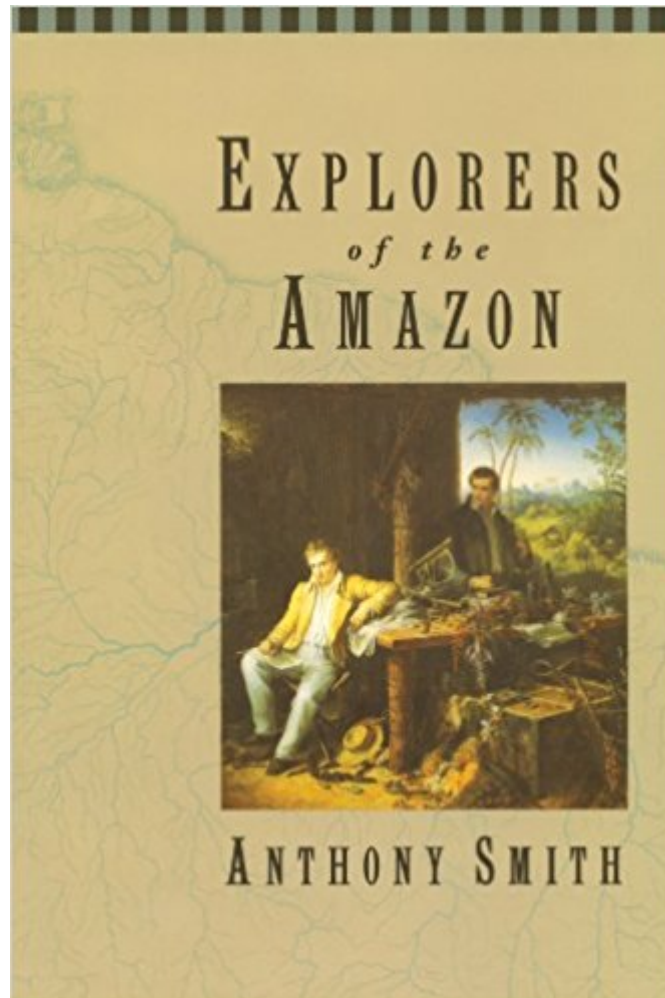




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Explorers Of The



Synopsis

Explorers of the Amazon vividly describes how European explorers such as Pedro Cabral, Francisco De Orellana, Lope de Aguirre, and Madame Godin encountered the vast wilderness of the Amazon basin; how they searched, exploited, and fought over its riches; and what they learned and failed to learn through four centuries of adventure. Anthony Smith not only enriches this history with fascinating geographical, political, and scientific details but also gives a strong warning to those who continue to exploit this great river's resources. "The history of Amazon exploration, wonderfully told by Anthony Smith, is awash with madness – an extravagant mixture of the malevolent and the miraculous." – Stephen Mills, Times Literary Supplement

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Customer Reviews

This history of European exploration of the Amazon will appeal to travel and adventure buffs. Illustrated.

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This is less a continuous history than a series of chapters dealing with the exploration of the Amazon River from the discovery of Brazil in 1500 to the expose of Indian exploitation on the rubber plantations of the early 1900s. Smith, a British TV and radio personality and freelance writer, presents a number of colorful characters from the homicidal Lope de Aguirre to the polymath Baron von Humboldt to the British adventurer Henry Wickham. Edward Goodman's *The Explorers of South America* (LJ 8/72) covers much of the same ground as Smith's work does, though in more scholarly fashion, but *Explorers of the Amazon* certainly merits consideration as a readable, popular account. - J.F. Husband,

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The has always been a source of dreams and threats to European explorers. In this volume, Anthony Smith selects a few explorers and adventurers who have sought fame, honor, fortune or knowledge in the banks of the . The selection is a bit random with some characters, but overall provides a very interesting and readable collection of great men and women. Devoting about 30-40 pages per explorer, the book covers the following: 1) Cabral, the discoverer of Brazil. He was never to the , so it is a bit unclear what he is doing in this volume. 2) Orellana, the first Spaniard down the , the first man to report seeing the women. 3) Aguirre, the madman who went down the in a murderous rage only to turn back and try to conquer Peru again. 4) Teixeira, the man who asserted Portuguese possession of the , sailing against the current up the . 5) Condamine, the first scientist down the . 6) The Godin's, one of the greatest love stories in the world, where a woman, separated for 30 yrs from her husband, goes down the to meet him. 7) Humboldt, the last renaissance man, does most of his scientific discoveries in the northern , including the famous Casiquiare canal. 8) Spruce and Wickham, two botanists and robbers of some of the wealth of the - cinchona and rubber trees. 9) Arana, the great and evil character of the Putumayo, where some of the greatest atrocities of the rubber boom were committed against Indians. These stories are well told, though some important characters are not listed -- Wallace and Bates, for example. Highly recommended though, as a door to finding out more about this great region and its history.

Book in very good shape.

Intriguing tale of early explorers and what went wrong.

One of my favorite history books. Very interesting!

This book is an easy read for those who don't have the time or inclination to pursue this subject further. No source material is given for any of the chapters. It seems to be plagiarized from a number of other works on this subject. I'm not familiar with this writer and wonder if he's primarily a writer of fiction. Anyway, he covers in an entertaining way most of the well known Indian explorers but leaves out true greats such as Henry Walter Bates, who only gets a passing reference, and Candido Rondon and Richard Evans Schultes, both of whom are not even mentioned. But he includes Julio

Arana, for who, as far as I am concerned, cannot even be classified as an explorer. Perhaps he is included because his reign of terror as a rubber baron on the upper makes for spicy reading. The serious student of this interesting subject should go to "The Explorers of South America" by Edward J. Goodman for a serious study.

I have read and re-read this wonderful account of the history of ian exploration since the hardcover edition first came out in 1990. Anthony Smith, an inveterate science writer, writes with warmth and humor as he describes the very first European travels down this mighty waterway, those of the Spaniards Don Francisco de Orellana and the notorious Lope de Aguirre (the subject of Werner Herzog's 1972 movie "Aguirre, Wrath of God") and the Portugese navigator Pedro Teixeira. Next came the scientists, including la Condamine and von Humboldt followed in the latter nineteenth century by a bevy of entrepreneurs who expropriated rubber and other commodities from the rainforest. A well-written book on a fascinating subject!

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