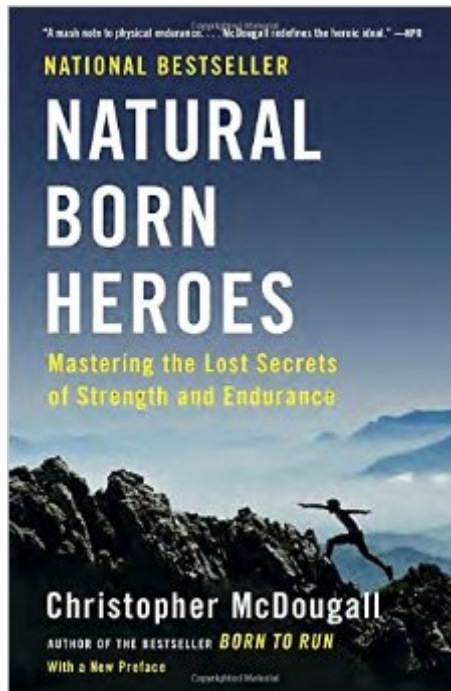


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# Natural Born Heroes: Mastering The Lost Secrets Of Strength And Endurance



## Synopsis

Christopher McDougall's journey begins with a story of remarkable athletic prowess: On the treacherous mountains of Crete, a motley band of World War II Resistance fighters—an artist, a shepherd, and a poet—abducted a German commander from the heart of the Axis occupation. To understand how, McDougall retraces their steps across the island that birthed Herakles and Odysseus, and discovers ancient techniques for endurance, sustenance, and natural movement that have been preserved in unique communities around the world. His search takes us scrambling over rooftops with a Parkour crew in London, foraging for greens with a ballerina in Brooklyn, tossing heavy pieces of driftwood on a Brazilian beach with the creator of MovNat—and, finally, to our own backyards. *Natural Born Heroes* will inspire readers to unleash the extraordinary potential of the human body and climb, swim, skip, throw, and jump their way to heroic feats.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*Natural Born Heroes*, by Christopher McDougall, is a book with a dual purpose. First and foremost, McDougall retells the improbable, World War II tale of Patrick 'Paddy' Leigh Fermor and his rag-tag band of irregulars, who masterfully and audaciously abducted General Heinrich Kriepe from a heavily guarded section of Axis occupied Crete and took the general on a 19-day trek across the island. Fromer and the team had to hide Kriep in plan site, dodge Nazi patrols, and survive harsh terrain in order to bring Kriepe to a British boat that would take the captured general to Allied occupied Egypt. McDougall uses Leigh Fermor's cloak-and-dagger tale as a frame story to highlight his personal research on 'the lost secrets of strength and endurance.' The book is a page turner

and is quite successful in recounting Leigh Fermor's story, but is somewhat more idiosyncratic--yet still amazingly interesting and readable--when discussing the secrets of strength and endurance of its subtitle. In any book that shifts back from one story line to another, there is always the danger that an author might lose the reader. This is especially true when the second topic is more esoteric and technical in nature, as it is here. Nevertheless, McDougall kept me hooked from start to finish. The Leigh Fermor story is one of those true-life stories that is so outrageous that it reads like fiction. McDougall's enthusiasm for the secrets of strength and endurance is so infectious that I was swept away by that part too.

I have written a full review - aimed at readers who have already enjoyed *Born to Run: A Hidden Tribe, Superathletes, and the Greatest Race the World Has Never Seen*. Author Christopher McDougall made a name for himself with "Born to Run" and many of the readers of this new book will have come from this direction. My review will compare these 2 books, highlight the important areas of "Natural Born Heroes", and offer my opinions. Christopher McDougall's first book *Born to Run: A Hidden Tribe, Superathletes, and the Greatest Race the World Has Never Seen* had a very strong effect on me. It was the first book that I read in a long time that held my attention, entertained me, and had valuable information that was new and unique. Based on its stellar popularity, I feel that "Born to Run" affected other readers in a similar way. I think that many of us are hoping that Christopher McDougall's new books will live up to the reputation of his first book. Please read on. #1 MORE DIVERSE INFORMATION First, and most importantly, "Natural Born Heroes" is different than "Born to Run". "Natural Born Heroes" covers a much larger range of fitness-based information (functional fitness, muscle building, endurance training, nutrition, the human spirit, martial arts and boxing, parkour, Greek mythology), using stories from over 20 different people and information from well over 20 different sources.

What do the following have in common? • LeBron James • Brazil • Arthur Evans • Patrick Leigh Fermor • Tom Myers • Fairbairn & Sykes • Shanghai • Pankration (Greek) • George Hebert • Norina Bentzel • Xan Fielding • The Minotaur • Wing Chun • Steve Maxwell • The Arizona desert • John Pendleberry • a glass eye • Fritz Schubert, a/k/a the Turk • Erwan Le Corre • Friedrich-Wilhelm Møller • Dr. Phil Maffetone • Dwight Howard • William Banting • Hitler • Churchill • Cretel If you had a difficult time discerning connections, don't feel badly about it (although the last three items provide a strong indication of one topic). These topics are among dozens of other possible

examplesâ”are tied together in the two books written by Chris McDougall as one book: *Natural Born Heroes: How a Daring Band of Misfits Mastered the Lost Secrets of Strength and Endurance* (2015). In this book, McDougall examines the German invasion and subsequent resistance movement on Crete during WWII. British Special Operations Executive (SOE) agents aided the Cretans during the occupation. These tales provide the central core of the book. Around this central coreâ”fascinating and cinematic in its own right--McDougall constructs a second book about human performance from ancient Minoan culture to contemporary Parkour. In lesser hands this could have resulted in a mess, but as McDougall displayed in another favorite book of mine, *Born to Run*, he can weave and integrate stories as a master.

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