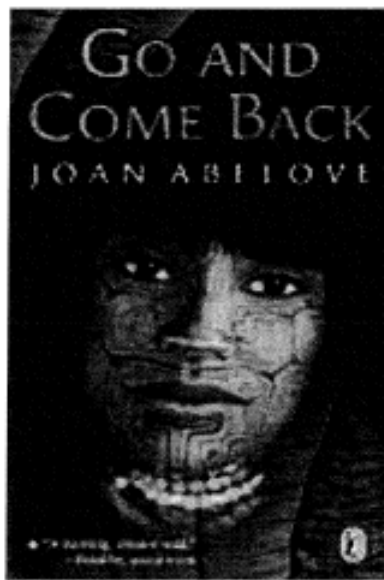


Go and Come Back Abelove, Joan

Puffin Books NY 1998
Ages 12+
177 pages

Winner of multiple prizes and awards including ALA best Book for Young Adults and the SLJ Best Book of the year, *Go and Come Back* is the story of two "old lady's" who arrive in the Amazonian Jungle of Peru to live among the native people and study their way of life. Joan Abelove herself lived in the Amazon for two years and it is delightful to imagine, as you read, that this is the story of her visit as told by Alicia, a young Isabo girl.



Alicia may only have just entered her teen age years, but she quickly sizes up these silly, ill equipped and ill mannered women who have come to stay in her village. What we learn about the characters evolves only as we become more familiar with Alicia, who is at first standoffish. She interprets the events around her with a clarity that is sometimes cutting, sometimes funny but

always direct. This is another book that is deceptive in its simplicity. Alicia watches with a cool eye as the anthropologists blunder their way along, and it is through her patient lessons to them that we learn about the tribes' attitudes toward marriage, sex, sharing, responsibility and fun. The Isabo have a special kind of philosophy that is akin to *que sera sera* – "happy or whatever I would be", they accept the world and their lot in it.

Go and Come Back is an intimate look at the Isabos' way of life. It is educational, but Alicia's dry wit and clarity of expression provide moments of both hilarity and tender sadness. This is the lighter side of anthropology.

The Mosquito Coast Theroux, Paul

Hamish Hamilton, London 1981
Ages 16+
392 pages

If you are into extreme camping, *The Mosquito Coast* is essential reading. This is the story of the rise and fall of Allie Fox, a Yankee inventor extraordinaire who has become completely contemptuous about life in the United States. His distaste for the rampant consumerism becomes so extreme he is driven to uproot his family from their home in Massachusetts, abandoning almost all their personal possessions and ship off to Honduras on a banana boat. Allie is convinced that the US is doomed and that by leaving they are not only escaping the consumer-driven society and the collapse of real values, but that they are actually saving themselves from destruction.