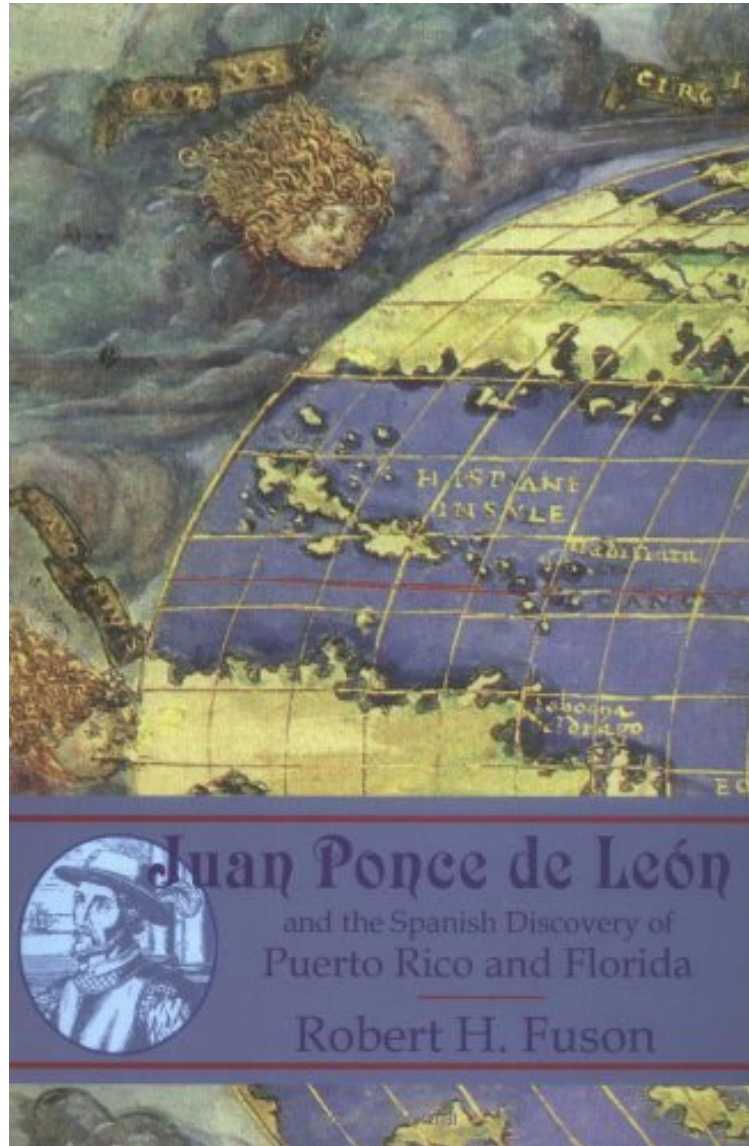


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Juan Ponce de Leon: And the Spanish Discovery of Puerto Rico and Florida

Robert H Fuson

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Robert H Fuson : Juan Ponce de Leon: And the Spanish Discovery of Puerto Rico and Florida before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Juan Ponce de Leon: And the Spanish Discovery of Puerto Rico and Florida:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Misleading TitleBy Ollie M.The book was good and informative,

but the title is a little misleading, as about the first 25-30% of the book is background information to the Spanish coming to Puerto Rico and FL, and the last 1/3 of the book is after Ponce de Leon has died and deals with subsequent expeditions to the the New World. Overall the book was good, but I was expecting more information about Ponce de Leon in the book, and the book really wasn't so much about him, as much as it was the Spanish discovery of the new world.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Three StarsBy Aaron EspinozaInteresting book.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good book.By RadarIt's not for average "Joe Reader", but I enjoy reading about the places I have visited. Recommended for the serious amateur historian.

Juan Ponce de Leon was an important figure in the history of the Spanish colonisation of what are today Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, and the south-eastern United States. While many people are familiar with the name Ponce de Leon, only a handful know the historical truth of what Ponce did -- and did not -- do! This is the most extensive biography to date of this important but misrepresented figure in the early colonial history of America. Written by one of America's foremost experts on 15th and 16th century exploration and discovery, this book dispels the myths about Ponce de Leon and credits him with discoveries for which he previously has not been credited. The author assembles the most extensive collection ever of facts, reasoned inference, translations of critical documents, original maps, historical illustrations, and photographs bearing upon the life and legacy of this important figure. Ponce's life and legacy are examined in the context of Spain's ambitions in the New World during the 16th century.

From Library JournalMost fourth graders learn that Juan Ponce de Le"n was looking for the Fountain of Youth when he discovered Florida in 1513. Ponce de Le"n, a member of the Spanish upper class, sailed with Columbus on his second expedition and became a prosperous farmer on Hispaniola and later governor of Puerto Rico. In 1516, he was searching for a rumored island west of Cuba called Bimini when he instead came upon the peninsula of Florida, which he explored in two expeditions but never colonized. He was the first European to discover the value of the Gulf Stream, which was so vital to the Atlantic crossings. Ponce de Le"n was killed by Indians near Tampa in 1521. He found no gold and founded no colonies, and his explorations were overshadowed by the achievements of Cortes and Pizarro in Mexico and Peru, respectively. Fuson, a historical geographer at the University of South Florida, demonstrates that Ponce de Le"n was an honest, deliberate, and rational man at a time when abuse, greed, and treachery often prevailed. The author has brought together an extensive collection of facts, original documents, maps, and illustrations bearing on the life and legacy of this important figure. A beautifully written and well-illustrated work that should be in all public and academic libraries.DStanley L. Itkin, Hillside P.L., New Hyde Park, NY Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From BooklistPonce de Leon has been held up frequently as an object of ridicule for his quest for the Fountain of Youth. Fuson, a historical geographer and professor emeritus at the University of Southern Florida, successfully attempts to provide a more balanced portrait of a largely effective explorer and administrator. This is a sober, well-documented biography that reveals Ponce de Leon as a serious servant of Spain and a solid professional soldier. Fuson deftly places his subject within the historical context of both sixteenth-century Spain and the New World. Unlike other conquistadores, he was not obsessed with the search for gold. Although he was no proponent of religious or racial equality, his expeditions were notable for the relatively humane treatment of the Native Americans they encountered. Fuson has written a useful and informative work that dispels many of the myths surrounding an interesting and surprisingly admirable man. Jay FreemanCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved

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