

PRESS RELEASE



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Les Déserts a new book by Vanier's Viviane Bouchard, Passionate about history

The desert – mysterious, threatening, rich in natural resources, site of spiritual inspiration and source of deadly confrontations – is the subject Viviane Bouchard explores in her latest book, *Les Déserts, témoins de l'histoire du monde*, released this spring by Québec Amérique. Viviane Bouchard, a history professor at Vanier College, has discovered in deserts and the legends and exploits they have given rise to, a captivating research topic.

« The desert is about emptiness and death, misery and distress, survival and ingenious adaptation, » she says. “But it’s also about folklore, sand dunes, camel races, adventure and challenges.”

With this book, which is chock full of illustrations, photographs, maps and texts and comments in the book margins, Viviane Bouchard has created an easy-to-read work that can appeal to all types of readers and that goes beyond run-of-the-mill notions about the desert. Put together as a series of questions and answers, *Les Déserts* piques the reader’s curiosity. What happened to the nose and the beard of the Sphinx? When was oil first discovered in the desert? Where did the aborigines who live in Australia’s Victoria Desert originally come from? Why has the desert – home to gods and devils, attracted so many mystics? Viviane Bouchard finds answers to these intriguing questions.

By plunging into history as it is linked to deserts, Viviane Bouchard, a historian who is fascinated by how people and things come together, turns herself over whole-heartedly to curiosity and her lifelong passion for understanding history. The result is a gem of a book.

Les Déserts, is Viviane Bouchard’s second book. In her first publication, *Che Guevara, un héros en question*, (Québec Amérique, 2004), she combined two of her other interests: history and Latin America.

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