

## Wilderness House Literary Review 14/4

Zvi A. Sesling  
**Dirty Water**

*Well I love that dirty water  
Oh, Boston, you're my home  
--The Standells*

They have been cleaning the Charles River for umpteen years now. They say you can swim in it, but were dredging for years finding goose poop by the tons. You can see fifty or more geese and goslings swimming at one time. When they eat, they poop.

A few ducks here and there really do not matter, but geese are protected and no one knows why. You cannot use a gun, bow and arrow or sling shot. If you do the goose protection police will get you.

Of course the same folks who protect the geese could be reporting muggers who are out there attacking lovers as they stroll. Or they could report the rapist who is dragging some poor girl into the bushes to prove his power and rage. No one calls the people police to rescue any victim who dares walk or jog along the Charles River even in broad daylight.

If you really think it is safe to go swimming in the Charles where the HMS Somerset was anchored on April 18, 1775, think again. Back then it is much wider and swimming probably a fun sport to the colonials and British. It is filled over to build houses. Then sewer systems are added that empty into the venerable waterway. All sorts of sand and dirt and tools are heaved with sewage into the Charles so that two hundred years later it is filthy and polluted. So polluted, in fact, that a song is written about it, so polluted only catfish and bad bacteria survive.

If you go sailing and fall in all these years after the British warship patrolled you need a tetanus shot to protect against disease. So now they – whomever they are – say it is safe to swim again but if you cannot drink it, would you swim in it?