Endurance: a Year in Space, a Lifetime of Discovery by Scott Kelly

A memoir by the astronaut who spent a record-breaking year aboard the International Space Station shares candid reminiscences of his voyage, his colorful formative years, and the off-planet journeys that shaped his early career.


About the Author: Scott Kelly is a former military fighter pilot and test pilot, an engineer, a retired astronaut, and a retired U.S. Navy captain. A veteran of four space flights, Kelly commanded the International Space Station (ISS) on three expeditions and was a member of the yearlong mission to the ISS. During the Year in Space mission, he set records for the total accumulated number of days spent in space and for the single longest space mission by an American astronaut. He lives in Houston, Texas.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the significance of the title? Would you have given the book a different title? If yes, what is your title?

2. Was there something especially surprising about Scott Kelly's story? What was it and why?

3. Did preconceived opinions of Kelly change after reading his story? If so, did it change for the better or the worse? Explain.

4. What do you think motivated the author to share his life story? How did you respond to the author's “voice”?

5. What is most compelling about memoirs as a genre of non-fiction? Are true-life stories potentially more powerful than fictional ones? Why or why not?

6. Which aspects of Kelly's character do you identify with most and least? How does your reaction to the author affect your experience of the book?

7. Were there any moments where you disagreed with the choices made by Kelly? What would you have done differently?

8. Did you think the ending was appropriate? How would you have liked to have seen the ending go?