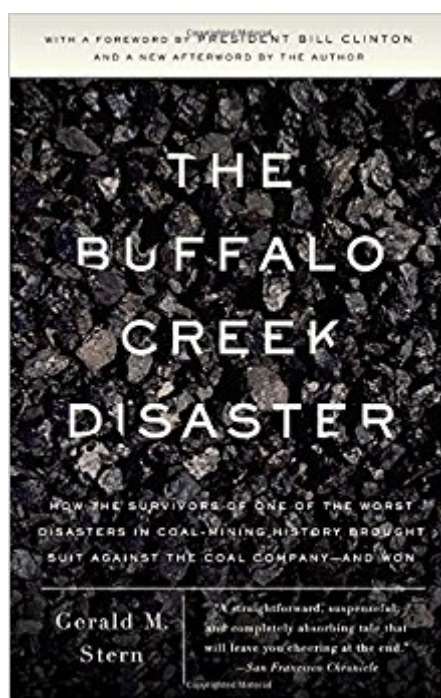


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The Buffalo Creek Disaster: How The Survivors Of One Of The Worst Disasters In Coal-Mining History Brought Suit Against The Coal Company- And Won



Synopsis

One Saturday morning in February 1972, an impoundment dam owned by the Pittston Coal Company burst, sending a 130 million gallon, 25 foot tidal wave of water, sludge, and debris crashing into southern West Virginia's Buffalo Creek hollow. It was one of the deadliest floods in U.S. history. 125 people were killed instantly, more than 1,000 were injured, and over 4,000 were suddenly homeless. Instead of accepting the small settlements offered by the coal company's insurance offices, a few hundred of the survivors banded together to sue. This is the story of their triumph over incredible odds and corporate irresponsibility, as told by Gerald M. Stern, who as a young lawyer and took on the case and won.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A straightforward, suspenseful, and completely absorbing tale that will leave you cheering at the end." [San Francisco Chronicle](#) "Jerry Stern's classic work provides readers with tremendous insight into the causes of the disaster. . . . It is powerful, troubling, and uplifting." [From the foreword by President Bill Clinton](#) "A shocking, timely book." [The New York Times Book Review](#) "A fascinating tale of how investigative lawyers work, intermingled with sympathetic portraits of the survivors of the disaster." [Chicago Tribune](#) "Fascinating reading. . . . An inside look at a history-making case." [The Boston Globe](#)

Gerald M. Stern is a Counselman at Phillips & Cohen LLP, a practice is devoted exclusively to representing whistleblowers in qui tam lawsuits. He graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School before beginning his legal career in Washington.

I had to read this as a course requirement, but I think it's an inspiring read for anyone. I still enjoyed it as my professor was ruining it. haha

This book is essentially required reading for most first-year law students. Whether your civil procedure professor assigns it in the first or second semester, you won't be able to avoid it. Luckily, it's cheap and mercifully short. The dry and self-righteous narrative (with a special foreword full of fire-and-brimstone against those nasty coal companies from President Clinton) won't entertain you, but it will certainly teach you a great lesson about the legal profession: no matter which party "prevails," the true winners are always the attorneys. This review won't give away all the juicy details, but compare the final sum each plaintiff earned versus the original settlement offer from Pittston. Next, compare that figure to the final jackpot Arnold and Porter raked in when the dust settled. Was it really worth all the time, heartache, depositions, and physical exams for the people affected by the disaster? You be the judge. All we know now is that this book is still lining Gerald Stern's pockets nearly 40 years after dam broke at Buffalo Creek. Welcome to the legal world.

I was told to read this for a seminar that the University of Tulsa School of Law put on a few days before my first law school classes of my first semester began. It actually was a very interesting and informative read. There is a lot of emotion in the stories, and you actually start to care about the plaintiffs, all 600 of them. The author is the hero of the story and he does a great job explaining even the most basic law terms so that someone who is unfamiliar can completely understand and learn.

Must read for anyone thinking of law school, in law school, or who would like an insight into a civil action from negligent act to jury trial and even having to pierce the corporate veil. This book reads like a novel and is hard to put down.

This was one of my readings for a summer law course. I couldn't have asked for a more real-life example of political science. From the first few pages (the description of the disaster) the author captured my attention. I became emotionally attached to the suit and I cared about the

outcome. Two major accomplishments in one book: 1) A story 2) A dramatic political science learning experience. I do warn prospective readers, however, that the content regarding the disaster could be too much for VERY emotional readers, but most people should be able to handle it.

Well I ordered this book because I recently read *A Civil Action* by Jonathan Harr. I wanted a good court room drama / good back story. I think it is because of the author. His writing was very dull, and I found myself dozing off every 10 mins or so. I really wanted to like this book (since I bought it) but was unable to get very far. The story itself is amazing (They stuck it to a multi-million dollar company and won) And Tragic (Lives lost and millions of dollars in property damage. I recommend going to wikipedia and looking up the disaster or find free articles published throughout the internet.

I had to get this for a class and the book itself wasn't awful though the guy wasn't a particularly good writer. What really upset me is the total lack of editing in the Kindle version. If they had to refund even a penny for every error I found they would probably end up having to pay me in excess of my purchase price

I'm reading this book for civil procedure so I expect it to be dull but it was quite the opposite. Stern is quite the storyteller. He captivated my interest and I read half the book in one sitting. It's a book that makes learning portions of civil procedure easier on my brain. I'm happy with it.

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