plex topic, however, and do deserve credit for a thorough treatment of it in the context of their institution.

This book will serve as a good introduction for those with a special interest in telemedicine or for those practicing in an applicable setting. Unfortunately, most wilderness medicine-oriented practitioners will gain little from it. The formalized system described, and the complex hardware and networking issues touched upon, preclude use in most developing countries or remote area settings. It may have some applicability to high-budget base camp settings, where increasingly sophisticated technology (eg, satellite telephones and Internet/video links) is becoming more commonplace, and to aerospace and undersea settings, inasmuch as ventures into these environments are highly technology-dependent already. However, at this time, the majority of us on a hike, trek, or trip without access to sophisticated videoconferencing equipment will still have to rely on our wits, our training, and possibly voice communication with the outside world; therefore, we should continue to diligently study the tenets of wilderness medicine.

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The Big Drop: Classic Big Wave Surfing Stories

John Long and Haai-Van K. Sponholz, editors
Helena, MT: Falcon, 2000
US \$14.95, 250 pages, softcover.

Nowadays, you can choose an anthology on a multitude of adventures: rock climbing, kayaking, rescue, survival, ice climbing, mountaineering, or polar exploration. This book is only unique in its subject, surfing the world's big waves. If you want to see what all the hullabaloo is about, *The Big Drop* begins to shed light on the mystique, motivation, and thrill of one of the greatest adventure sports of ancient and modern times.

John Long and Haai-Van K. Sponholz have collected narratives from most of the great surf writings over the past half century. The book begins with historical feats of big wave drops by legends such as Greg Noll. It then sucks you into big wave meccas: Waimea Bay in Hawaii, Todos Santos in Mexico, Mavericks in California, and the newest rage of tow-in surfing on Hawaii's outer reefs, where surfers are pulled by personal watercrafts into waves that are too big to paddle into.

Missing from the book are writings from more recent writers of waves such as Daniel Duane and Matt Warshaw. In fact, many surfers may not pick up this collection because they already own the books or surf magazines that the stories were drawn from. Nonetheless, if

you are looking for some "airplane reading" and prefer compilations, this may be your ticket. Better yet, buy one for the call room so everyone can get stoked.

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My Quest for the Yeti: Confronting the Himalayas' Deepest Mystery

Reinhold Messner
New York, NY: St. Martins, 2000
US \$23.95, 169 pages, with photographs, hardcover.

Cryptozoology may not be the next subspecialty in wilderness medicine, but Reinhold Messner's new book brings the yeti to the forefront of mountaineering circles once again. In *Quest for the Yeti: Confronting the Himalayas' Deepest Mystery*, Messner takes on a new task—apart from his prolific writings on mountaineering and polar explorations.

For Messner, the quest started in the middle of the night in eastern Tibet in 1986; he thought he saw a yeti. He became enthralled, or rather obsessed, with the Himalayan legend. Although centered around Tibet and Nepal, his travels take him from China to Butan. The book for the most part deals with his treks and his discussions with villagers, although he does include some historical points, especially encounters with footprints and sightings by other Himalayan mountaineers. Like others before him, Messner's differential includes a yet-undiscovered species of ape, a lost hominid *Gigantopithecus*, a Tibetan bear, or the more rare animal, the che-mo.

First published in Germany as *Yeti: Legende und Wirklichkeit*, the book has undoubtedly lost some of Messner's voice in the translation. The writing is lackluster. It reads like a humdrum journal and doesn't include nearly as much scientific data or reference material as I had hoped.

For some readers, this makes a weak companion to Robert Michael Pyle's *Where Bigfoot Walks: Crossing the Dark Divide*, a work that covers Pyle's obsession with the North American counterpart. Otherwise, if you are interested in Messner's life or writings, especially his 8000-m peak ascents or his polar traverses, pick another of his many books.

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