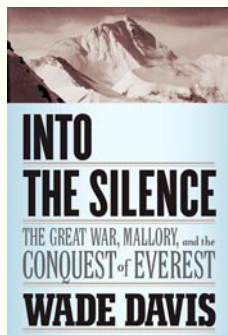


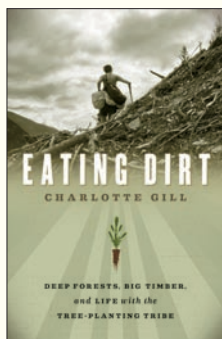
## NEW BOOKS



### INTO THE SILENCE: THE GREAT WAR, MALLORY, AND THE CONQUEST OF EVEREST

BY WADE DAVIS  
(ALFRED A. KNOPF, \$35)

This exhaustively researched book from one of Canada's best-known explorers provides a fascinating account of the first three British attempts on the world's highest mountain. While George Mallory may have become a legend, Davis highlights the important roles played by other members of the expeditions, such as Oliver Wheeler, the Canadian surveyor on the 1921 team, whom Mallory treated with disdain.



### EATING DIRT: DEEP FORESTS, BIG TIMBER, AND LIFE WITH THE TREE-PLANTING TRIBE

BY CHARLOTTE GILL  
(GREYSTONE BOOKS, \$22.95)

Having worked as a tree planter across Canada for nearly two decades, Charlotte Gill is perhaps the perfect person to be writing about one of this country's most interesting subcultures—the world of tree planting. An award-winning author, Gill also celebrates the value of our forests and examines the challenges facing them today.



**MAKING TRACKS:** Sebastian Copeland (right) and Eric McNair-Landry in Greenland in 2009.

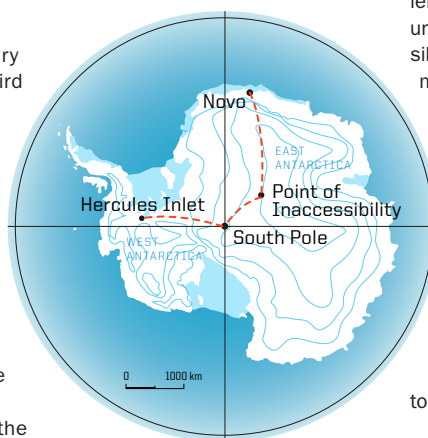
## RACE YOU TO THE BOTTOM

One hundred years after Amundsen, two modern adventurers will be zooming to the South Pole

BY CONOR MIHELL

**LEAVE IT TO** Eric McNair-Landry to take the Canadian snowbird tradition of going south for the winter to the extreme. Fresh off completing a harrowing, 3,300-kilometre transit of the Northwest Passage by kite-ski with his sister, Sarah, last spring, the 27-year-old Iqaluit-based polar guide set off on a three-month crossing of Antarctica in late October. The unsupported, 4,200-kilometre mission is the brainchild of McNair-Landry's expedition partner, Los Angeles-based filmmaker/adventurer Sebastian Copeland, who planned the trip to commemorate the centennial of Roald Amundsen's and Robert Falcon Scott's battle to claim first dibs on the South Pole.

But apart from its South Pole waypoint, the current expedition bears little resemblance to its historical inspiration. While both Amundsen and Scott staged their attempts with food caches and used dogs and ponies to



support what were essentially gruelling, multi-year slogs, McNair-Landry and Copeland are relying on parabolic kites to pioneer a new, relatively fast crossing of Antarctica. After dragging 400-pound sleds up the crevasse-laced route from the Russian research station of Novo to Antarctica's 10,000-foot-high ice shelf, the pair will kite-ski to the Pole of Inaccessibility (the furthest point from the Antarctic coast) and then blaze an 800-kilometre route to the South

Pole. From there they'll follow a route that McNair-Landry kite-skied in 2007 back to sea level at Hercules Inlet.

For Copeland, 47, it's the length of the journey and the unknowns of the Pole of Inaccessibility to South Pole leg that are most alluring. "There's a child-like excitement of venturing into a place where no one has been before. That's at the high end of any adventurer's bucket list," he says. "Kites give us untold advantages over Scott and Amundsen, but the big challenge will be a lack of wind in some areas. Pulling sleds isn't fun and we won't be able to sit and wait for the wind."

For McNair-Landry—who teamed up with Copeland in 2009 on an expedition across the Greenland ice shelf—the Antarctic trip is yet another opportunity to explore the haunts of one of his polar heroes. "Amundsen has always been a source of inspiration for his strong leadership, his ability to learn and adapt to new circumstances," says McNair-Landry. "I just finished an expedition across the Northwest Passage that Amundsen was the first person to complete. It seems like I'm following in his footsteps." **e**