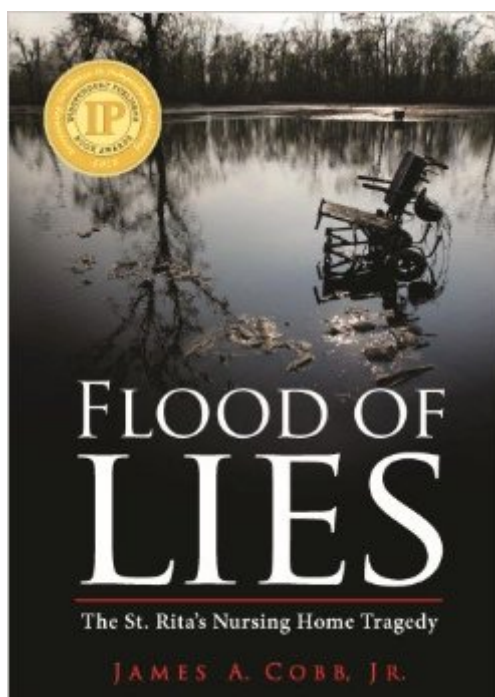


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Flood Of Lies: The St. Rita's Nursing Home Tragedy



Synopsis

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER BOOK AWARDS BEST REGIONAL NONFICTION OF THE SOUTH GOLD MEDAL • "When an elderly couple is charged with murder in the drowning deaths of thirty-five bed-ridden residents of St. Rita's Nursing Home, an emotional edge-of-your-seat thriller takes off like a shot! The players: a wily and profane defense lawyer, a ferocious prosecutor, vengeful families of the victims, and a ravenous media that brands the defendants 'Monsters of Hurricane Katrina.' My advice: block out enough time to read this wonderful book in one sitting." • John Berendt, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* • "A passionate and personal book, artfully constructed." • "Washington Post" • "A war story of jurisprudence. . . . a book you wish wouldn't end." • "Daily Beast"

Book Information

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Pelican Publishing Company, Inc. (July 6, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1455621307

ISBN-13: 978-1455621309

Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 1 x 8.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars • See all reviews • (116 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,202,231 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #198 in Books > Law > Media & the Law #1126 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Disaster Relief #25127 in Books > History > Americas > United States > State & Local

Customer Reviews

New Orleans attorney Jim Cobb has written a behind-the-scenes trial book like no other. It is a passionate, profane and highly-readable account of the signature horror of Hurricane Katrina - the drowning deaths of 35 nursing home patients. When the book opens, it is two years after the storm and Cobb is in court, defending the Sal and Mabel Mangano, owners of St. Rita's Nursing Home, who've been charged criminally with the deaths. They face the prospect of spending their golden years behind bars. The families of the victims are out for blood; they arrive for the trial's last day all dressed in black. Cobb's law partners, who have been trying to resurrect their Katrina-flattened law practice while he represents the most-despised people in Louisiana, are barely speaking to him. Cobb himself is buried under a mountain of personal debt as he simultaneously struggled to rebuild

his own flooded house and mount a defense he's not sure his clients can afford. Cobb's chief adversary is Louisiana's Attorney General, a politically ambitious first-termee facing reelection, Charles Foti. The AG served three decades as the criminal sheriff of Orleans Parish and was known more as an astute political operator than a student of the law. In the days after Katrina, Foti stoked public outrage against the Manganos with a media campaign that vilified the couple so thoroughly most Louisianans thought the Manganos deserved whatever charges the state could muster up. And the state mustered up a full slate: Each of the Manganos was charged with 35 counts of negligent homicide and 24 counts of cruelty to the elderly and infirm -- for a total of 118 counts. Cobb had never defended a criminal case before.

Not since the blinded Samson pulled down the Temple of Dagon on top of the drunken, rioting heathen Philistines has there been as great and unlikely a triumph of justice as attorney Jim Cobb's quest to vindicate his clients the Manganos in a Louisiana country courthouse against every kind of the worst possible odds. In the usual criminal trial, the defense has to beat only one opponent, the prosecution. Not this time. The Manganos were good people who had risked their own lives to try to save the 35 people they were charged with having murdered. Ranged against them besides the prosecuting Louisiana Attorney General were: the national news media, which had taken the Attorney General up on a mountain and shown him glory and possibly Wall Street by reporting false rumors that whipped him and the public into a frenzy to crucify the Manganos; the Governor of Louisiana, who tried to quash a subpoena for her to testify about what she had told Congress as to who was really guilty and why; paid "expert" witnesses for the prosecution; a real defense expert and another defense witness nevertheless both scared to testify; a bumbling trial judge who kept getting lost, to the prejudice of the defense; and an inept Louisiana Supreme Court that issued a misguided final writ decision that could put the Manganos behind bars for life because of just this one legal error the high Court had a chance to commit in the case.

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