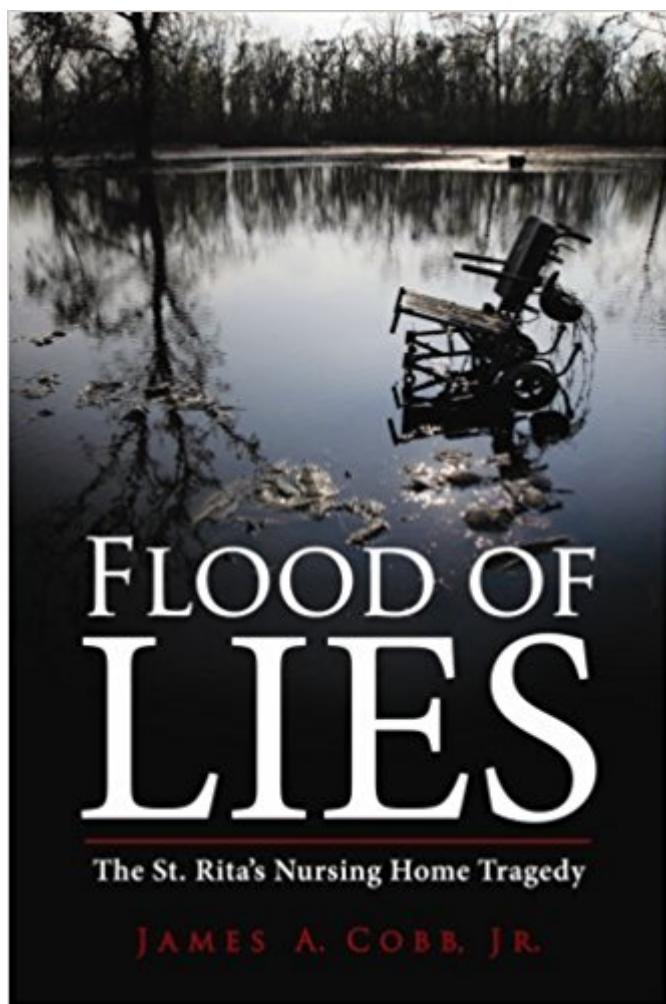


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# Flood Of Lies: The St. Rita's Nursing Home Tragedy



## **Synopsis**

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER BOOK AWARDS GOLD MEDAL FOR BEST REGIONAL NONFICTION OF THE SOUTHDefending Hurricane Katrina's most notorious couple. In the media storm that followed Hurricane Katrina in 2005, nursing home owners Sal and Mabel Mangano were vilified for allegedly causing the deaths of 35 residents of St. Rita's Nursing Home in low-lying St. Bernard Parish. This book, written by the lawyer who defended them, reveals the gripping, true story behind the couple's heartrending decision not to evacuate and their persecution at the hands of the government sworn to protect them.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"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, devastated 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*"What Jim Cobb captures better than any writer I've read is how deeply the media's pre-trial feeding-frenzy shaped public perceptions about the St. Rita's nursing home tragedy. When Sal and Mabel Mangano entered the St. Francisville courtroom facing multiple charges of murder, they also faced a near-universal presumption of guilt. Cobb's brash, brilliant storytelling takes you behind the scenes of an important test for the American system of justice."-Ken Bode, former national political correspondent, NBC News"As if the story covered in this

book were not passionate enough, the author gives readers unrestricted access to his heart, soul, and the passion he experienced as his life was consumed by defending the operators of St. Rita's Nursing Home after Hurricane Katrina. The story is gripping, the details revealed are amazing, but the emotional link that emerges between the reader and the author-a key character in the story-makes this one of the most extraordinary stories ever told."-Dennis S. Mileti, PhD, director emeritus, Natural Hazards Center"This is more than a story about Katrina. It is that, told from an original perspective, but it's also a story of abuse of power, of political ambition, of survival, and of a trying to make life ordinary again-when ordinariness amounts to triumph."-John M. Barry, *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America* and *Roger Williams and the Creation of the American Soul: Church, State, and the Birth of Liberty* In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the nation reeled in shock as the story of St. Rita's Nursing Home unfolded in a flood of constant, garish-and often wildly misleading-media coverage. Now, author James A. Cobb, Jr., tells the true story behind the tragedy in this powerful account of loss, devastation, and his relentless pursuit of justice.

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Jim Cobb is an excellent legal thriller author. He inserts the reader into the drama with him, describing his internal feelings and what he had for lunch alongside descriptions of people involved in this true story, and transcripts directly from what was an emotional roller-coaster of a trial for all involved. The story was engaging and instructive, and Mr. Cobb's genuine concern for his clients inspiring. I look forward to reading more from him, and I would love to be a student in one of his classes!

A mesmerizing, compelling true story about the murder trial of nursing home owners who stood accused of murder for failing to timely evacuate residents/patients. This book is authored by their defense attorney and reads like a gripping, edge of your seat novel of suspense. I highly recommend it. Anyone who has any interest in the repercussions of Hurricane Katrina will enjoy the storytelling ability of Cobb. Up close, you have a front row seat at the murder trial. I could not put this book down.

The book is well written and presents not only the wrong done, but also the political problems in our courts. Courts should not have any political agenda, but they do, and this effects the outcome of a trial, or at least the problems in presenting a defense. The States Attorney General at the time clearly attempts to use this case and the case against Dr. Pou for political gains. In doing so he attempted to make them guilty in the press long before any court actions were taken. It is worth getting an understanding of this. The press also elected to create lies that made it harder. Where is investigative journalism? It is dead in South Louisiana, and possibly at a national level. This further proves it. With so much wrong information spread, the Manganos were so wronged in the media before the trial, they may never get their credibility back. Mr. Cobb went to extra ordinary lengths to represent them and should be held with respect for his effort and outcome. It is sad to see he was

not viewed as fitting in with the other lawyers in his organization. They are the ones who should feel poor for their view. I feel it is a lawyers responsibility to do what it takes to make the legal system work. Without a lawyer to act in ones behalf an individual will only be further wronged.

I was once a fellow member of the New Orleans admiralty trial bar with Jim Cobb. Eagerly, I downloaded this book on my Kindle. I started reading and could not put it down. Within 24 hours, I had devoured its content. Hurricane Katrina devastated everything and everyone in its path, including Jim Cobb, his family, and his clients. Everyone interested in what real trial attorneys live to do should read this book, which should be required reading for every law school trial advocacy class. A seasoned admiralty civil defense lawyer who taught trial advocacy as an adjunct professor at Tulane Law School for decades, Jim found himself, like a fish out of water, serving as criminal defense counsel for clients who were victims or villains, depending on the teller's point of view. Not since I read Capote's In Cold Blood more than thirty years ago have I been so enthralled by a book about a criminal prosecution. A true story masterfully told, this book is as good as any Grisham novel. Moreover, the truths it tells are captivating.

To evacuate or shelter in place when a hurricane is predicted is a very difficult decision for residents. Hospitals and nursing homes face an even harder decision since their residents are more likely to exhibit worse physical symptoms during an evacuation. This account of a very sad and tragic event following Hurricane Katrina presents the thoughts of the Manganos during the preparations for the storm. If the federal hurricane protection levees along the MRGO had not broken, their plans would have gone as expected and those residents who did not evacuate with their families would have survived at St. Rita Nursing Home just as they had during previous hurricanes. Mr. Cobb's Flood of Lies reads like fiction, but those of us who lived through Katrina's wrath and devastation know how factual the book is. His personal thoughts give a true picture of some of the hardships an evacuation family encountered.

I read a lot of books but this one has my vote for the year as being the one I will recommend. It read it completely in less than 24 hours. From the very beginning it grabbed me and I could not put it down till I finished. This book would make a GREAT movie. I wish it would be made into a movie because most people only take what the media says as fact and never bothers to read more in detail on a subject. This is the story about the case of the owners charged in the 35 deaths of St Rita's Nursing Home during Hurricane Katrina. It is written by the attorney who defended them and

PRAISE GOD to him for defending this poor couple against an irresponsible Attorney General's office. This is one of those stories that needed to be told and it was incredibly well written. It was funny and sad at the same time because the author's personality shines through so much in the writing. The TRUE story needed to be told and I am so glad he has told it. This is a MUST READ!!! Hope it becomes a movie!!!

Whether you like Fiction or Real Life Drama this book will hold your attention cover to cover. I downloaded it to my Kindle late one evening and the only reason I didn't finish the 320 pages in one sitting was that my battery went dead at 2:30 am. (It was a good thing, because I had work the next day) It is a straight forward, personable read of what can be a complicated subject. James Cobb gives us a peak behind the curtain of the workings of the legal system in America. What he shows us might shock some, but should also serve as a wake up call for others. His writing is as if you are sitting on his front porch listening to a family story being told. My only question is - When is the movie coming out ?

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