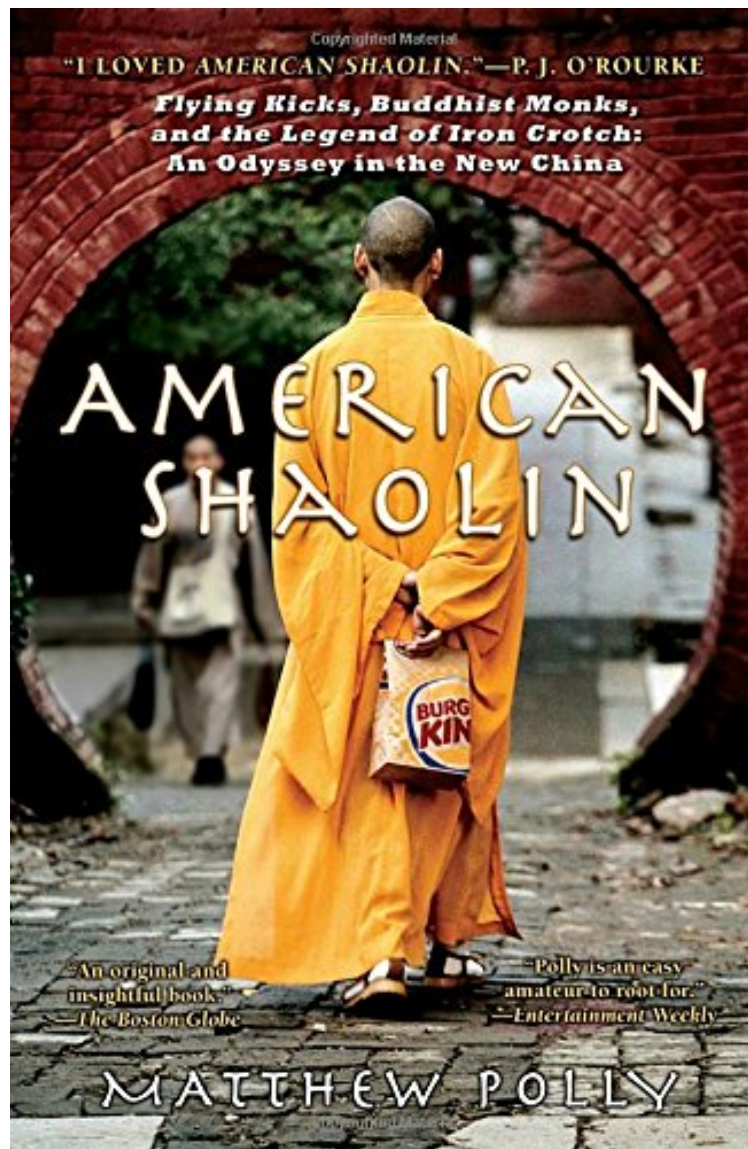


(Download) American Shaolin: Flying Kicks, Buddhist Monks, and the Legend of Iron Crotch: An Odyssey in the New China

American Shaolin: Flying Kicks, Buddhist Monks, and the Legend of Iron Crotch: An Odyssey in the New China

Matthew Polly

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#185281 in Books Polly, Matthew 2007-12-27 2007-12-27 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .90 x 5.40l, .70 #File Name: 1592403379384 pages | File size: 46.Mb

Matthew Polly : American Shaolin: Flying Kicks, Buddhist Monks, and the Legend of Iron Crotch: An Odyssey in the New China before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Shaolin: Flying Kicks, Buddhist Monks, and the Legend of Iron Crotch: An Odyssey in the New China:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A unique, humorous travelogue and coming of age story
By PBI
In the early 1990's, Matthew Polly dropped out of Princeton and did what a lot of young men only dream about: he traveled to China and studied kung fu with the monks of the Shaolin Temple. A victim of bullying with issues of self confidence and a heaping helping of teenage angst, Polly is transformed by his experiences. He gains faith in his own abilities, but also exposure to a China on the cusp of its current rise, and he is shaped by both the profound and equally mundane aspects of the people he meets, befriends and alongside whom he trains. This is not a book about a weak soul who finds deep meaning in his life through the otherworldly depth of foreign clerics. Rather, it is a story about growth from a bratty, impulsive teenager blind to many of his own advantages, into a young man who better understands the world around him, who conquers some of his fears, and who gains an understanding that, at the end of the day, people like the monks of Shaolin are just that: people. Polly's memoir is an easy read, spiced liberally as it with bawdy events and characters, hair-raising experiences, and lots of self-effacing humor. "American Shaolin" is likely to be most warmly received by practitioners of Asian martial arts, who will find some level of common experience with the author. That said, it also has broad appeal as a coming of age story and a unique travelogue. Recommended.
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I thought it to be very well written and an easy read. Would recommend it to anyone interested in ...
By AJ
Very insightful and entertaining book. I thought it to be very well written and an easy read. Would recommend it to anyone interested in doing something crazy like running off to China to study martial arts for an extended period of time or if you just enjoy martial arts and are content with reading about someone who has already done just that. I was surprised how much I learned from this book outside of a fun martial arts story. A very good read. Highly recommended!
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not what I expected, but still interesting
By azshopper
Interesting but not engaging unless you're into martial arts. I was expecting more insight into zen and Buddhism, but instead got blow by blow description of martial art tournaments and the training involved. The training itself was interesting, tho. The writing was good, and various parts were very humorous.

The raucously funny story of one young American's quest to become the baddest dude on the planet (and possibly find inner peace along the way) Growing up a ninety-eight-pound weakling tormented by bullies in the schoolyards of Kansas, Matthew Polly dreamed of one day journeying to the Shaolin Temple in China to become the toughest fighter in the world, like Caine in his favorite 1970s TV series Kung Fu. American Shaolin is the story of the two years Matthew spent in China living, studying, and performing with the Shaolin monks. The Chinese term for tough training is chi ku (?eating bitter?), and Matthew quickly learned to appreciate the phrase. This is both the gripping story of Matthew's journey and an intimate portrait of the real lives of the Shaolin monks, who struggle to overcome rampant corruption and the restrictions of an authoritarian government. Laced with humor and illuminated by cultural insight, American Shaolin is an unforgettable coming-of-age story of one man's journey into the ancient art of kungfu and a poignant portrait of a rapidly changing China.

From Publishers Weekly
In this smoothly written memoir, 98-pound weakling Polly makes the age-old decision to turn his nerdy self into a fighting machine. Polly's quest for manhood leads this guy from Topeka, Kans., to the Shaolin Temple, ancient home of the fighting monks and setting for 10,000 chop-socky movies. As much a student of Chinese culture as he is a martial artist, Polly derives a great deal of humor from the misunderstandings that follow a six-foot-three laowai (white foreigner) in a China taking its first awkward steps into capitalism after Tiananmen Square. Polly has a good eye for characters and introduces the reader to a Finnish messiah, a practitioner of "iron crotch" kung fu, and his nagging girlfriend. We get the inside dope on Chinese dating, Chinese drinking games and a medical system apparently modeled on the Spanish Inquisition. The last hundred pages of the book lose focus, and Polly doesn't convincingly demonstrate how he transforms himself from a stumbling geek to a kickboxing stud who can stand toe-to-toe with the highest-ranked fighter in the world. Although Polly may fall short in sharing Shaolin's secrets, as a chronicler of human absurdity he makes all the right moves. (Feb.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. I loved "American Shaolin," PJ O'Rourke An original and insightful book. "Boston Globe" Polly is an easy amateur to root for. "Entertainment Weekly" It takes a special kind of person to leave the comforts of Princeton University and move to rural China to smash his forearms against tree trunks. Meet Matthew Polly. "NY Post" I picked up "American Shaolin" and read it straight through. It is first rate. Polly's book tells more about what's going on in China and has more insights into the real China than anything in recent years. It is a wonderful true-life story with profound, behind-the-headlines observations about Chinese life. A tip of the Stetson to Matthew Polly. Dan Rather I loved "American Shaolin," a PJ O'Rourke a An original and insightful book. a "Boston Globe" a Polly is an easy amateur to root for. a "Entertainment Weekly" a It takes a special kind of person to leave the comforts of Princeton University and move to rural China to smash his forearms against tree trunks. Meet Matthew Polly. a "NY Post" a I picked up "American Shaolin" and read it straight through. It is first rate. Polly's book tells more about what's going on in China and has more insights into the real China than anything in recent years. It is a wonderful true-life story with profound, behind-the-headlines observations about Chinese life. A tip of the Stetson to Matthew Polly. a Dan Rather? I loved "American Shaolin".? PJ O'Rourke ? An original and insightful book.?

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About the Author Matthew Polly is the author of the national bestseller *American Shaolin*, which *The Boston Globe* called an original and insightful book, and journalist Dan Rather called a wonderful true-life story with profound, behind-the-headlines observations about Chinese life. A Princeton University graduate and Rhodes Scholar, Polly's work has appeared in *Esquire*, *The Nation*, and *Playboy*. He lives in New York.