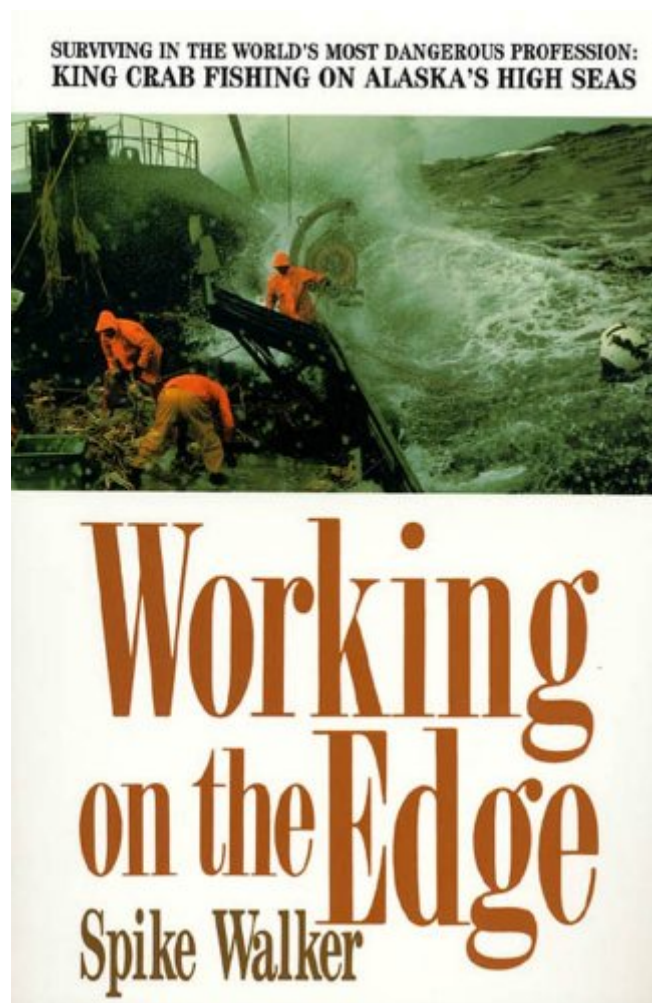




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Working On The Edge: Surviving In The World's Most Dangerous Profession: King Crab Fishing On Alaska's High Seas



Synopsis

No profession pits man against nature more brutally than king crab fishing in the frigid, unpredictable waters of the Bering Sea. The yearly death toll is staggering (forty-two men in 1988 alone); the conditions are beyond most imaginations (90-mph Arctic winds, 25-foot seas, and super-human stretches of on-deck labor); but the payback, if one survives can be tens of thousands of dollars for a month-long season. In a breathtaking, action-packed account that combines his personal story with the stories of survivors of the industry's most harrowing disasters, Spike Walker re-creates the boom years of Alaskan crab fishing--a modern-day gold rush that drew hundreds of fortune-and adventure-hunters to Alaska's dangerous waters--and the crash that followed.

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Customer Reviews

This is a wonderful book! Well written and anyone who is a fan of the show will love this book!

Highly recommend!

Very enjoyable read. But it drags at time (no pun intended). Hairy way to get rich quick. Kids with guts

I'd give this 4.5 stars if I could - author is a terrific, no-hold barred writer with a definite gift for words. It was said by a critic about Sebastian Junger's "Perfect Storm" that you "could taste the salt". For this book I'd say the writing lets you feel the monumental fatigue and the icy water washing over your feet. It's less romantic than "Deadliest Catch" TV show, as it so plainly describes what real life is like on these boats. No music, just work and more work. The only thing I found a bit puzzling is that at one chapter the author waxes on about the fierce pull of the sea and goes back to the life, and the next all of a sudden he is in major burn-out mode. In any case, money well spent and deserves all the good things said about it.

This is possibly the best of the many, many books about commercial fishermen. Spike Walker is a terrific writer and brings you along with him as he makes the transformation from rookie to seasoned crab catcher. The book is not just descriptive, it's hypnotic in the best sense of the word. While reading "Working the Edge," there were great chunks of time when I was transported to the deck of a crab boat...I was right there...dodging crab pots, smelling the stink, feeling the cold and the spray, loving the warmth of a cup of coffee after a long shift. The book never got stale and never stalled...I imagine crab fishing gets repetitive...fishing books certainly do. Walker keeps it fresh and interesting to the last page. He's joined my pantheon of "real life" writer gods -- John McPhee, Sebastian Junger, Tim Cahill and Jon Krakauer, who blend deft writing skills, a slightly off-kilter slant, and usually, their own thrill of discovery, to their work.

If you like the show the Deadliest Catch, you'll love Spike Walker's book. Incredibly well-written, indeed one of the best writers I have ever read, Walker writes about his experiences as an Alaskan crab fisherman during the "gold rush" era of the early 1980's. His tales of serious disasters and incredible loss of life tell the deeper tale of the Alaskan crab fishery, deeper than the edited version of the Discovery channel. You will find yourself searching Google maps to place Walker and his boat's travels. A truly fascinating book I loved it and I think you will too.

I picked this up on a trip to Alaska as a teenager and loved it. This was also well before Deadliest Catch ever aired. It gives a glimpse into the heyday of derby fishing that you always hear the captains reminisce about on Deadliest Catch. I just bought another copy to replace one that I

"Loaned" out.

I was in Kodiak the same time Spike was up there. I also was a commercial fisherman after putting in my dues as a dock foreman at Pacific Pearl Seafoods. There were some common people we both knew, including fishing vessels and skippers. His writing brought back a flood of memories and emotions. Very compelling! My best friend was lost up there and mentioned in the book. His vivid descriptions of feelings of the fishermen who knew loss of close friends and the extremely dangerous and arduous conditions while working the crab boats is right on the money!!!! Great book Spike, thanks for the memories!!! I'd love to talk to you and exchange memories.

While some of the impact is lost if you have seen the 'Most Dangerous Profession' or whatever the series is called on TV about the crab boats in Alaska, this is a well written and gripping account of a world the vast majority will never experience but wish we could see if we could measure up to.

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