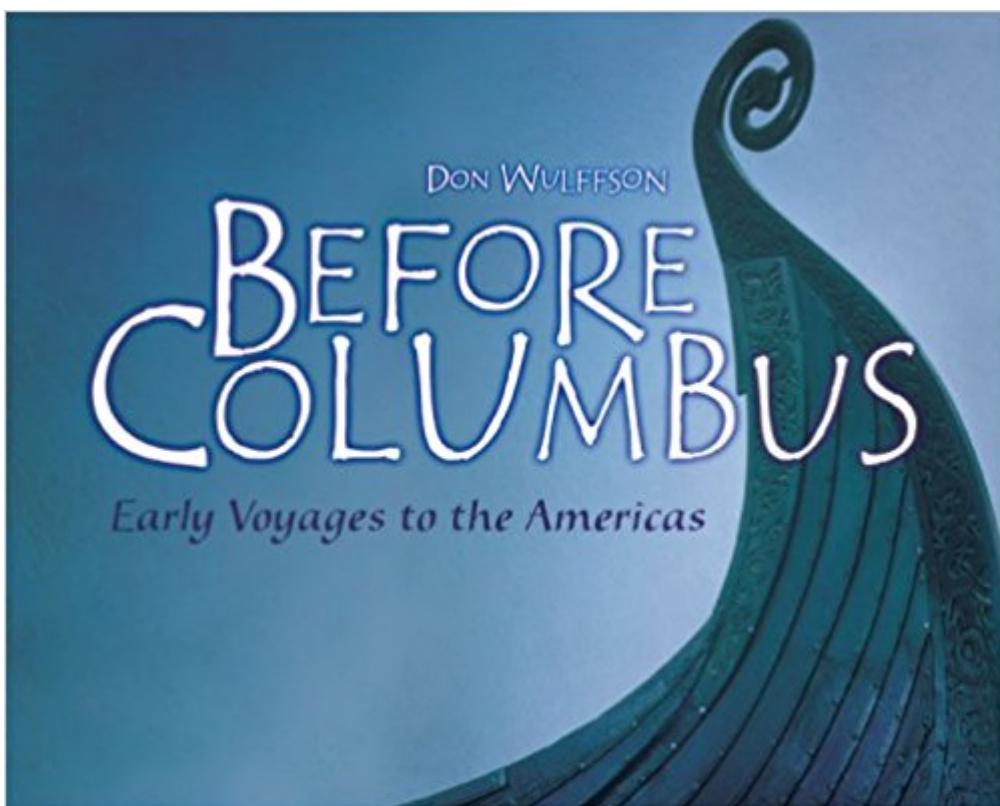


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Before Columbus: Early Voyages To The Americas (Exceptional Social Studies Titles For Upper Grades)



Synopsis

Voyages to America before Columbus.

Book Information

Series: Exceptional Social Studies Titles for Upper Grades

Library Binding: 128 pages

Publisher: Twenty-First Century Books (CT) (September 1, 2007)

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Customer Reviews

Voyages to America before Columbus.

On the positive side, the book does lay out all alleged pre-Columbian contacts with the Americas in an easily digestible format. However the author seems to take the "evidence" at face value and doesn't indicate that several of the artifacts and inscriptions he refers to have been exposed as hoaxes, some clever, others clumsy. This is important in a book intended for "upper grades" mentioned by the series editor. I think that high school students need to know that there is a lively diffusionist-inventionist debate regarding claims by various ethnic groups that their ancestors were the first across. However, they should be made aware of the spurious nature of much of this evidence, with the exception of the Viking presence which has been pretty much confirmed. Even there, the claims that the Vikings showed up as far west as Minnesota and the Great Lakes or as far south as the Chesapeake Bay or even Florida needs to be put in perspective. I do think that the book sets out all the competing claims concisely. Perhaps an appendix weighing the credibility of the finds might have been helpful. I realize that the debate on both sides of the issue is heated and that there are a number of works that use scientific (rather than intuitive) methods to substantiate a

few--though far from most--of the claims that intrepid seamen not only voyaged to the New World in late antiquity and the medieval era, but left material remains substantiating their visits. But, the counter arguments that these visits did not result in any real impact on the native American culture are also very cogent. Lacking this context, the book might leave the teen-aged reader with the false impression that all the reported artifact finds are equally reliable.

Great book!

In 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue...and that's when America was discovered, right? Well, you may be surprised to find out that that isn't even close to the truth! We know for a fact that the Vikings sailed across to North America some 500 years before Columbus made his voyage. Happy Leif Ericsson Day! But, there is good reason to believe that the Vikings themselves were Johnny-come-latelies. This book contains information on all of the suspected visits to the Americas that occurred before Christopher Columbus sailed here. There are stories of Irish visitors, Welsh visitors, Vikings, Chinese, Africans, Romans and even Phoenicians. Yep, this book has it all. And, it is presented in an easy-to-read manner, complete with many interesting pictures. Now, I do take away one star because the author does treat every suspected visit as a confirmed visit, and some of the evidence is much more suspect than the author lets on. But, that said, it is a very interesting and thought provoking book. If you like reading about unusual historical events, then you will like this book...I know I did!

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