



## The Great Deluge: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast

By Douglas Brinkley

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In *The Great Deluge*, bestselling author Douglas Brinkley finds the true heroes of this unparalleled catastrophe, and lets the survivors tell their own stories, masterly allowing them to record the nightmare that was Katrina.

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

Bestselling historian Douglas Brinkley, a professor at Tulane University, lived through the destruction of Hurricane Katrina with his fellow New Orleans residents, and now in *The Great Deluge* he has written one of the first complete accounts of that harrowing week, which sorts out the bewildering events of the storm and its aftermath, telling the stories of unsung heroes and incompetent officials alike. Get a sample of his story--and clarify your own memories--by looking through the detailed timeline he has put together of the preparation, the hurricane, and the response to one of the worst disasters in American history.



#### From Publishers Weekly

Historian Brinkley (*Tour of Duty*, etc.) opens his detailed examination of the awful events that took place on the Gulf Coast late last summer by describing how a New Orleans animal shelter began evacuating its charges at the first notice of the impending storm. The Louisiana SPCA, Brinkley none too coyly points out, was better prepared for Katrina than the city of New Orleans. It's groups like the SPCA, as well as compassionate citizens who used their own resources to help others, whom Brinkley hails as heroes in his heavy, powerful account—and, unsurprisingly, authorities like Mayor Ray Nagin, Gov. Kathleen Blanco and former FEMA director Michael C. Brown whom he lambastes most fiercely. The book covers August 27 through September 3, 2005, and uses multiple narrative threads, an effect that is disorienting but appropriate for a book chronicling the helter-skelter environment of much of New Orleans once the storm had passed, the levees had been breached, and the city was awash in "toxic gumbo." Naturally outraged at the damage wrought by the storm and worsened by the ill-prepared authorities, Brinkley, a New Orleans resident, is generally levelheaded, even when reporting on Brown's shallow e-mails to friends while "the trapped were dying" or recounting heretofore unreported atrocities, such as looters defecating on property as a mark of empowerment. Photos. (May)

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#### From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Professor of history and director of the Roosevelt Center at Tulane University, Douglas Brinkley, whose previous efforts include *The Boys of Pointe du Hoc* and *The Majic Bus*, brings an historical and personal perspective to bear on one of the first books to detail the Katrina disaster. Some critics point out factual errors and editorial lapses that detract from the author's valuable story, and Diane Jennings writes that Brinkley's book "will be among the earliest, but not among the best, books about the catastrophe." Others

praise the author for his passion and the depth of his research and interviews with the individuals whose lives were most affected by the hurricane. The book's value, finally, will be weighed against future accounts of the tragedy, many of which are already in the works.

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#### **Michael Coffman:**

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