

The Search for El Dorado

John Hemming

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John Hemming : The Search for El Dorado before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Search for El Dorado:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Blood and gold - a great and irresistible account of explorationBy StrategosThis is an excellent history of the sixteenth century exploration of the territories in South America which later became Colombia and Venezuela. Hemming draws from the early chronicles and his account is gripping. Inevitably, given the brutality of the conquistadores in their obsessive search for gold through trackless jungles and on the high plateaus and mountains of the Andes, each of the explorations and early conquests and settlements by is a story written in the blood and suffering of the native Indians.Thousands were enslaved and massacred by every adventurer who led groups of ruthless desperados, and the women and children were abused at will, often after the tribes had welcomed the strangers and offered them food and gifts. Many of the Spaniards and their followers (drawn from various European countries in the gold-rush fever of the times) suffered horribly and died of hunger, disease, or poisoned arrows, and some were even eaten by cannibals or themselves ate their companions or friendly Indians. The book ends tragically, with the disastrous expedition of Sir Walter Raleigh and his execution by order of James I.No better book has been written on the deadly 16th century, when like a swarm of venomous parasites invaders burst into South America - very much like aliens from another planet, bringing diseases to which the people they encountered had no resistance, wearing steel armor and wielding swords, riding horses to which there was no effective defense - killing, pillaging, enslaving, and subjugating vast new lands unimagined before the encounters. It is the story of an

image and a myth and its power to delude generations to their destruction - the legend of El Dorado, the golden man and his golden land, of wealth far greater than the gold and silver of Mexico and Peru, waiting for the lucky conquistador who could find and fight his way to it. For anyone who has lived or traveled in Colombia or Venezuela, or who has looked at early maps of South America, or who has seen the movie "Aguirre: The Wrath of God", this book will bring a whole new perspective in which to see these lands and the first settlements in them. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Tom R. All that glitters is gold. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Three Stars By stuart cameron comprehensive history, but too detailed

The legend of El Dorado, and of a naked ruler who covered his body in gold dust, completely obsessed conquistadors and successive adventurers, who went in search of the sacred gold belonging to the Indians in Central and South America. Here is not only the story of the explorers' cruelty, but also of the indescribable hardships they suffered. Beguilingly illustrated with images from the Gold Museum in Bogot, as well as the author's own photographs.