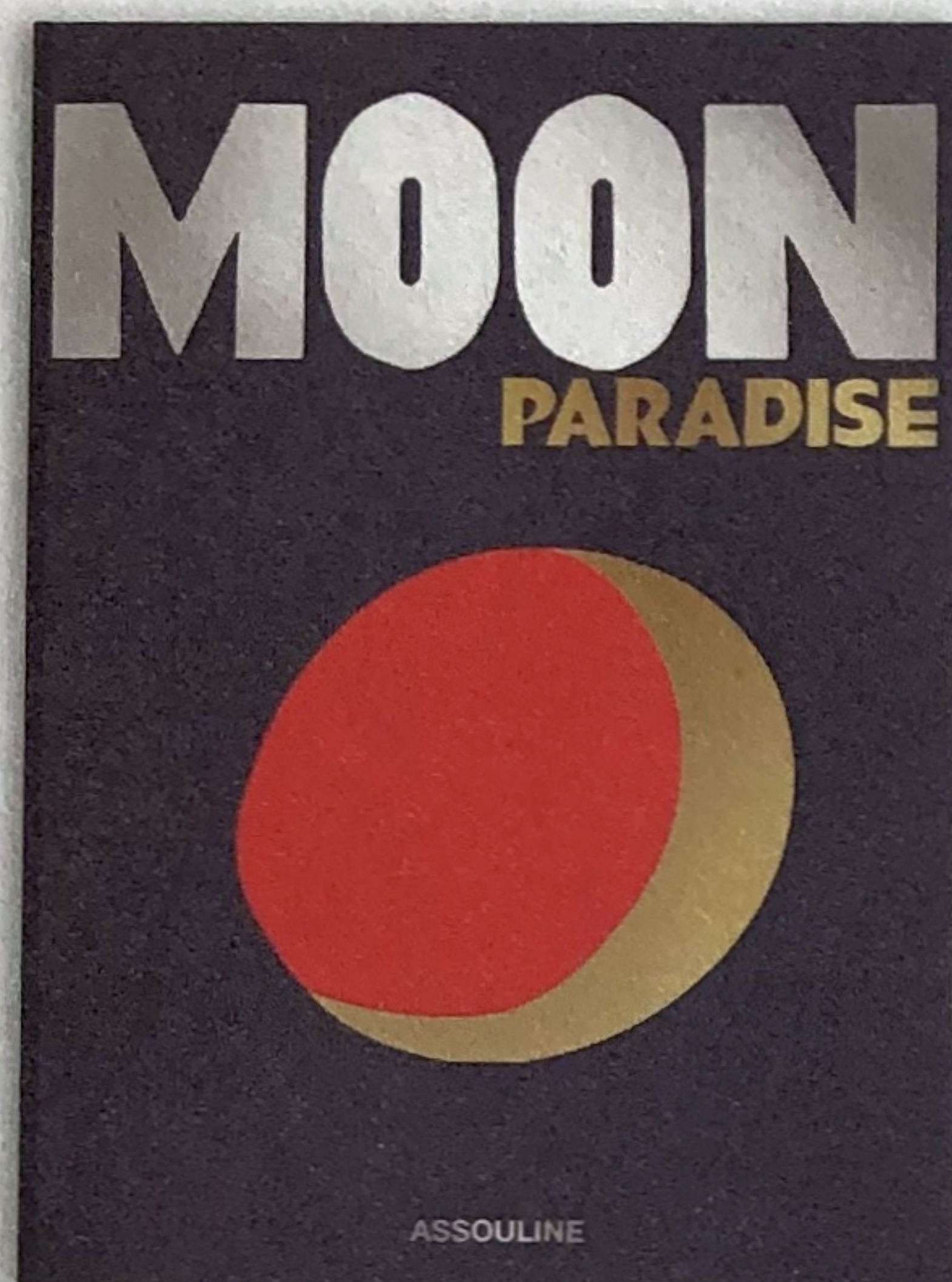


# BOOK REVIEWS

EDITED BY MILBRY C. POLK



## MOON PARADISE

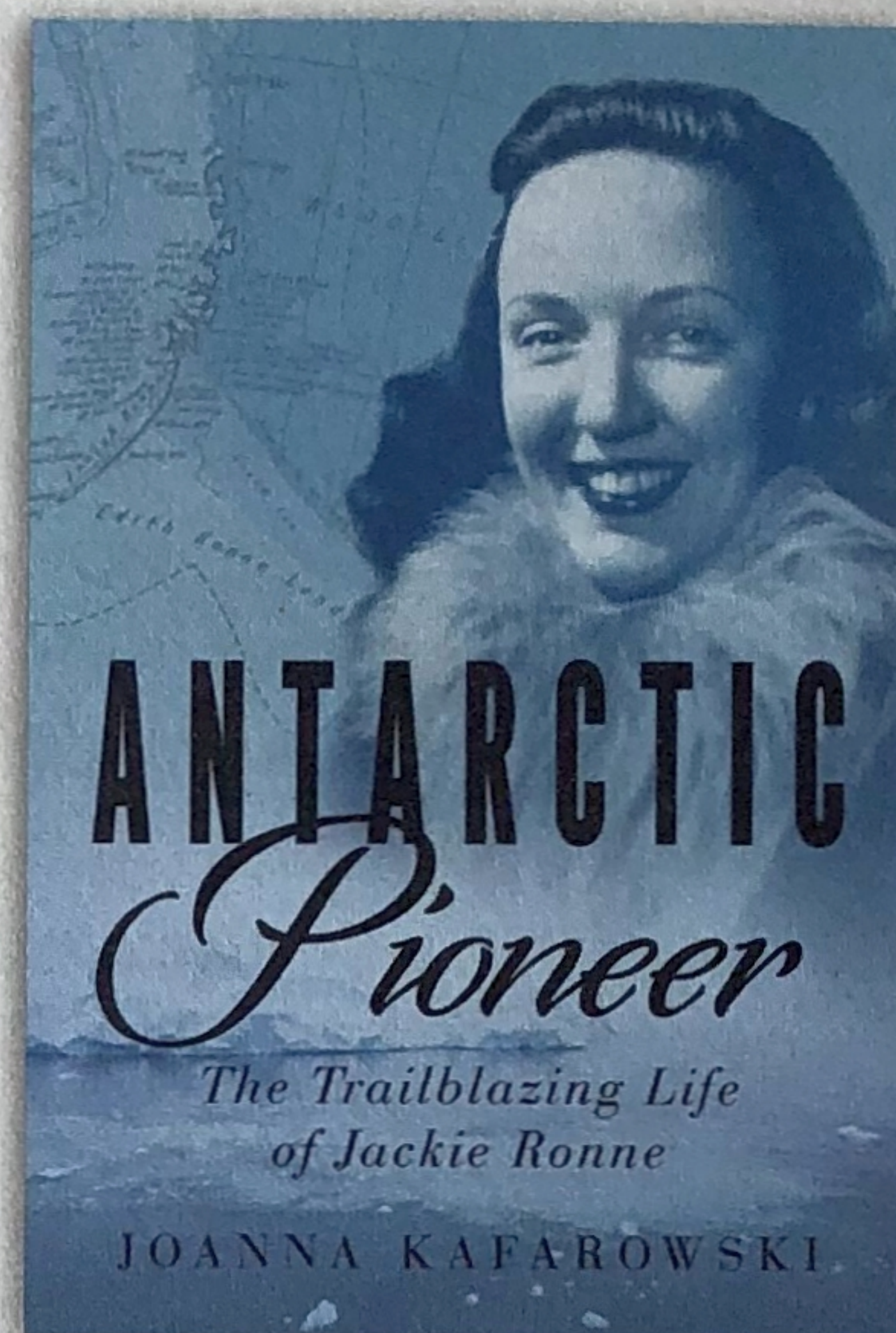
BY SARAH CRUDDAS  
FOREWORD BY CHARLIE DUKE

294 PP • NEW YORK: ASSOULINE, 2022  
• ISBN-13: 978-1649800770 • \$95 •  
REVIEWED BY ANGELA M.H. SCHUSTER

Since the dawn of humankind, Earth's satellite has fired the imagination—serving as an infinite source of wonder that happened to allow us to measure time. By the launch of the Apollo program in the 1960s, the Moon also came to symbolize America's ingenuity and prowess in the realm of space flight. As John F. Kennedy so cogently said: "We choose to go to the Moon...and do other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard."

That ambitious goal, achieved when Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin stepped onto the lunar surface on July 20, 1969, is celebrated in grand style in *Moon Paradise*, a coffee-table compendium from luxury publisher Assouline. Unlike many commemorative editions, this handsomely illustrated volume, penned by space journalist Sarah Cruddas, goes far further than simply recounting the extraordinary human achievements in lunar exploration, and space ventures more broadly. It telescopes out for a much wider view, looking at how notions of the Moon, from antiquity to the present, and the study of it, have influenced our lives—from art and religion to pop culture and design.

In his foreword, Apollo 16 moonwalker Charlie Duke writes, "When I was standing on the lunar surface, looking up at our home planet, the most important thing I came back with is the realization that we are one human race. The Moon helps to remind us of that."



## ANTARCTIC PIONEER

BY JOANNA KAFAROWSKI

304 PP • TORONTO: DUNDURN PRESS, 2022 • ISBN-10: 1640125523 • ISBN-13: 978-1459749535 • \$25.99 •  
REVIEWED BY KRISTIN LARSON

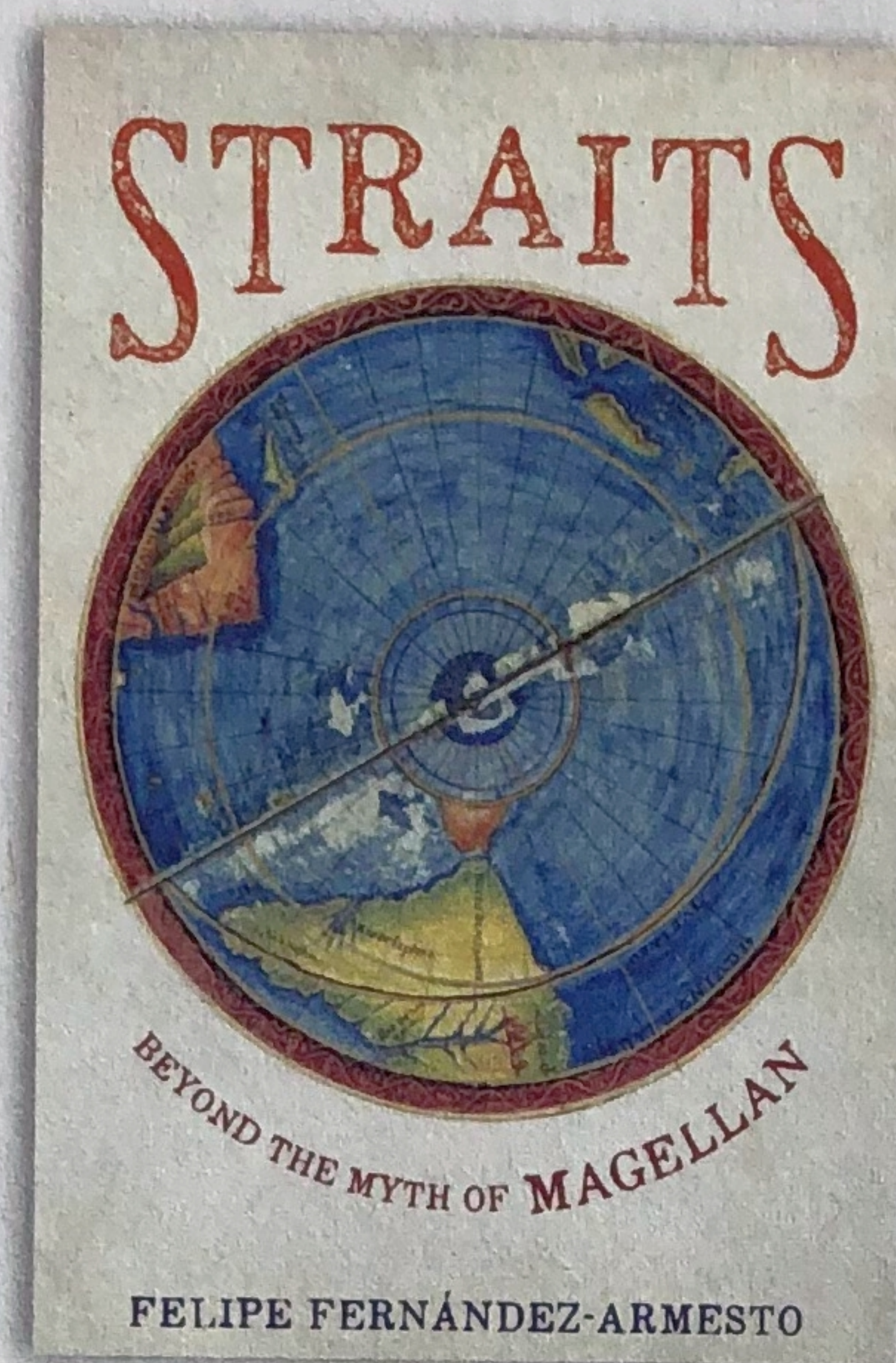
Shadows have long cast unflattering light over the Ronne Antarctic Research Expedition (RARE) of 1946–1948. Rumors of interpersonal strife, and outright loathing for the expedition leader, Finn Ronne, stole headlines and undermined this remarkable year of human endeavor and scientific investigation. As a result, the record of this last, large-scale



private expedition—with its daring airflights and epic dogsledding—has been relegated to dusty archives, where it has remained unappreciated. Joanna Kafarowski's new, meticulously researched, and wonderfully written book on the remarkable life of RARE's key architect, Jackie Ronne, changes that, as it brings this era back to us in sharp relief.

Until her death in 2009, Jackie Ronne (née Edith Ann Maslin) deflected credit for the RARE expedition and even downplayed the fact that she and RARE teammate, Jennie Darlington, made history as the first women to over-winter in Antarctica. Instead, Ronne wrapped herself in the feminine trappings of the day, where men dominated, and women supported them in unobtrusive ways. This book deftly pulls back the apron, uncovering the true Jackie Ronne as both a self-effacing force in a good suit and a fully realized woman expertly navigating the gauntlet of Cold War-era Washington and the dangers of an Antarctic winter. It is revealed that her talents as an intelligent writer, speaker, and organizer greased the skids of the Ronnes' life, and are talents that Finn depended on heavily without giving her much credit. This book represents much more than an accounting of one

person's life because it delves into an often overlooked, yet important period in Antarctic history. The author has also given us a wonderful gift, allowing Jackie's story to see the light of day.



### STRAITS: BEYOND THE MYTH OF MAGELLAN

BY FELIPE FERNÁNDEZ-ARMESTO

380 PP • OAKLAND: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS, 2022 • ISBN-10: 0520383362 • ISBN-13: 978-0520383364 • \$29.95

Although Portuguese by birth, Ferdinand Magellan made his famous expedition of 1519–22 across the Pacific Ocean to the East Indies under the Spanish flag, causing contentions that have survived to this day. “Almost everything most people think they know is false,” says award-winning author Felipe Fernández-Armesto in his new book, *Straits: Beyond the Myth*

of Magellan. He was a man whose life and legacy had many contradictions.

Born into minor Portuguese nobility, Magellan entered the Royal Navy in his teens with great ambition. Later, when King Manuel I refused to sponsor his expedition to the Spice Islands, now known as the Maluku Islands, Magellan turned to King Charles I of Spain, who agreed to sponsor his quest and so, as a newly minted Spaniard and as admiral of the Spanish Fleet, Magellan sailed west to his destiny and into history.

The author delves into the character and life of this complicated man who he contends schemed his way forward, saying “Magellan is exceptional because his failure was total. Yet his renown seems impregnable.”

To begin with, he was killed in the Battle of Mactan in 1521 so in fact he never completed the first circumnavigation of the world that is associated with his name. Add to this the fact that most of his ships were lost and only a few of his men made it back to Spain, suffering a death rate of 90 percent. Yet Magellan's failures have been translated in popular culture to successes, with a list of organizations such as NASA, academic awards, banking, health care companies, and beyond proud to be associated with his name.