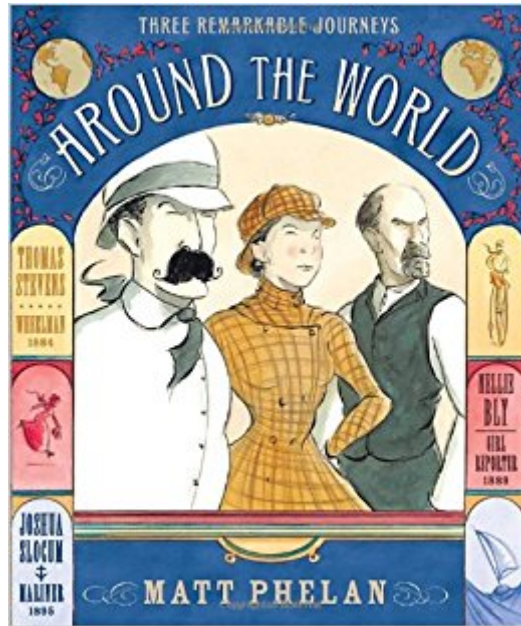




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# Around The World



## Synopsis

A Scott O'Dell Award-winning graphic novelist follows three dauntless adventurers on a Jules Verne-inspired challenge: circling the world, solo! As the nineteenth century wound down, a public inspired by the novel *Around the World in Eighty Days* clamored for intrepid adventure. The challenge of circumnavigating the globe as no one ever had before--a feat assuring fame if not fortune--attracted the fearless in droves. Three hardy spirits stayed the course: In 1884, former miner Thomas Stevens made the journey on a bicycle, the kind with a big front wheel. In 1889, pioneer reporter Nellie Bly embarked on a global race against time that assumed the heights of spectacle, ushering in the age of the American celebrity. And in 1895, retired sea captain Joshua Slocum quietly set sail on a thirty-six-foot sloop, braving pirates and treacherous seas to become the first person to sail around the world alone. With cinematic pacing and deft, expressive art, acclaimed graphic novelist Matt Phelan weaves a trio of epic journeys into a single bold tale of three visionaries who set their sights on nothing short of the world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A first-rate pleasure from the acclaimed graphic novelist Phelan. And this book - riveting, wondrously drawn, expertly paced - is a triumph in and of itself. "The New York Times With uncommon perception and a flair for visual drama, Phelan tracks three intrepid souls' solo journeys around the world...Three true tales of adventure as grand and admirable in the telling as they were in the doing." *Kirkus Reviews* (starred review) A graphic novel that will appeal to aficionados of the

form and any reader in search of engrossing true journeys.â School Library Journal (starred review) The stories encompass such national ideals as dogged can-do spirit, exploration, enterprise, and commercialism...the very essence of determination and adventure.â Booklist (starred review) Phelan invests each tale with its own distinct mood and style.â Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books (starred review)

Matt Phelan is the author-illustrator of the highly acclaimed and award-winning graphic novel THE STORM IN THE BARN. He is also the illustrator of many books for young readers, including ALWAYS and I'LL BE THERE by Ann Stott and THE HIGHER POWER OF LUCKY by Susan Patron, winner of the 2007 Newbery Medal. He lives in Philadelphia.

My son gives a huge thumbs up to all of Matt Phelan's graphic books. It's a book anyone can read more than once.

Good read.

Written and illustrated by Matt Phelan, AROUND THE WORLD is a graphic novel that tells the story of three different 19th century individuals who traveled around the world in three very different ways. Up first is Thomas Stevens. Stevens was a miner who quit his job and took to riding a bicycle (a new invention at the time) and set out to ride around the world on his bicycle. The second traveler in the story is Nellie Bly, a female reporter who after reading Jules Verne's AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS, set out to beat that record. The last story is that of Joshua Slocum, a retired sea captain who repairs an old boat and sets to sail at sea and eventually becoming the first man to sail around the world alone. Although a graphic novel, the book does a good job of illustrating the particular challenges and obstacles each of the individuals had to overcome to complete their tasks. Overall, while AROUND THE WORLD might not exactly be a riveting tale of adventure, it is entertaining and educational and provides the reader with a basic understanding about these three individuals who traveled around the world in three very different ways.

The team at Candlewick Press continues to impress with their innovative approach to telling great stories for young readers, and that includes important stories we all should remember in our collective culture. So, bravo for this three-part graphic novelization of the lives of three people who circled our planet. All three are real, historical figures and the comic-book-style sequences are taken

from the surviving narratives of their adventures. But, if you think you know the story of Nellie Bly circling the world, for example, this dramatic version centers on moments you may have overlooked. That's why I refer to this as a "novelization." Yes, this is history, but it's stirring drama as well. Two of the adventurers whose tales form this book are Thomas Stevens, the first person to cycle around the world, and Joshua Slocum, the first person to sail solo around the globe. What drew me to single out and praise this new Candlewick title in particular is its attention to Nellie Bly, who gets a little more than a third of the entire book. Evidence that far too many Americans are forgetting this courageous journalist is a notable slip-up on National Public Radio back in 2009, when an on-air host listed Nellie Bly among famous "serial killers." Later NPR apologized and corrected the mistake, but clearly our American memory of this crusading investigative reporter are fading. Around the World only focuses on Nellie Bly's attempt to circle the world more quickly than in Jules Verne's best-selling account. She did much more! If you are intrigued by this tough-as-nails reporter, I also highly recommend the PBS-sponsored video *American Experience: Around the World in 72 Days*, which also focuses on Nellie's planet-circling adventures but tells about her other exploits as well. While it is easy to dismiss Nellie as a publicity seeker, she clearly was driven to shine the light of journalism on many unfortunate corners of the human community. Even in this new graphic novel, Matt Phelan points out that she made time on Christmas Day 1889 to visit a leper colony. That was classic Nellie. This is a great gift to give young readers, but perhaps after you've enjoyed these tales yourself!

Reason for Reading: I enjoy graphic biographies and while I wasn't too impressed with Matt Phelan's *Storm in the Barn*, thought I'd give him another go. This is the story of three late 19th century "around the world travelers". The book opens with the scene from Verne's famous book of the same name where Phileas Fogg makes his bet to travel around the world in 80 days. It was the publication of this book that inspired many real life adventurous types to set off and do the same thing. Told separately in three vignettes, the reader is introduced to the stories of three such adventurers, who each wrote a book documenting their travels. First up is Thomas Stevens a miner, who quits his job, takes up riding the new-fangled invention the bicycle and proceeds to travel around the world via bicycle (this was the penny-farthing bike at the time, though he rode the American version). Next is the story of Nellie Bly, Girl Reporter who set out to beat Phileas Fogg's time and travel the world in 74 days while sending home news reports. The American public went wild for her stories. Finally, we are told the story of Joshua Slocum, retired sea captain, who fixes up a dilapidated little boat into a sea-worthy sailing ship and travels the world by sea. Each one of the

stories is interesting and while having the same theme, unique from one another. Rather than being just a retelling of events, Phelan has chosen to portray each journey through the person's ultimate reasons as to why they conducted the voyage, their driving force and their eventual personal rewards. An enjoyable read. Not overly exciting, but interesting nonetheless. I can't say I'm particularly fond of Phelan's artistic style; his colours are drab and his watercolours are wishy-washy to my sensibilities, but he is a well known illustrator and obviously many others do appreciate his work. Certainly a unique topic and combination of stories.

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