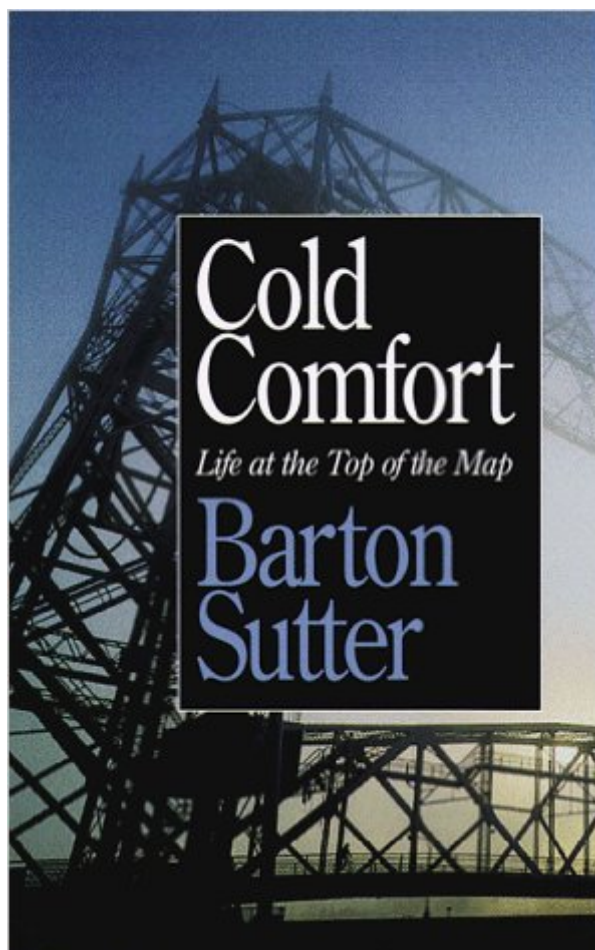


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# Cold Comfort: Life At The Top Of The Map (Minnesota)



## Synopsis

Temperatures that dive to forty degrees below zero are only part of life in northern Minnesota, according to award-winning writer Barton Sutter. *Cold Comfort* is his temperamental tribute to the city of Duluth, Minnesota, where bears wander the streets and canoe racks are standard equipment.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Barton Sutter's book, "Cold Comfort", came to me as a Christmas gift from my son-in-law. He and my daughter live in Duluth, and it seemed a fitting gift to provide an apparent travelogue about their northern hometown. Suspecting a boring book, I nevertheless tasted the first chapter. I felt as though I'd held up a mirror to my soul. The Duluth and northern Minnesota setting is merely the pretense of the book, whereas its real merit is in seeing life in a refreshing simplicity, in a no-holds-barred honesty. Barton cuts through much of the fluff in our modern world, not deliberately, but almost accidentally while telling us his truth. Each chapter is enjoyed like the day's first cup of coffee. When the mind is rested and open, I sip in another short essay to settle me down and warm my day. Great book; great writer.

Although I grew up in northeastern Minnesota and was driven away by the cold, I am always drawn back to Duluth and Lake Superior. (Duluth is an incredibly beautiful place and for a city it's size has a thriving arts community.) Barton Sutter makes me want to move to Duluth. He describes the characters, the landscape, the lake, the weather...everything which makes Duluth so special...in his

own unique style. In a few chapters he talks about the BWCA, but I didn't feel that this detracted from the main concept of the book. Mr. Sutter is to be congratulated for making this city come alive for me.

Barton Sutter is an amazing writer. He uses his creativeness to express his feelings about the beautiful city of Duluth. Not only did I enjoy "Cold Comfort," but I enjoyed learning more about Barton Sutter. He seems to be a brilliant man with a lot of positive energy. The book highlights points of Duluth and Lake Superior that I've never heard of before or considered. I'm new to the city of Duluth; during my winter break, I'm going to take some time to visit the places that Sutter talked about in "Cold Comfort." He really inspired me about the city of Duluth and I look forward to getting to know the city better!

Sutter describes the attitude of the Duluthians dead-on, proud of the climate and the effect it has on the citizens, and the in-your-face weather and power of the lake. The stories are sprinkled with dry Scandinavian humor. He passes through the seasons and reflections of his life with the clear, harsh beauty of the city and the Lake. Reminds of the depressing joy of a bright, clear -20F February morning. You'd know what I mean if you lived here...and if you don't? Let Barton Sutter fill you in!

This book made me miss Duluth so much I cried while I read it. I talked about it in book club yesterday, then came home and made motel reservations the end of May in a place very near the bridge. I can't wait to see it again!

I attended college at what was then called Wisconsin State University-Superior in the late sixties. I was from Philadelphia and I quickly got into this college to avoid the draft. So did many eastern draftable men. Imagine my surprise when I landed at Duluth Airport in January and stepped into a sheet of frozen air that made the hairs in my nose stiffen like pins. Barton Sutter describes Duluth and Superior exactly the way people live there. Yes, people live there and they are nice people, but as Sutter shows, they ain't like you and me. They live in snow drifts nine months of the year. Then there's Lake Superior or as Barton describes it, GOD. The lake is an ocean and it's everywhere. Barton describes fishing, hiking, canoeing, and reading maps for a hobby. Somewhere in those dark winters he gets a divorce, is involved with a surprisingly active art community, and then gets married again. The prose is perfect. The description of rugged Minnesota and Wisconsin is terrific. Forget

Vanity Fair and the New Yorker. Experience ice fishing at thirty below.

Cold Comfort is a delightful look at life in place about as far north as you can get in the lower 48, written in a witty prose by someone who knows not to take himself too seriously. This book is a collection of short essays, some originally written for Minnesota Public Radio - the same people that bring you Garrison Keillor and Lake Wobegon - that are loosely tied together, but can be taken singly without losing anything. (It would be very hard to stop after just one though.) More than just being about the place, Cold Comfort takes a look at life itself -- what really makes us tick, makes us happy or sad.

Cold Comfort is a great book to read. It's a book about Barton's journals on Northern Minnesota. His book focuses on his life, activities, and the Boundary Waters the gateway to true camping. Being a Duluth resident I found this book truly explains why we can stand Duluth's unusual climate. This book was one of the best I've read.

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