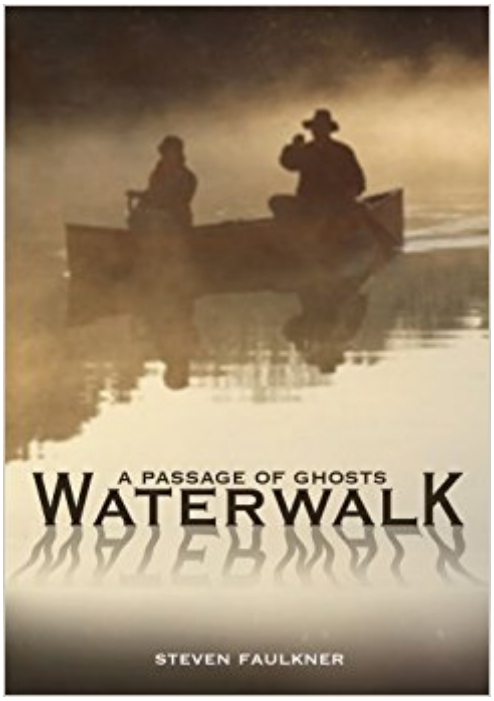
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Waterwalk: A Passage Of Ghosts



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Synopsis

Tired, hungry, lost, lonely, fogbound, shipwrecked, unable to make their way in the darkness, Steven Faulkner and his teenage son Justin are having a great time. They are on an epic journey, retracing the historic 1673 route of French explorers Marquette and Joliet along the Lake Michigan shore to Green Bay, up the Fox River, then down the Wisconsin River to the mighty Mississippi. A poet with a sense of humor, Faulkner brings the majestic American heartland to life in one of the finest books ever written about a river journey. A modern travel classic in the tradition of Blue Highways, this book will appeal to anyone who has a sense of adventure.Here is what author William Least-Heat Moon, author of Blue Highways and River Horse has to say about Steven Faulkner’s Waterwalk. Thank you so much for sending along Steve Faulkner’s Waterwalk, and please pass along to him my admiration for his long voyage and for setting down his account in a most capable prose style. Well done on both counts.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Faulkner’s book is a Midwestern road story, tinged by history, yet fresh with his own discovery of the waterways and small towns, the dangers and helping hands and natural beauty he finds along the way.His is also a travelogue of contemporary Wisconsin: Much of his watery journey is through the state, alongside the Door County Peninsula to Green Bay and then up the Fox River and down the Wisconsin River until it flows into the Mississippi.Waterwalk is energized and made relevant in part by Faulkner’s descriptive, literary prose --Geeta Sharma Jensen, Milwaukee Journal SentinelTerrific. Faulkner is a marvelous writer. --Alan Couture, ForeWord MagazineThis is the

quintessential journey - a trip far outward, deep inward - to see what you're made of . It turns out, Steven Faulkner and his son are made of very strong stuff, and the vivid account Faulkner here provides makes for exciting reading. --Kent Haruf, author of Plainsong and Eventide

Steven Faulkner teaches Creative Writing at Longwood University, a beautiful school in the forested hills of southern Virginia. He has published essays in DoubleTake, Wisconsin Trails magazine, Southern Humanities Review, Dos Passos Review and other journals. He was for many years a truck driver, roofer, grave vault maker, newspaper and doughnut delivery driver and for fourteen years, a carpenter. He returned to college, working nights to support his wife and seven children ad acquired the necessary degrees from the University of Kansas. He has been married to his wife Joy for 34 years.

The author has told a wonderful story about himself, his son, their relationship and the world that has changed. They do a canoe trip following the route of Marquette and Joliet. On this journey of discovery they experience something that can never be taken from them and will be a touchstone of their relationship throughout their lives. The author is a word smith who picks and uses his word wisely. His trip is one of reflection about his life, his sons life and the microcosm of the world they experience with universal overtones. It is personal and public. It is a journey I too would like to make.

Bought this book for my mother in-law for Christmas. She absolutely loved the book and has shared it with many of her friends and family members already!! I have not read it yet, but look forward to when the book makes it's way to me.

Excellent writing. It was adapted for a movie (limited) but I was fortunate to see it. This is an enjoyable way to go adventuring vicariously.

Fascinating.

I know Steve and Justin. His kids and mine grew up together and we remain friends: I see Steve and his wife at the grocery store when he's in town. Steve has been writing for a long time, it's heartening to see this book in print. He's a fine writer and story teller and a deep thinker. Knowing the family as I do has given me a unique view of this particular work. The larger story of their canoe

trip, tracing the path of Fr. Marquette and Louis Joliet in an effort to reconnect as father and son, is a modern, somewhat domestic, grand adventure. His narrative draws you in to share their experiences and Steve's ponderings, for which he has plenty of time while meandering through the various waterways and camps they employ on their journey. His stories of the people they meet and places they pass through, colored with liberal extracts from history,geography, philosophy and theology, are generally warm and positive, though he's not above taking jabs at people, cultural practices and industries that don't have a place in his pastoral, somewhat utopian view of the past and how life and the world should be today. That's all well and good - he can do that, he's the writer, after all.What I found appalling was his careless attitude towards preparation for a journey of this nature, that nearly proved disastrous for him and needlessly (perhaps even negligently) exposed his teenage son to life threatening conditions, not to mention the long term effect his loss would have meant for his wife and four kids still at home. How does any one expect to successfully and safely undertake an arduous 1000 mile canoe trip down publicly navigable waters without first 1) researching the public records (maps, Corps of Engineers, Coast Guard, State Wildlife and Parks Departments, various canoeing clubs, etc.) to gain some understanding of the terrain and it's challenges or 2)gaining some experience and proficiency at canoeing on rivers and large waters-including navigational skills. Steve apparently did very little of this basic preparation and is lucky (probably more accurately BLESSED to have Providential protection)that both survived to tell the story.I'm glad I read his book. I found the story and the narrative compelling and, on one level, was sorry to have to put the book down when finished. However, I just can't quite get past his incredible naivete and reckless endangerment of both his son and his self. Makes it hard to recommend this book, it might just encourage him to try another stunt like this.

The main setting for Waterwalk is a nine-week canoe trip taken by the author with his 16-year-old son, Justin, from St. Ignace, Michigan to St. Louis, Missouri, following the path of Marquette and other French explorers. This is no ordinary voyage or "travelogue."In Waterwalk, Steven Faulkner skillfully enlists sun, moon, wind, water, sand and fire in bringing the reader alongside him, with his son, on their nine-week voyage. You are there. Through his eye for detail and his bracing poetic imagination, Faulkner renders a quintessentially American landscape into not only a mirror of its historical movement from rugged wilderness to industrialized heartland, but also into an arena for the manly exertions of a father seeking only to connect with his son.Waterwalk is in turns humorous, haunting, exhilarating, even devastating, much as the courses of our lives unpredictably flow through both hardship and delight. There are encounters with "ghosts" here to be savored long

afterwards. It's a lyrical odyssey I did not want to end. It reminds us of things we've lost as a society, but may yet recover, if we try. It's the best book I've yet read this year and I highly recommend it!

Waterwalk by Steven Faulkner is the story of a man's desire to connect with his 16-year-old son. Faulkner decided in 1996 to retrace the steps of Marquette and Joliet, the first white men to see the Mississippi River by traveling from St. Ignace in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, down to Green Bay, across Wisconsin on the Fox River to the Wisconsin River to the Mississippi and then down to St. Louis Missouri. It's a trip of over 1000 miles, and the two men made it in a canoe they named Natty Bumpo. I was intrigued by the book because Faulkner actually stopped and visited not only Green Bay, but Oconto, which is only 20 miles away from my home. Faulkner writes with an amazingly lyrical voice quoting poetry and philosophy about a wide range of subjects, but always weaving it gently into the narrative. Faulkner and his son Justin faced a series of adventures, and the friendliness that they encountered in Northeastern Wisconsin makes me proud to be a resident. The story would tend to lag in places, but the book begins with a major car accident, and a few details are carefully portioned out throughout the remainder of the book creating a sense of urgency and fear for the future. The book is beautifully written and was a joy to read.

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