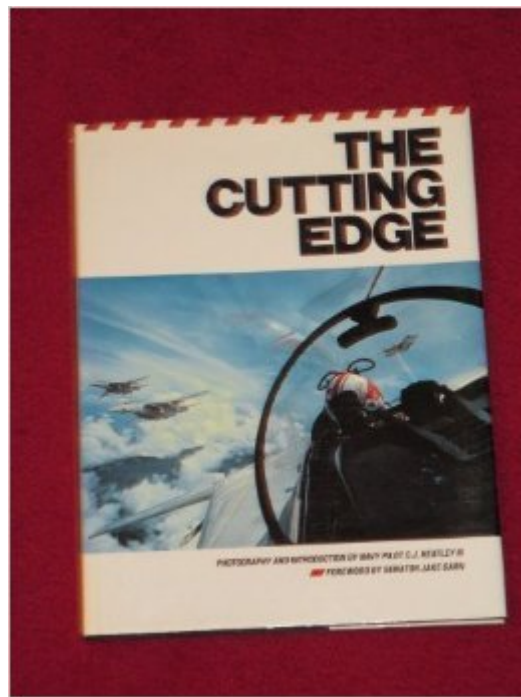


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The Cutting Edge



Synopsis

Coffee table book.

Book Information

Hardcover: 152 pages

Publisher: Thomasson Grant & Howell; 1st edition (1986)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0934738173

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Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 9.5 x 12 inches

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (12 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Still one of the best Naval photography books around, Heater did a good job capturing the feeling of shipboard life. His photos have been reproduced in a few books, but none to the clarity of the originals seen in this one. I served on board the USS Ranger, CV-61 with Mr. Heatley and still regret never stopping to ask if he would autograph my copy. Oh well, as it was when you were an E-nothing Aircrewman at the time.

This is an epic pictorial of the US Navy of the 1980's. "Edge" came out in the 1980's, in the wake of the popularity over "Top Gun", though it does less to cash in on the hype than generate its own. (Remember how in 1986, leather aviator jackets covered in patches like some old steamer trunk were all the rage?) With George Hall's "Top Gun", "Edge" occupied a spot on my bookshelf, but never sat unread very long. Heatley's camera picks up life aboard an aircraft carrier - mostly on deck. Though an F-14 pilot, Heatley also captures the adventures of those who fly "Helos", Hawkeye radar planes, Viking sub-hunters, Corsair strike fighters, Intruder bombers, tankers, and ELint planes. "Edge" is mostly a picture book - with little emphasis on telling very detailed stories. Nevertheless, between thin blurbs from shipmates and Heatley's pictures, a very nuanced picture of carrier aviation comes across - F-14's going supersonic or dogfighting against each other;

Sea-Knight helicopters bringing needed supplies; deck-crew managing millions of dollars worth of hardware on a pitching carrier deck; a mammoth warship is dwarfed by the vast seas in a great vista shot; stricken planes making emergency barricade landings; Soviet planes being intercepted near the carrier. (I doubt that the Tu-95 "Bear" has ever appeared so classically beautiful by Soviet photogs.) Mid-way through, Heatley goes to Miramar to capture the sights of legendary Top-Gun (since moved to Yuma) and also capture the (then) new F/A-18 which was just entering the fleet. Heatley gets some great shots of aggressor pilots and their planes - McDonnell Skyhawks and Northrop Tigers with Soviet-style paint jobs - but the results aren't as dramatic as those achieved on the carrier (maybe the rigors of naval aviation have a way of creating their own narrative.) Heatley's pictures are incredible - it's hard to believe that they're being taken while the guy is driving a \$36 million plane (one of his shots appears as a mural in the bar scene in "Top Gun".) While the pictures are unforgettable, "Edge" excels in the uncommon and still unsurpassed sincerity that Heatley brings out of his crewmates. They're faithful to their roles as strike-fighter aviators or helo drivers, but aren't afraid to talk about their limits (we know that the Corsair doesn't come with the bells and whistles of an F-14, but its pilots appreciate being able to make all the decisions themselves; sub hunting isn't a fast-moving job, but Viking crewmen appreciate the thrill of the chase). If you want a more detailed story of Navy carrier aviation, I'd recommend George Hall's book - which has some great pictures to be sure, but nothing that can touch the visual splendor of "The Cutting Edge".

You can't call yourself a die hard fan of naval aviation if you don't own this book. Or of the F-14A. Stunning photography and personal naval personal commentary- it's a sheer joy to read over and over. Great historical piece, too! Just get it now.

This book was for my grand nephew who is in the Navy as a flight navigator on an aircraft carrier. He is at sea now, and I sent him this book because of how much he loves to fly. He wrote to tell me how much he likes the book and how he has shared it with his friends. It's a terrific book for someone who loves planes and flying.

Like Navy Pilot said, I read this book when I was a kid and remember the vivid pictures depicting Navy life. I remember looking at the photos, which include a brief descriptive paragraph, and thinking "this is something I want to do". Military flying wasn't in the cards, but I'm currently a major airline pilot and attribute reaching my goals to this book. For anyone who has a love of aviation, or knows someone who is interested, this is a great book to light the fire. A quote I remember from the

book, when he photographed the F-18, "There are those who fly the F-18, and those who wish they did!" I don't have personal experience, but after all these years that is a quote I remember. All in all, a great book, with great photographs, that will make a great addition to your library. I think I said "great" multiple times in this review. Need I say more?

I was stationed on board the USS Kitty Hawk the same time Mr Heatley was. So many of the pics that were published in the book were from the 1984 WESPAC. I didn't know about this book until after I had got out of the Navy. When I first opened the book and started seeing pics of certain events that I was there for, I had to buy a copy!

The best pictorial of high performance aircraft in action ever produced. Not the usual press corps pictures of aircraft in formation. The author spent years in service and flew with cameras on every mission. His still pictures capture an amazing amount of energy and motion. My two favorite pictures: 1) A rainbow ring around an F-14 as it breaks the sound barrier in a tropical environment--shot from the author's plane while doing the same; 2) an F-14 at the moment of touchdown on a carrier with a hint of tire smoke and the arresting cable whipping taught. WOW!

As a long time airdale/sailor this is the only book of it the kind. This is a must have book for the ex-Navy flight deck 24 hours/7 days a week action packed photo album! The photo's are superb! Most photo's are action photo's and not a bunch of birds sitting on the deck of the boat! As a jet mech (AD2), I've been there done that! This is a close to the real thing as your going to get, plus you get to see the Navy in her prime with a A-3, A-6, A-7 and of course the cat's! Buy this book and you'll enjoy it for life. I guarrantee it!!! AD2 Pols

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