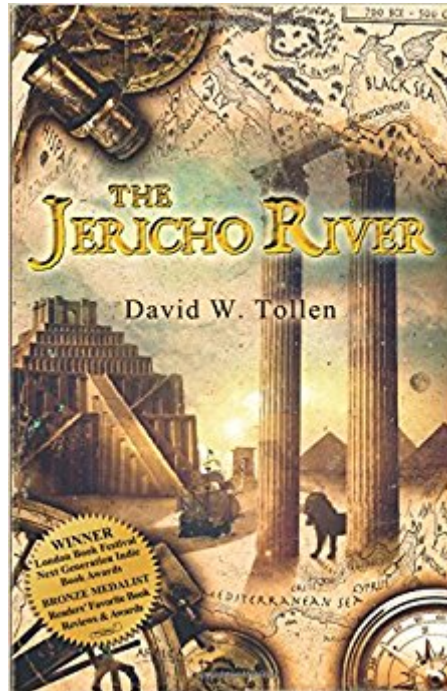




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# The Jericho River



## Synopsis

History isn't names and dates -- it's an adventure story. And so is *The Jericho River*. Both a young adult fantasy novel and a history, it's won multiple awards, including first place at the London Book Festival and the Next Generation Indie Book Awards. *The Jericho River* flows through a magical world shaped by myth and history. Young Jason Gallo sails the river on a dangerous quest to rescue his estranged father. He battles minotaurs and pirates, flees barbarians, stumbles into mummies' tombs, and outwits fairies, philosophers, and scientists. Along the way, he finds love and betrayal, faces the legacy of a broken family -- and flees a hidden foe who threatens all he holds dear. But Jason's tale is more than an adventure story. The river flows like a timeline, carrying the young man through historic lands -- Sumer, Babylonia, ancient Greece, Medieval Europe, the colonial empires, and many others -- all in chronological order, tracing the history of Western Civilization, from its Middle Eastern origins to modern times. Professor Gallo, Jason's father, is a historian, and his notes outline the journey, revealing the truth about Cleopatra, King Arthur, and the fall of the Roman Empire. He explains how Snow White began as a goddess and how a French lawyer's son became king of Sweden, as well as the origins of coffee, the cat, chivalry, the Internet, Atlantis -- and much more. Featuring twenty-six vivid historical illustrations and three maps.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Impressively well written and an exceptionally entertaining read from beginning to end, "The Jericho

River" is enhanced with the inclusion of twenty-six vivid historical illustrations and three maps. An inherently fascinating and absorbing novel, "The Jericho River" is highly recommended and certain to be an enduringly popular addition to community and academic library original fiction collections.--

Midwest Book ReviewsThe Jericho River is an exciting retelling of the history of western civilization, one that makes us question how that history unfolded and wonder what might have been.--

Christopher White, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Religion in America, Vassar College; author of *Unsettled Minds: Psychology and the American Search for Spiritual Assurance*David [Tollen] is a literary Van Gogh ... a pioneer .... [T]his book makes it fun to learn by combining history, religion, philosophy, myths and legends. -- Northern Star[A]n intriguing and fun way to learn history ... that will appeal not only to the teenage audience but to adults as well. You can trust the accuracy of detail and depth of interpretation, and at the same time you learn history in an exciting manner and with an entertaining read. -- Robert J. Littman, M.Litt., Ph.D., Professor of Classics, University of Hawaii; author of *The Greek Experiment* and other works

David W. Tollen earned his B.A. in history from U.C. Berkeley and went on to earn law degrees from Cambridge University and Harvard Law School. He's passionate about history and enjoys writing imaginative stories that spread knowledge of the past, and of science too. In addition to writing books, he speaks about history and blogs at [www.PintsOfHistory.com](http://www.PintsOfHistory.com). David also writes and speaks about the law. He's the author of the American Bar Association's bestselling manual on technology agreements, *The Tech Contracts Handbook* ([www.TechContracts.com](http://www.TechContracts.com)): the number-one bestseller for the Intellectual Property Section of the A.B.A. His law writing follows the same pattern as his history and fiction: he works to make large, complex topics simple and fun. David practices intellectual property and technology law with Sycamore Legal P.C., a San Francisco firm he founded. He lives in Northern California with his wife, a teacher, and their two sons. For more information, please visit [www.DavidTollen.com](http://www.DavidTollen.com).

This well paced page-turner is a fantastic example of how history can be made engaging and accessible to readers of all ages. Before picking up *The Jericho River* my understanding and appreciation of history was limited. This book provided a captivating overview of the history of western civilization that pulled me in from the start. By joining Jason Gallo on his perilous journey I felt like I was learning history while living it. As a former high school teacher, it's easy to appreciate the value of teaching history in such an immersive fashion. This book should be mandatory reading in middle or high school history classes and for anyone interested in gaining a better understanding

of how humans arrived where we are today. I look forward to future works from Mr. Tollen.

I was pleasantly surprised by *The Jericho River*. An amateur history buff, I was delighted by the innovative manner in which David Tollen presented people and places that spanned thousands of years. Each era received excellent treatment leaving the reader with a colorful image of what the time was like. This is of course not a history book, but a young adult adventure novel, and three cheers for melding the two. The story was fun and at times thought provoking and suspenseful. I thoroughly enjoyed it. After me, my 13 year old son read the book and consumed it with a hunger that he generally reserves for the teen dystopian epic of the day. Now, how to convince him to not become a history major? Parting thought and a challenge for the author (as if they do not have challenges enough): A history text written in the voice of Professor Gallo. I'd read it.

This historical fantasy follows Jason Gallo on a quest to find and rescue his father. With the aid of a mysterious woman, Jason finds himself stranded in ancient Sumer. Soon, he must flee down the only path open to him, the Jericho River, along with a catlike creature called a Lumin. So, first off, not only are the characters interesting, but I really dig the journey through time aspect. Before each new stop along the Jericho River, short history lessons prime the reader for the coming time and place. I thought it was clever to use Jason's father in the story as the speaker for these lessons. And then, after all is said and done, there are the foot notes. I didn't read them when they popped up in the story, but I did after I finished it. So basically, not only is this a fantastic adventure, but also an educational one. As for the adventure and the quest, they are really well done. Jason is chased by a mysterious organization. He faces danger and struggles with insecurities. He falls for a girl, trusts the wrong people, and the right ones, too. And he comes to appreciate his father's love for history in the best way possible, by experiencing it. As for things I didn't like, I suppose it was a bit disturbing to see how progress brought destruction, tearing down everything that came before, not just the bad but the good as well. Then again, I think a story like this does have to show that, because it's reflective of real life. I also noticed that the story was a bit jumpy in places, probably because of the drastic shifts in time and location. Some weren't that much of a jump, but they become so the farther down the river the heroes travel. I also had trouble buying the romance, it was a bit too immature, though probably realistic for the age of those involved. Overall, I'd recommend this story to people who like adventure with a touch of magic and history. I came across this story when searching for free Kindle books. Looked interesting, so I picked it up.

This book seems to me like it would make more sense as an educational computer game than as a book. It definitely reminds me of some computer games I've played, such as "Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego." I loved that kind of game as a kid, but most of the appeal was in the problem solving and interactive elements that novels don't have. The thing that bothered me the most was how contrived some elements of the plot were. There had to be a chapter for each civilization which meant that there had to be some sort of event for each civilization. Many of these events just kind of happened out of the blue, got resolved fast, and didn't have any particular impact on the main arc of the story. That was fine for a while, but then it got tedious. It's one of those things you expect out of an educational computer game but not out of a novel. A chapter per civilization is good for teaching the progression of history, but it just wasn't that great for creating an entertaining novel. There are several times when a close relationship between two characters becomes a plot point but the book never showed these characters as being close. Like, there's an obligatory het romance that doesn't make sense unless you just assume that any time a story has one man and one woman of the same age they must end up together. Additionally the relationship between Jason and Zidu is supposed to be close but you never see them interacting the way people who are close to each other interact. As far as the historical information is concerned, it's mostly stuff I learned in middle school and high school. The reading level and complexity is at about that level too. There's some miscellaneous swear words, a small amount of violence that the main character reacts to with an appropriate level of disapproval, some mentions of sex, and an attempted rape that doesn't get very far. So those are the relevant content warnings for young people. I would have read it in middle school and I generally disapprove of restricting what teenagers read, but there you go. So basically, if you're a teenager wanting something to help you learn and remember history, this might be a book you'd like. If you're an adult looking for a good book to read for entertainment, there's probably something else out there you'd prefer. I kind of wish the description had mentioned that this is YA.

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