

# Climbing—A Way Of Life For High-Minded People

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There you are: 300 feet over nothing but cool air and silent sunlight, hanging to a precious toe-hold by what you always thought was your least needed appendage. You compose

yourself and send forth that great mountaineer's cry of old that echoes through the canyons below:  
"Maaaaaaa!"  
Maybe that's an exaggerated view of your first hard climb — but your knees were

really shaking — that's no joke when you need them the most. You think, "When I get to the FLAT ground, I'll never do this again."  
Funny thing though, when you get down from your immortal perch, you're ready to go again.

"I always feel this knotting up in my stomach before leading a climb," confessed veteran UNC climber Hugh Owens, leader of the Christmas climb to Orizaba in Mexico.

### No Ruts In Life

For some people, this cycle of conquest of the self as well as the heights is a real way of life.

"I'm more me than any other time when I reach the top," expressed one climber at Carolina. He's not the only one that feels that way.

For the 30-some students that compose the UNC outing club, the weekend escape to the mountains is a vital additive to a fresh perspective on living.

"I have to get away from the books, if I don't get some exercise every day I feel stale," said another climber.

### Get Away

This getting away process that the outing club performs almost every weekend involves some pretty risky living. The closest difficult climbs are at Hanging Rock State Park, just an hour and a half from Chapel Hill. Of course, you've got to stop in Greensboro to pick up some mountain climbing girls (really!) to add to the spice of the afternoon.

If it's difficult then why do it? is the question often leveled at climbers. The answer seems to be a mysterious mixture of joy of total living, thrill of risk and discovery of new emotions and strengths within yourself.

### Thrill of Risk

This thrill of risk thing can be pretty tenuous. "I feel that when I go out there on that ledge and for once in my life have a life and death decision — to go up, down, which route to choose — then it adds a new dimension to my life. No ruts in this kind of living

that way," declared one knickered climber.  
The more actual air-space and hazard there is to a specific climb is referred to as "exposure," by climbers. Actually, it's just a professional-sounding term for, "I was scared as hell up there."

### Safety First

For the UNC climbers, it's not all that dangerous. A system of belaying is used, whereby a caution rope is tied around each climber to assure safety. At the upper end of the belay rope, an experienced climber sits, anchored to a rock or tree with the rope around his waist.

These Fall climbs for the outing club are training and conditioning grounds for the scheduled climb to Western Hemisphere's third highest peak over the Christmas holidays. The Mexican peak of Orizaba, 18,600 feet above the Vera Cruz lowlands, will be assaulted by eight Carolina climbers.

Expedition Leader Owens will be aided by Expedition Coordinator, Robin Wright. Climbing Leader is George E. DeWolfe. Other members of the team are: John F. Thorne, George N. Huppert, Barry Owens and photographer Jock Lauterer.

As Wilfred Noyce put it, "We extend our horizon, we expand our being, we revel in a matery of ourselves which gives an impression mainly illusory that we are masters of our world."

"In a word, we are men, and when men cease to do these things, he is no longer man."



Rappelling is the fastest practical method of descending from steep heights



Wind-carved mountain trees bend in to cliff



UNC's Robin Wright picks his way along a dizzy cliff. This incline at Moore's Wall affords good "Exposure."