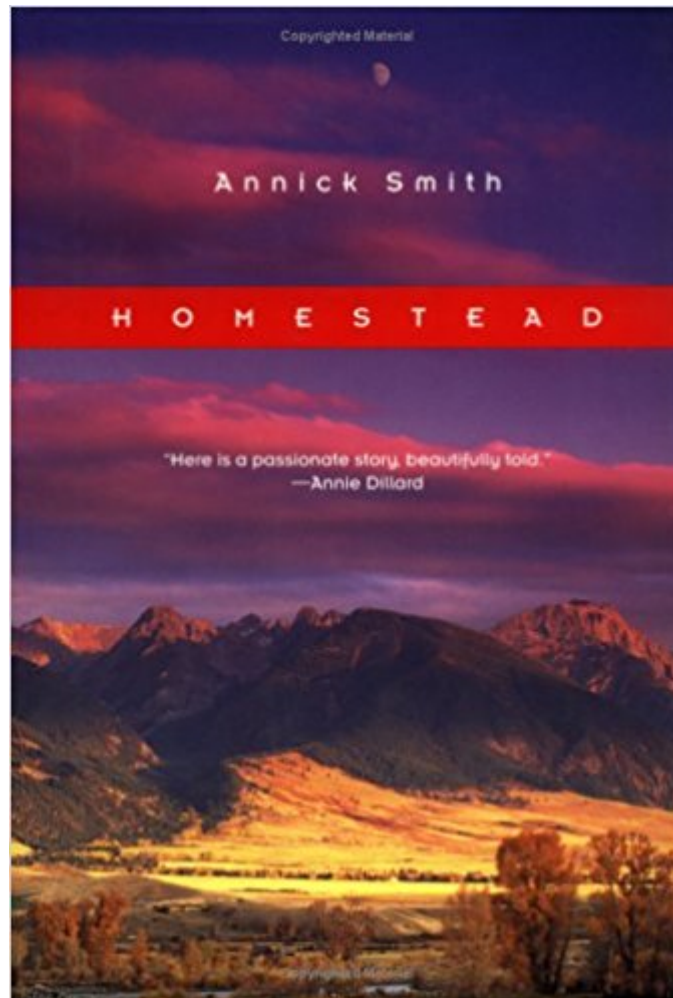




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# Homestead (The World As Home)



## Synopsis

Describes how the author and her family built a wilderness homestead in 1959 Montana that grew into a flourishing ranch and recounts the many adventures that found their roots in early American western and pioneering traditions. IP.

## Book Information

Series: The World As Home

Hardcover: 211 pages

Publisher: Milkweed Editions; 1st edition (March 16, 1995)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1571312064

ISBN-13: 978-1571312068

Product Dimensions: 8.7 x 5.8 x 1 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.7 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars 10 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #3,329,136 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #76 in Books > Travel > United States > Montana #2185 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Environmentalists & Naturalists #3501 in Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Nature Writing & Essays

## Customer Reviews

Coproducer of *A River Runs Through It* and executive producer of *Heartland*, Smith has lived in Montana for more than 30 years. With her husband, Dave, and their four sons, she moved to a ranch near the Big Blackfoot River. It fulfilled their dreams, though they knew Dave had a fatal heart disease; he died at 41. Smith recalls her childhood in Chicago as the daughter of Hungarian emigres, likening her move westward to that of her parents. She offers vivid descriptions of the landscape, of adventures large and small. Smith writes about backpacking into the Bob Marshall wilderness, about her friendship with Norman McLean (who wrote *A River Runs Through It*) and about her efforts to preserve the land. A joyous celebration of wilderness. Author tour. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

A filmmaker, writer, and widow, Smith lives in remote Montana. From this perspective, she discusses the loss of love, of wilderness, of time. But her overriding message is about the preservation of both personal memories and wild surroundings. These essays, which were

previously published in various magazines but have been expanded here, cover cowboy history, the Big Blackfoot (the river featured in *A River Runs Through It*, which Smith coproduced), snow, fishing, family, and other themes. Some parts of the essays are redundant, but overall this is a worthwhile addition to collections on Montana and large nature collections. ?Nancy Moeckel, Miami Univ. Libs., Oxford, Ohio Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I bought this book after reading an excerpt from it in another book, a collection of essays from *OUTSIDE* magazine. As it turned out, that particular essay is probably the best part of *HOMESTEAD*. Not that the rest of the book isn't good too, but Smith's writing shines the brightest, I think, when she is writing about her parents, her first husband and her children. I was also surprised to learn that her father was Stephen Deutch, who was *THE* photographer of the stars back when I was a kid. I can remember his name in small print on many of the most famous film stars of the fifties. And one of Deutch's best friends was noted author Nelson Algren, still revered in Chicago, where Annick (Deutch) Smith grew up. There are many such connections here. Smith's long-time life partner since her first husband's early death from heart disease is another writer I admire, Bill Kittredge, whose memoir, *Hole in the Sky*, I read ten-plus years ago and much enjoyed. And I know that Kittredge was a pal of the late author, James Crumley, who isn't mentioned here, but I could almost feel his presence, nonetheless, as Smith tells her stories of gatherings of writers, artists and musicians over the past forty years in the bars and neighborhoods of the Missoula area where the liquor and conversation flowed freely. She tells too of her friendship with Norman Maclean, author of *A River Runs Through It*, and her part in bringing that story to the screen, working with Robert Redford, albeit too late for Maclean to see it. Her stories of the parties even intrigued me enough to go online and order a CD, *Armchair Cabaret*, from the website of one of Missoula's favorite bands, the Big Sky Mudflaps. I don't have it yet, so the jury's out on that element. The last few pieces of the book, in which she talks of trips and expeditions she made, alone or with Kittredge, to Europe and Alaska, did not interest me quite as much as the early part of the book. Although the quality of her writing is undiminished, these "filler" pieces gave the book a kind of uneven feel. In the end, the stories of her family, her large circle of friends, and the land where she has lived for over forty years, are the best. (I was reminded, while reading *Homestead*, of two other, younger Montana writers, husband and wife Tom and Jennifer Groneberg, also transplanted Chicagoans. Between them they have written three memoirs now: *The Secret Life of Cowboys*, *One Good Horse*, and *Road Map to Holland*. If you want a fascinating and heartfelt look at more recent, modern ranch life in Montana, try these.) I'm glad to have found and read Annick Smith's fine book about Montana and its charms.

- Tim Bazzett, author of PINHEAD: A LOVE STORY

Montana is well described by Annick Smith in this delightful book. Recommended by a friend and loved by our entire book club. This is a must read!

Annick Smith is a free spirit and her book of Montana memoirs, HOMESTEAD, highlights her joy in living life as she has chosen it. She approaches each of her experiences with perspective, joy, wonder, and strength. Best of all, she has the talent to put those experiences into words that captivate and enthrall her readers as she brings them along with her. Her writing skills shine as she relates the memory of her beloved husband with celebration rather than disabling sadness. She presents views of her glorious Montana wilderness that are awe-inspiring in their clarity and beauty. She tells of giving her boys the freedom and guidance necessary to grow to responsible adulthood while providing the protection necessary to make sure they make it. Today she joins them in joyous adult adventures with an unbreakable bond and nonjudgmental enthusiasm. She can endure the backbreaking fatigue of farm labor or trudge through the thigh-high snow of frigid Montana winters or fix an irrigation leak at the creek while fighting turkey-sized mosquitoes. Then she unwinds with the warmth of a crackling fire, cozy throw, and mug of hot cocoa. Whether her experiences are grinding or gentle, she always makes the sensations seem real to the reader. And, while she's at it, she'll tell you all about the brand inspectors, the rodeos, the rural dances and suppers, and the skinny-dipping with her friends in cold Montana waters. Neither your imagination nor your interest will wander when Smith is telling her stories. I highly recommend this book and applaud Annick Smith for her unabashed pride in her lifestyle, and her talent for sharing it. Schuyler T Wallace Author of TIN LIZARD TALES

I read "Homestead" by Annick Smith excited that I'd be reading the words of a lady who was friend to my grandmother and whom I had met a couple of times at Friends of the Library functions in Missoula. Sometimes it's not so easy to read the work of someone you know, either as acquaintance or as friend. It could prove difficult when the work turns out to be less than expected. Happily, this was not one of those times. I read this when I was still living in Las Vegas after growing up in Missoula, MT. I'd been in Vegas for 12+ years and was preparing for a move home to Missoula - to get me back in that Montana state of mind, I picked up this book and opened it randomly, placing my finger down and opening my eyes to see what the book had to tell me. Here's what it was: When you can see your breath, you know you are alive. This book is filled with gems

such as this. It is not a story with a plot. It is tales from a life lived well. It's made me look forward to seeing Annick and Bill again so that I can tell her in person just what her book meant to me. It helped me long to see the mountains again after so long - it helped me appreciate what is all around me here in ways I'd taken for granted while growing up in the midst of it all. She helped me, through this book, get my perspective back on the place this is - and just how majestic and flawed it is. I love this book - as I love Montana. Warts and all.

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