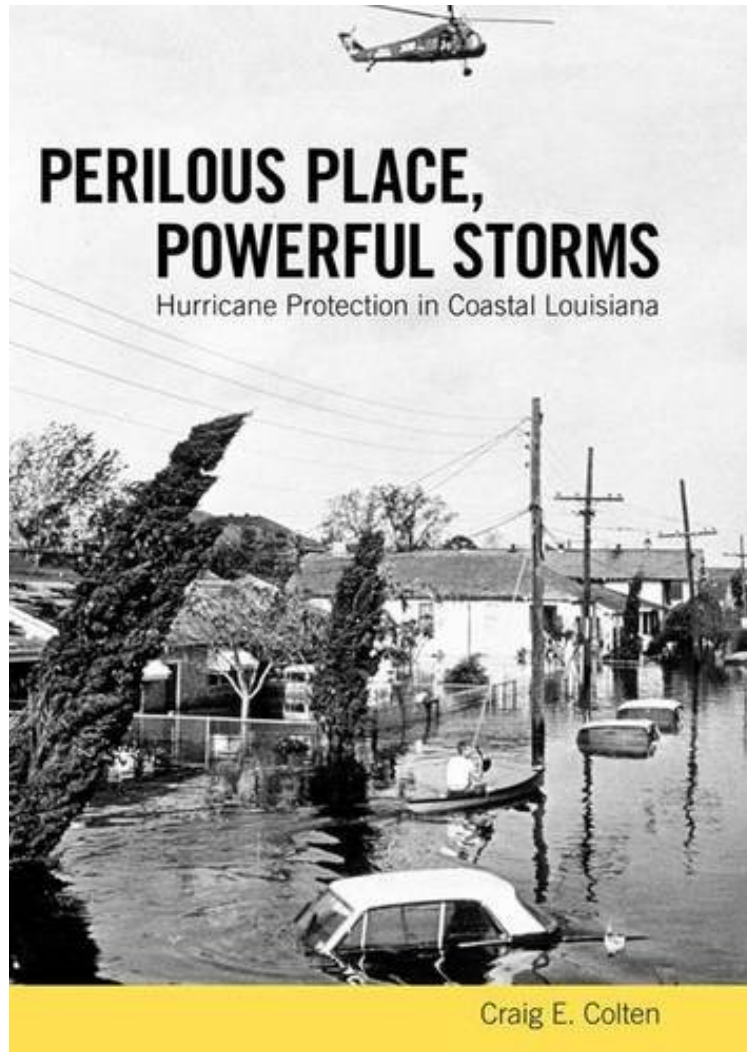


Perilous Place, Powerful Storms: Hurricane Protection in Coastal Louisiana

Craig E. Colten

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#4628056 in Books University Press of Mississippi 2009-06-12 2009-06-12Format: Large PrintOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .52 x 6.00l, 1.05 #File Name: 1604732385192 pages | File size: 46.Mb

Craig E. Colten : Perilous Place, Powerful Storms: Hurricane Protection in Coastal Louisiana before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Perilous Place, Powerful Storms: Hurricane Protection in Coastal Louisiana:

The hurricane protection systems that failed New Orleans when Katrina roared on shore in 2005 were the product of four decades of engineering hubris, excruciating delays, and social conflict. In Perilous Place, Powerful Storms, Craig

E. Colten traces the protracted process of erecting massive structures designed to fend off tropical storms and examines how human actions and inactions left the system incomplete on the eve of its greatest challenge. Hurricane Betsy in 1965 provided the impetus for Congress to approve unprecedented hurricane protection for the New Orleans area. Army Engineers swiftly outlined a monumental barrier network that would not only safeguard the city at the time but also provide for substantial growth. Scheduled for completion in 1978, the project encountered a host of frustrating delays. From newly imposed environmental requirements to complex construction challenges, to funding battles, to disputes over proper structures, the buffer envisioned for southeast Louisiana remained incomplete forty years later as Hurricane Katrina bore down on the city. As Colten reveals, the very remedies intended to shield the city ultimately contributed immensely to the residents' vulnerability by encouraging sprawl into flood-prone territory that was already sinking within the ring of levees. *Perilous Place, Powerful Storms* illuminates the political, social, and engineering lessons of those who built a hurricane protection system that failed and serves as a warning for those guiding the recovery of post-Katrina New Orleans and Louisiana.

Perilous Place, Powerful Storms is timely indeed. The back story of hurricane protection is necessary reading for anyone who wants to make sense of disaster planning for such frightening events. Martin V. Melosi, author of *The Sanitary City: Environmental Services in Urban America from Colonial Times to the Present* We all gamble with nature, Louisianans more so than most. Colten shows that the danger to New Orleans is beyond the dam-it, ditch-it traditions that protect its wetlands from floods. Blaming government or engineering is way too simple. The culprit, Colten explains, is the physical geography of mudscape in motion where risk-takers gambled and lost. Todd Shallat, author of *Structures in the Stream: Water, Science, and the Rise of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* From the Inside Flap A history of overreaching, gridlock, intrigue, and the final catastrophic results along America's most vulnerable coastline About the Author Craig E. Colten is the Carl O. Sauer Professor of Geography at Louisiana State University. Among his previous publications are *An Unnatural Metropolis: Wresting New Orleans from Nature* and (with Elaine Yodis) *The Geography of Louisiana*.