



Mid-Atlantic Region Virtual Book Club – Meeting #3

Chesapeake Requiem by Earl Swift

8 PM ET on June 9th, 2021

Meeting Dates and Chapters

5/12: Part 1 (Chapters 1-5; pages 9-92)

5/26: Part 2 (Chapters 6-12; pages 95-205)

6/9: Part 3 (Chapters 13-17; pages 209-274)

6/23: Part 4 (Chapters 18-20; pages 277-323)

7/7: Part 5 (Chapters 21-22; pages 327-378)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Part 2: The Lord Tells the Water (Chapters 6-12; pages 95-205)

3. (pages 171-173) - Canaan was already "beset by advancing seas" in 1929, and a long list of squalls, long before climate change was considered a factor. How does the long oral history reinforce the narrative of erosion for Tangier Islanders?
6. (Ch 10/11) -- Weather just hits differently on Tangier (pun intended, sorry!) -- how does Swift describe the relationship between the residents of Tangier and the storms of the Bay? How do their experiences with weather differ from your own?
7. Throughout the book, Swift is sharing stories about the people of Tangier to show that they are both a unique community but also that their challenges are very similar to everyone else's. Which argument is more persuasive to you -- that we should fight to save Tangier because it is a special place or because this could be our fate as easily as it is theirs?

Part 3: Eyeing the End Times (Chapters 13-17; pages 209-274)

1. (pages 225-226) "Brain drain" is a pretty common problem amongst rural communities—how is the situation on Tangier Island similar to or different from communities where you've lived or worked?
2. (pages 238-244) The story of the church schism in 2011 echoes many other divides happening in churches and across our country. Is there anything that could have been done to change the outcome? What can we learn from this when approaching the potential schisms in our own lives? Why do you think Earl Swift thought this was pertinent to include?
3. (pages 258-259) On p 258, Swift explains that "Because the data starts at a point where sea levels were rising at a much slower rate than they are today, averaging its entirety understates the severity of the

current problem; it ‘gives a falsely rosy picture of what’s happening.’” How can we as educators help students understand how the way you splice data impacts its possible meanings?

4. (pages 256-257, Ch 17) Back to a question we’ve considered before: What is more important to save—the town for its people or the habitat for the blue crab (and the other organisms that depend on the island and its coastal ecosystem)?
5. Hindsight is 20/20. We now know the outcome of the project described in the book: [USACE awards contract to Virginia company to construct jetty at Tangier](#) (May 2020). Do you think the project has met the expectations of the Tangier community, or will it be too little too late?