescue was available. The authors considered bailing out at moments of crisis, but proved impervious to the temptations of comfort, and this fortitude is their story's central attraction. *Gilbert Taylor*

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