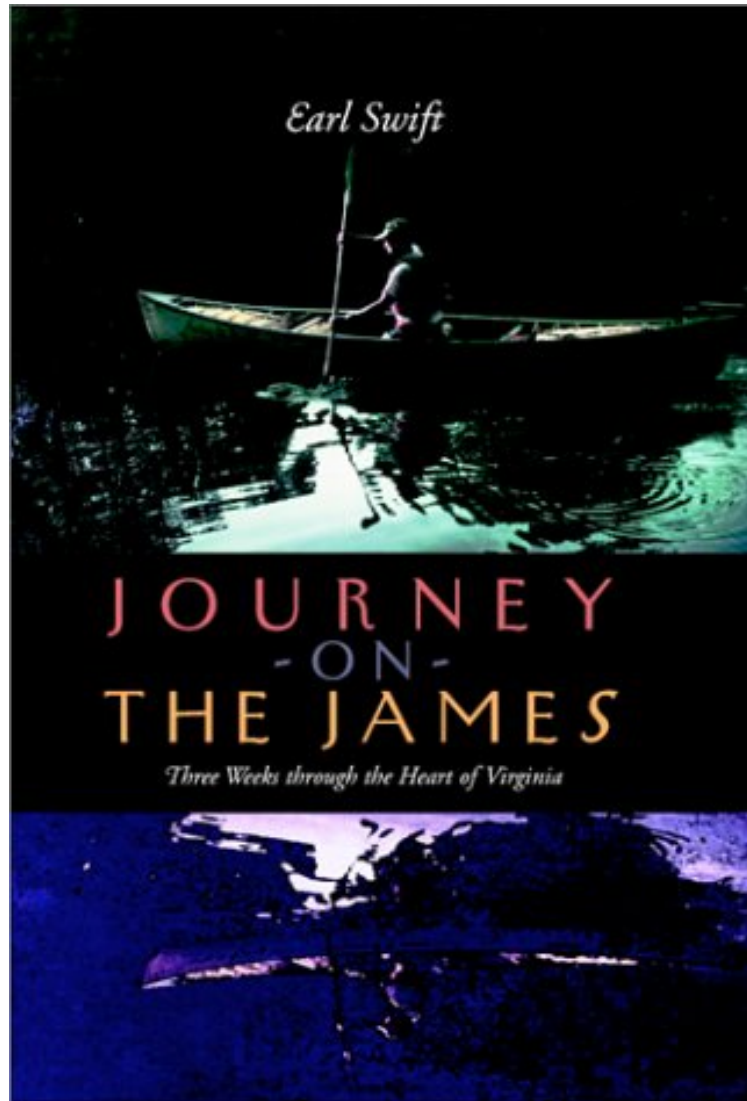


[Free and download] Journey on the James: Three Weeks through the Heart of Virginia

## Journey on the James: Three Weeks through the Heart of Virginia

*Earl Swift*

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**Earl Swift : Journey on the James: Three Weeks through the Heart of Virginia** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Journey on the James: Three Weeks through the Heart of Virginia:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Holly H.Still reading it. Very interesting.4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. An excellent readBy walkeatsleepFor those of us who love and canoe the James this book is an excellent companion. Apparently a few of the reviewers have been right ticked off at Earl Swift's writing style, or his mannerisms, or his choice of words, or his choice of topics, maybe they just don't like his hair

style. Who knows? I think most of the negative reviews are petty, unfair and not well thought out. Overall the book does what the author set out to do, and that is entertain us with his impressions of the James River and the people who share it with us. I can't find fault with any writer who has the courage to state his or her opinions. I think it is the responsibility of the reader to understand what the book is about, and if the reader doesn't like the content then send it back for a refund. Heated, almost hysterical charges against the author are pretty weak when you actually read the book and digest the message. Swift is a professional writer and treats his subject - the James River - with respect. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars  
By CAndersonGreat Book!

From its beginnings as a trickle of icy water in Virginia's northwest corner to its miles-wide mouth at Hampton Roads, the James River has witnessed more recorded history than any other feature of the American landscape -- as home to the continent's first successful English settlement, highway for Native Americans and early colonists, battleground in the Revolution and the Civil War, and birthplace of America's twentieth-century navy. In 1998, restless in his job as a reporter for the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot, Earl Swift landed an assignment traveling the entire length of the James. He hadn't been in a canoe since his days as a Boy Scout, and he knew that the river boasts whitewater, not to mention man-made obstacles, to challenge even experienced paddlers. But reinforced by Pilot photographer Ian Martin and a lot of freeze-dried food and beer, Swift set out to immerse himself -- he hoped not literally -- in the river and its history. What Swift survived to bring us is this engrossing chronicle of three weeks in a fourteen-foot plastic canoe and four hundred years in the life of Virginia. Fueled by humor and a dauntless curiosity about the land, buildings, and people on the banks, and anchored by his sidekick Martin -- whose photographs accompany the text -- Swift points his bow through the ghosts of a frontier past, past Confederate forts and POW camps, antebellum mills, ruined canals, vanished towns, and effluent-spewing industry. Along the banks, lonely meadowlands alternate with suburbs and power plants, marinas and the gleaming skyscrapers of Richmond's New South downtown. Enduring dunkings, wolf spiders, near-arrest, channel fever, and twenty-knot winds, Swift makes it to the Chesapeake Bay. Readers who accompany him through his Journey on the James will come away with the accumulated pleasure, if not the bruises and mud, of four hundred miles of adventure and history in the life of one of America's great watersheds.

"With humor and insight, Swift narrates his story on a day-by-day basis, telling not only the hazards and the beauty of the river itself, but also of the people he and Martin met along the way. His historical notes, reflecting a great deal of research, add depth to the chronicle. This is no if-it's-Tuesday-it-must-be-Balcony-Falls travelogue, but a lively and colorful recap of a journey savored hour-by-hour. (Ann Lloyd Merriman Richmond Times-Dispatch)" By turns travel narrative, history book and comic adventure, Journey on the James breathes life into the affairs of one of our most beautiful and significant rivers. (Katherine Jackson Style Weekly)" Earl Swift has taken what could have been a disaster-prone journey down Virginia's most famous river and turned it into a delightful piece of writing. While we're chuckling about his less-than-expert attempts to float an inner tube in too-shallow water or maneuver a canoe through rapids that tax his ability, all along he steps off the water to relate the remarkable story of the James. (Garvey Winegar Richmond Times-Dispatch) About the Author A staff writer for the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot, Earl Swift has been a Fulbright fellow and twice nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. He has backpacked the entire Appalachian Trail and completed a circumnavigation of the Chesapeake Bay by sea kayak. He lives in Norfolk with his daughter, Saylor.