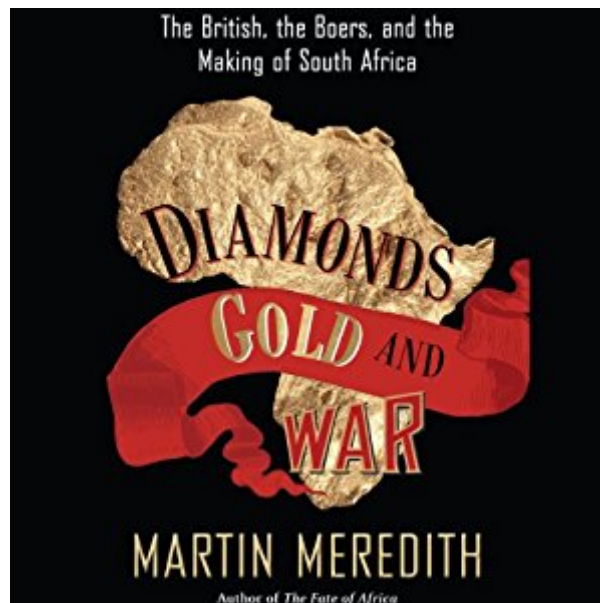




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Diamonds, Gold, And War: The British, The Boers, And The Making Of South Africa



Synopsis

Southern Africa was once regarded as a worthless jumble of British colonies, Boer republics, and African chiefdoms, a troublesome region of little interest to the outside world. But then prospectors chanced upon the world's richest deposits of diamonds and gold, setting off a titanic struggle between the British and the Boers for control of the land. The result was the costliest, bloodiest, and most humiliating war that Britain had waged in nearly a century, and the devastation of the Boer republics. The New Yorker calls this magisterial account of those years "[an] astute history....Meredith expertly shows how the exigencies of the diamond (and then gold) rush laid the foundation for apartheid."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I found this a fascinating history of South Africa in the pre-Apartheid era when the Brits and Africaners and indigenous people were competing for influence and territory. I learned a lot about some major characters in SA history and about its gold and diamond industries. Very readable too.

This is a great read, and does a wonderful job of explaining how South Africa ended up the way it did. It's not the most detailed history of the Boer War, but it's not trying to be. It covers a long stretch of history, and explains the long relationship of the Africans, Boers, British, and the diamond and gold industries. The author provides a fascinating narrative, the pages fly by.

Great read. It was exactly what I was looking for, the author gave the history of South Africa without getting bogged down in looking at it through the modern day political lens. Most books about colonization spend time denouncing it to show the reader how sorry they are for the sins of the past as if they committed them. This book just gave the facts in a concise way. The author was able to really show the contrast between the British and the Boers.

An excellently written piece of work about a fascinating period of South African history. Meredith's book reads like an engaging novel which brings the various historical characters to life. He is fair and balanced and leaves the reader with a great sense of the history of southern Africa during that period.

I think even readers who do not have a deep interest in British imperial history will find this book interesting, because the author makes the major players involved come alive. It sets the groundwork and explains so much about what South Africa is today. This is one of those history books where facts, and the people involved, are so much more interesting than any piece of fiction can be.

Not as good as Meredith's other books, but a good read about South Africa's history.

Fantastic book. The truth is very different from the history we have been taught. This book became a page turner once Cecil Rhodes part was introduced. I was wary the author would be biased but pleasantly surprised that he gave all sides to the story and especially that he evidenced this often with their own writings. The truth about the Boer War was of especial interest to me. The war was about mighty British military might attacking a bunch of simple boer farmers in order to take over their country's natural resources (some things never change - read "War is a Racket" by Major-General Smedley-Butler. Highly recommended (both books as they dovetail beautifully).

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