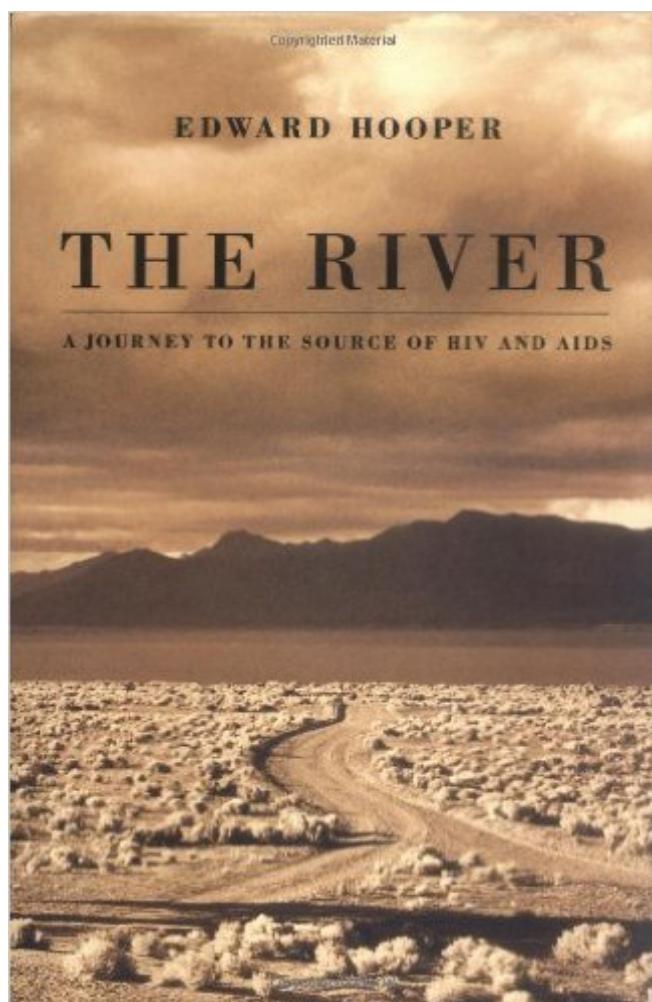


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# The River : A Journey To The Source Of HIV And AIDS



## **Synopsis**

While science has devoted much of its efforts to finding a cure for AIDS, the sources of this deadly epidemic remain largely unexamined. Distinguished science journalist Edward Hooper presents the meticulously researched -- and highly readable -- history of HIV and its possible origins. Pursuing leads across the U.S., the Caribbean, Europe, and Africa, Hooper pieces together the tantalizing clues offered by long-archived blood samples, early AIDS-like cases (such as the "Manchester sailor" case of 1959), immunodeficiency viruses (SIVs), and the medical interventions in Africa and elsewhere that may have played a role in SIVs' crossover into humans. Hooper examines over two dozen theories of origin, and eventually discards most of them. What remains is a remarkable and well-supported theory for the sudden appearance of AIDS, and the definitive story of its lethal spread. Drawing on more than 4,000 sources and 600 interviews, *The River* is a thorough and provocative investigation into the most terrible epidemic of the twentieth century.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The title of this book refers to the Congo River of Africa. This great river became famous in Western minds in the 1800s with the journeys of Dr. Livingstone. Later, it would be the setting of *The Heart of Darkness*. Doctors and scientists in the heart of darkness indeed as *The River* explains in its long, well-documented, exhaustive tale of secretive, unregulated medical research. This book's author interviews hundreds of individuals involved in this process, goes over countless documents, and from it, pieces together the following story. After WWII there was a race to find a vaccine for polio

that could be administered orally. Numerous groups of scientists from around the world took part in this race; the prize being fame, fortune, and patents galore. In public, these teams agreed to perform all their research in Western countries, document everything, and only conduct tests on adults who had signed written consent forms. In reality, many of these teams flocked to the Africa Congo to perform large-scale tests on unwitting and unknowing human populations, often without oversight by the press or medical institutions. These groups would inject various African primates with polio, extract serum from the infected primates, and using this serum to make experimental vaccines which would then be given to the local human populations. This book contends that by this process, HIV was accidentally transmitted from certain monkeys into humans. The author provides numerous pieces of evidence in proof of this theory. First, the very same villages in the Congo where HIV was first discovered also happened to be the very same villages in which the polio tests were performed. Second, HIV was diagnosed in these villages 10 - 20 years after the polio tests were performed.

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