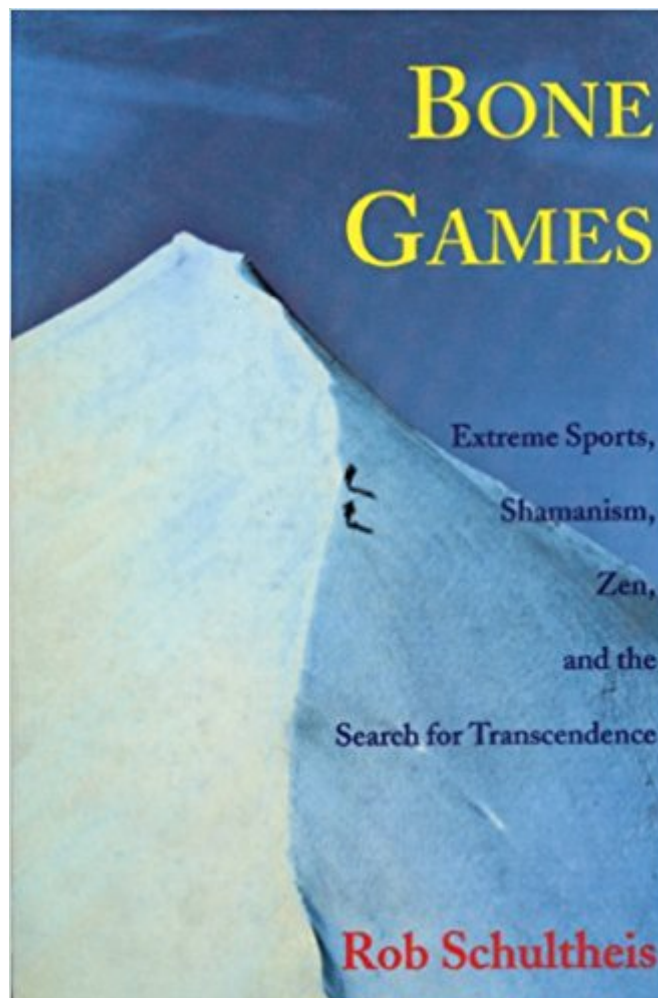




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Bone Games: Extreme Sports, Shamanism, Zen, And The Search For Transcendence



Synopsis

An inquiry into how ultra-endurance sports can induce preternatural states in athletes.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Shallow

This book is good for anyone interested in the physiological effects of extremes on the body. What kind of rush we are actually looking for and the desire to control these effects. Interesting book.

Starts slow, but overall great.

Badly injured, alone and in mortal danger, author Rob Schultheis found himself doing impossible things to save his own life after a near-fatal mountain-climbing accident. "Bone Games" is an account of his intensely personal quest to understand an almost mystical experience and, if possible, to re-capture that extraordinary and elusive "state of grace" through wilderness athletics. Exploring his subject from historical, biochemical, spiritual and various other perspectives, Schultheis produced a truly excellent memoir of journeys through terra incognita.

This book is an old favourite of mine. When I came across it on sale a few years ago in the Daedalus catalogue, I bought a bunch of copies to give to friends, mostly martial arts types. This book is not about martial arts per se, I can't help feeling that what Mr. Schultheis has to say is

important to all martial artists and those involved with peak athletic performance. While mainly focused on high-risk sports and survival situations, I think most readers will be fascinated by his obsessive search for the consummate mind-set in which the seemingly impossible is accomplished with ease. Schultheis is a runner and a climber, and when climbing in the Colorado Rockies, he had a bad fall which triggered a kind of peak experience. As he describes it: "Something happened on that descent, something I have tried to figure out ever since, so inexplicable and powerful it was. I found myself very simply doing impossible things: dozens, scores of them, as I climbed down Neva's lethal slopes. Shattered, in shock, I climbed with the impeccable sureness of a snow leopard, a mountain goat." This experience sets the author off on a quest to find the key to this altered state of consciousness. And what a quest it is! He ranges from Shamanism to long-distance running, mountaineering in Nepal, Plains Indian vision quests, and survival at sea. He doesn't specifically deal with martial arts, but the state of consciousness he seeks is known by various terms such as "muga-mushin" and "heijoshin" in the Japanese Martial Arts. More recently Mihaly Csikszentmihaly has researched what he calls the "Flow" state and written extensively on it. While Schultheis doesn't seem to come to any firm conclusions, it's certainly not through a lack of effort, and it sure is fun being along for the ride.

Also an old favorite of mine. I recommend this book for anyone who wants to get more juice or joy out of their sports and/or adventures. I'm an endurance runner and when my running gets stale I pick up *Bone Games* and re-read it for a refresher on how to keep my running interesting and exciting. Anyone who enjoys sports, including hiking, running, climbing, adventure racing or whatever would get value out of this one. Anyone who enjoys a good adventure story would like it as well. It's well written, interesting, and therefore, easy and quick to read.

Don't be deceived by the title. This book leaps beyond mere 'games' and instead zeroes in on a wide spectrum of outdoor adventurers. The author, Rob Schultheis, compares a wide spectrum of athletic psyches to himself, hoping to explain the lure to nature's most extreme challenges. His writing may stray from scientific methods, but his anecdotal and personal style is engaging and often based in Eastern philosophies. Overall, a solid collection of musings in a topic rarely navigated, sprinkled with harrowing accounts of unbelievable triumphs and near-misses.

A mix between Brad Lewis' "Assault on Lake Casitas", Heart of Darkness, Walden and "Jonathan Livingston Seagull". Throw in some John Muir and you're set. A kindred spirit of anyone who has

ever found a balm for existential anxiety in testing the limits of the human body and spirit.

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