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Blue Rooms: Ripples, Rivers, Pools, And Other Waters



Synopsis

The earth is beautiful because of water, says John Jerome, who sets out to explore the most ravishing examples of the element he can find. The search takes him from Oklahoma swimming holes to Adirondack lakes, from Canada to the Caribbean and from his earliest water memories to his mature reflections on what it is about water in its natural state that humans find so compelling.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jerome, the author of the fine study *On Mountains* and many other books, turns his attention to his lifelong quest for "perfect waters" in this limpid book of natural history and personal reflection. He takes his readers to little-known streams like the Mountain Fork River of Oklahoma, the scene of his earliest memories, and the turbulent Raquette River in the Adirondack Mountains of New York. He dips into the warm, healing waters of the Caribbean and the cold depths of Canadian lakes, and examines the play of water in the human imagination, an influence that has been profound in music, art, and literature. Jerome writes with evident love for his subject, and his lyrical book speaks to the power of waters to make us whole.

The author of books on wide-ranging subjects (*Truck*, Univ. Pr. of New England, 1996; *Stone Work*, LJ 5/1/89), Jerome examines water in a variety of forms from several perspectives. Much of this work is a recounting of his love affair with various childhood swimming holes, progressing to his present infatuation with canoeing in the Adirondacks and Canada and his trips to the Caribbean. Offering a series of vignettes, Jerome recounts much personal history. He does a good job of

conveying the primal joy of swimming and the mixed emotions elicited by returning to visit cherished watery landmarks of his youth. Similar to Thomas Farber's *On Water* (Ecco, 1994) but differing in locale, this work is recommended for most public libraries. Tim J. Markus, Evergreen State Coll. Lib., Olympia, Wash. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

John Jerome has, in recent years, become one of my favorite writers thanks to his elegant and straightforward prose style. I ordered "Blue Rooms" the moment I heard it was out, and I was not disappointed. This is a terrific book. "Blue Rooms" is about a lifelong love affair with water. From playing in the muddy San Marcos river as a boy, to kayaking the cold waters of Canadian lakes as a grown man, it seems Jerome has always been fascinated by water. Most of the earth's surface, he points out, is water. So is most of the human body. What strikes me most about this book is the way in which Jerome takes a personal obsession and makes it understandable to his readers. By the end of the book I could have sworn I had a lifelong love affair with water, too, even though I'm a mediocre swimmer who lives in hills far from any large water source. Really, this is a terrific book. Go out and buy it. You won't be sorry.

As a lover of "water" myself (lakes, ponds, rivers, creeks and ocean), I'm enjoying reading of John's adventures.

This is simply one of the very best books written about the joy, adventure, contact and contemplation of water. I have dipped into it frequently and recommended it to many. And I have quoted it 8 times (few authors other than Thoreau were quoted more frequently) in my own recent book *Deep Immersion: The Experience of Water* (nominated for top environmental book of the year). Jerome's prose is wonderful and his stories engaging. He simply loves to get wet and would well understand Thoreau's maxim: "That part of you that is wettest is fullest of life" (quoted in *Profitably Soaked: Thoreau's Engagement With Water*, Green Frigate Books, 2003).

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