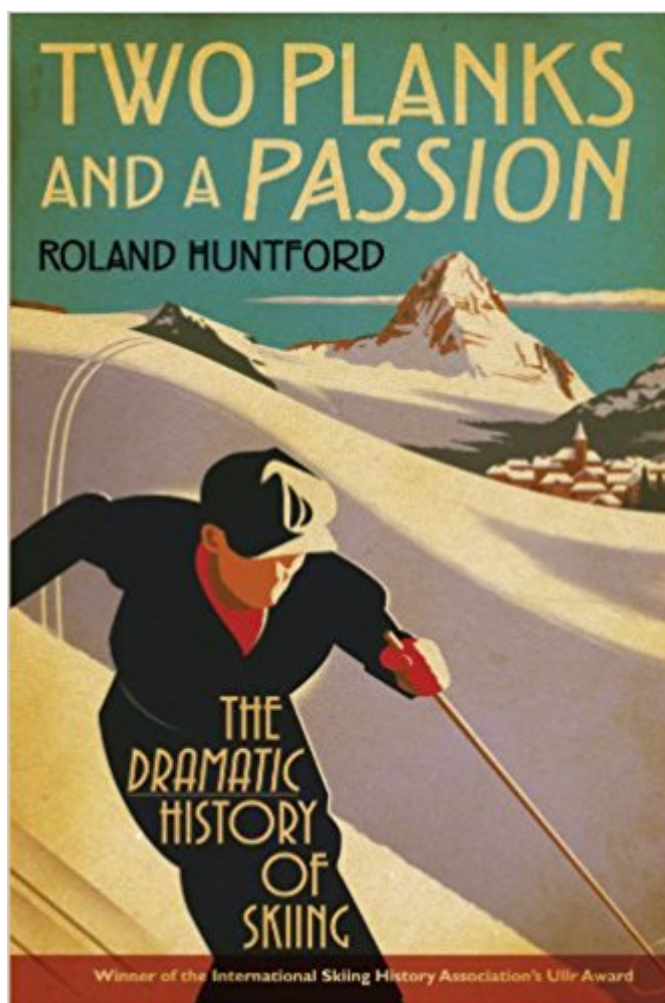




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# Two Planks And A Passion: The Dramatic History Of Skiing



## Synopsis

Roland Huntford's brilliant history begins 20,000 years ago in the last ice age on the icy tundra of an unformed earth. Man is a travelling animal, and on these icy slopes skiing began as a means of survival. That it has developed into the leisure and sporting pursuit of choice by so much of the globe bears testament to its elemental appeal. In polar exploration, it has changed the course of history. Elsewhere, in war and peace, it has done so too. The origins of skiing are bound up in with the emergence of modern man and the world we live in today.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

'This is a deeply scholarly work ... Fortunately scholarly in this instance is not synonymous with dull ... Huntford manages to bind a wealth of material together with a strong narrative thread.' Simon Redfern, *The Independent on Sunday* "The breadth of his scholarship, which includes an easy familiarity with Scandinavian texts, is extraordinary." *Literary Review* "What elevates Huntford is his comprehensive approach ... accessible and enjoyable, even to the most armchair bound of 'schussers'." Paul Watkins, *The Times* "Could the outcome of the Second World War have been decided by the humble ski? That's the bold but surprisingly convincing claim made by Roland Huntford in *Two Planks and a Passion*." Roger Cox, *The Scotsman* Review in *The Daily Telegraph*. "Huntford's book will be a perfect stocking present for piste fantasists like me", Max Hastings, *Sunday Times* "This is a compelling account, and definitive history, of an activity that has evolved over time into one of our most thriving leisure industries." *Sunday Telegraph* "An engaging and insightful work" *Sport Magazine* "The most in-depth study of skiing currently in the English

language and it will no doubt remain the defining record for some time." The Guardian  
Mention in The Daily Mail, 28 November 2008. Mentioned in Skier and Snowboarder Magazine, 01 November 2008. "In his early books, Huntford chronicled the race to the South Pole ("The Last Place on Earth") and wrote biographies of Ernest Shackleton and Fridtjof Nansen. "Two Planks" seems a natural progression for him ... Huntford deserves praise for bringing together a lot of rich material." New York Times Book Review. 'This will be skiing's definitive history for years to come...' Alex Wade, Times Literary Supplement '[A] fine, erudite history of the sport', Hugh Thompson, The Independent "Roland Huntford's book is an amazingly detailed history of skiing's Scandinavian origins." BBC History Magazine Title mention in The Guardian. Title mention in Skier & Snowboarder Magazine. 'Our choice - pick of the paperbacks ... Huntford tells the ski story straightforwardly and simply' - Sunday Times 'Huntford has also undertaken the monumental task of tracing and explaining the development of the sport of skiing outside Scandinavia, particularly in Alpine Europe. As such, he has provided us with a much richer and more complex picture than was previously available from Arnold Lunn's highly partial The Story of Skiing.' (oxfordjournals.org) 'Huntford has also undertaken the monumental task of tracing and explaining the development of the sport of skiing outside Scandinavia, particularly in Alpine Europe. As such, he has provided us with a much richer and more complex picture than was previously available from Arnold Lunn's highly partial The Story of Skiing.' (Sanford Lakoff)

Roland Huntford is the world's foremost authority on the polar expeditions and their protagonists. He is the author of the award-winning Two Planks and a Passion: the Dramatic History of Skiing and Scott and Amundsen: Last Place on Earth and he is the biographer of Shackleton and Nansen. He was the Scandinavian correspondent on The Observer for many years.

If you're serious about the early history of skiing, Huntford's book is essential reading. There are now a number of very good academic English-language studies of the history and culture of skiing in the modern era (beginning with the eighteenth century), but Huntford is the best scholarly work on the sport's prehistory -- that is, on over-snow travel by the preliterate peoples of Northern and Central Eurasia. Excellent, authoritative detail on the transfer of skills that led to the adoption of Scandinavian skiing in the Alps, on the relationship between wintersport and nineteenth century nationalism. Huntford is a polyglot and was able to do most of his research by reading sources in their original languages. The book is not flawless, but it's a gem and should serve as a starting point for any further research into the history of the sport in Europe. And it's fun to read. --Seth Masia, [...]

Like others have mentioned, this book thoroughly covers the history of skiing up to WWII, and crams the last 70 years into a single chapter at the end. If you're looking for the "modern" history of skiing, then this isn't the book for you. The portion of history that is covered is thorough and well researched with notes and a full bibliography. It's obvious the author spent a lot of time doing research to make sure the information is correct. I love learning as much as possible about skiing, and I really enjoyed this book. As much as I enjoyed it, I only gave the book 4 stars because the writing style is a little boring, and that made it a slow read.

very good

Books in better condition than expected. Thanks.

Yet another book which churns out info. which has not been properly checked.

This book isn't what I expected. It is good for the prehistoric info about skiing but is too technical and over-worded for the rest of skiing history and doesn't come up into a modern enough time period. It misses some of the recent short, shaped ski developments and their impact on alpine racing and ski instruction.

I have a whole bookshelf of ski books, mostly history. This one is my favorite and if you have a PASSION for skiing, this is the best one. I was stunned to see the tepid reviews of this book. Less dry than "From Skisport to Skiing" and certainly covering a much longer time period, with a world, rather than US, focus. My only quibble, as with many of these histories, is that more recent events are given short shrift. A decent amount of pictures adds to the better understanding of earlier times.

I bought it as a gift for a nordic skier and he really likes the book. I have not read it personally but he likes the really early history detailed in the book, he has not finished it as of yet but looks forward to.

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