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The Black Heart: A Voyage Into Central Africa (Armchair Traveller Series)



Synopsis

****SUBTITLE: A Voyage into Central Africa**** A travel book, literary adventure and personal odyssey. In this celebration and critique of present-day Zaire, Paul and Noelle Hyland travelled on river-boats, in dug-out and bizarre vehicles from Congo's mouth, through equatorial forest, to the remotest uplands at the heart of Africa. Seldom sure where they would find the next boat or bed, they met horrors and delights, living among hunters and fishermen, villagers and traders. At last, beside Lake Mweru, the Hylands lived in a mud-and-grass house, where the people begged them to lay their bones. Paul Hyland was born in Dorset in 1947. He has written for music, theatre, t.v. and radio. He grew up with tales of Africa, for members of his family worked in the Congo from 1889 to 1976; they fuelled the fascination that inspires *The Black Heart*. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Series: Armchair Traveller Series

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #9,236,626 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #69 in Books > Travel > Africa > Democratic Republic of Congo

Customer Reviews

This is actually three books in one: a travelogue, a "literary adventure," and a series of historical narratives taken from European adventurers who traveled the Congo a century ago and whose footsteps Hyland tries to follow. It is a curious combination, and the historical snippets may confuse those not familiar with Zaire. While generally well written, there are some questionable "literary" gems. Overall, however, this is quite interesting; recommended for larger collections.- Paul H. Thomas, Hoover Inst. Lib., Stanford, Cal.Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Holly Black is the co-creator of THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES. A NEW YORK TIMES No. 1 bestselling phenomenon, the series has been described as 'vintage Victorian fantasy' and has been made into a hugely successful film. The books have been translated into 32 languages. Holly Black lives with her husband in Massachusetts. For more information, please visit Holly's website www.blackholly.com, read her Livejournal at <http://blackholly.livejournal.com>. Follow her on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/hollyblack> and Pinterest at <http://pinterest.com/hollyblack>, and like her on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/HollyBlackFan>. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Normally I would not take the time for a review but when I looked for his other books and found no reviews I thought I would do him and readers a favor. Hyland is an excellent writer and he has done a fine job of blending his trip to West Africa in the 80's with the prior accounts of his friends, relatives and many others, including most notably the famous novelist Conrad, going back well into the 19th century. This is one of the rare cases where the cover blurb is accurate: "Paul Hyland skillfully interweaves mythology, history, literature and contemporary reportage into an intensely vivid and powerful experience." Many of the extracts of older works remind us that robbery, murder, slavery, mutilation and cannibalism were common in much of the continent up to the end of the 19th century and that then, as now, unpleasant and often life threatening diseases are a normal part of daily life. But Hyland is also a poet and there are many passages portraying the beauty and otherworldliness of Africa that compensate. It is absorbing reading and makes me want to get his other books.

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