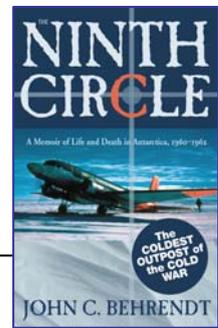


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Explorer's Story Unveils Reminiscences of the Icy Continent

ALBUQUERQUE—When John Behrendt went to Antarctica in the early 1960s as part of the United States Antarctic Research Program, he faced icy dangers and the cold realities of exploration on the Icy Continent.

One obstacle was the Cold War. At its height, the Cold War made airborne and field research risky as world superpowers fought for technological dominance.

Then, of course, research on the ice sheet was risky. The Antarctic air squadron VX6 had an accident rate eight times that of other U.S. Naval aviation squadrons.

In fact, in 1960, Behrendt and his five-man party were almost killed when their plane hit a wing tip on a mountain peak hidden in clouds. The scientific instrument called a magnetometer that trailed beneath them dragged along the mountain peak for seventeen seconds before it broke off.

A year later, while leading an over-snow geophysical traverse, Behrendt drove a Sno-Cat into a hidden crevasse while trying to negotiate a route around a recently discovered mountain range, now named the Behrendt Mountains.

Despite these two mishaps, the two successful field seasons in Antarctica launched Behrendt on a scientific career that has continued for another 40 years. In a new memoir, *The Ninth Circle* (\$19.95 hardcover, University of New Mexico Press), Behrendt tells about his Antarctic experiences.

In *The Ninth Circle*, Behrendt describes two seasons on the ice in Operation Deep Freeze, leading field parties, conducting scientific research, and struggling against the elements. Behrendt was in charge of an over the snow exploration party that researched geophysical, glaciological, geological, and geographic questions on the southern Antarctic Peninsula.

Behrendt pioneered geophysical surveys taken from the air over the Transantarctic Mountains and the West Antarctic Ice Sheet. In his reflections, he notes that the time from 1960 to 1962 was closer to the eras of Ernest Shackleton

and his Endurance Voyage of 1914 and Robert F. Scott's and Roald Amundsen's treks to the South Pole in 1911–12, than to present-day exploration where satellites, reliable communication, and modern technology prevail.

Behrendt's memoir provides insights and accounts of his adventures in a twentieth-century frontier that denizens on our shrinking planet will appreciate.

The Ninth Circle is available at bookstores or directly from the University of New Mexico Press. To order, please call 800-249-7737 or visit us online at unmpress.com where one can also find events updates and other news.

John C. Behrendt is also the author of *Innocents on the Ice: A Memoir of Antarctic Exploration, 1957*. He is a geophysicist and Fellow at the Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research at the University of Colorado, where he investigates volcanoes under the West Antarctic Ice Sheet using airborne geophysical surveys.