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Contract Holder
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© Jeff Todd (www.onyourtodd.com)

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Unique Work of Fiction Based on Hurricane Katrina

What makes *Storm of Hate* unique is the strength and originality of its characters. The narrative is shifting, with a cinematic feel. The pace is intended to be fast, pounding and gritty.

Essential key points:

1. While *Storm of Hate* is a work of fiction, some characters (and events) are fashioned from actual experiences before, during and after Hurricane Katrina.
2. Author doesn't bring any bias to this novel. As a journalist and a novelist, he crafted a story that is intense, hard-hitting and believable. It is a tale with a cinematic feel, a shifting narrative and at times, deliberately confusing.
3. *Storm of Hate* is as much about the past as the present. The backdrop of New Orleans is important, but in the end it's more of a facilitator. This is story about Katrina, but more importantly, it's about how characters react to it.

Storm of Hate is intended as adult fiction. It is targeted at a broad audience by drawing on an infamous disaster, while exploring its impact on an unusual mix of characters. While the writing style is very accessible, the subject matter is intense and sometimes graphic, and the level of symbolism, irony and foreshadowing is intended to be complex.

Author is available for appearances and interviews and can be reached through The Key Publicity, Heather Smith, e-mail: media@thekeypublish.com, Tel: 416-935-1790

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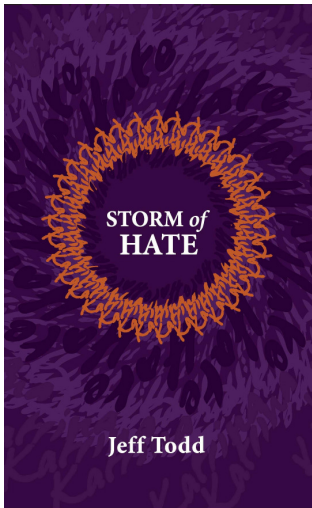
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Author: Jeff Todd

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"Jeff Todd has written a powerful and compelling story about the chaos, anguish and suffering of Hurricane Katrina as it was experienced by a cross-section of ordinary people. New Orleans is represented with intensity and immediacy and the characters are uniquely genuine. The novel builds in suspense and anxiety as it moves toward the especially well-realized, horrifying events and squalid conditions of the Superdome. A fine first novel."

~Catherine Harland
Professor of English literature, Queen's University

"This tense and turbulent novel is concisely written and a great read. Jeff seamlessly weaves together the characters' lives and choices before the storm with their conduct when tested by unimaginable circumstances after the levees break. *Storm of Hate* is a vivid, memorable, well-crafted novel, and I recommend it to anyone who enjoys great works of historical fiction."

~Edward L. Greenspan
Senior Partner at Greenspan Partners

"*Storm of Hate* is a powerful story about the struggle to survive amid the chaos of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. Author Jeff Todd paints a vivid and affecting picture of fragile hopes, personal tragedy and social breakdown. Peopled with memorable characters, the novel straddles and exposes the divisions of life in New Orleans: black and white; rich and poor; those born lucky, those searching for a modicum of happiness, and those whose chances were blighted from the start."

~Gene Allen
Associate professor of Journalism, Ryerson University

"Jeff Todd has produced a terrific piece of writing - well paced and well sustained throughout. The style of narration moves very quickly - essentially cinematic - although the rapid movement and the use of short sections are very much within the modernist tradition. *Storm of Hate* creates a vivid world and characters who are very deftly articulated - along with a mood of difficulty and of loss which is entirely convincing."

~Alistair Davies
Professor of English literature, University of Sussex



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Synopsis

The storm has begun.

Janna and Nate, an inter-racial couple living in the Lower 9th Ward, scratch and climb their way to the attic as the flood rises.

Only one will survive, and only one will begin a journey through the New Orleans jungle in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

The melancholy SWAT officer, Darren, barely hangs on as he tries to maintain a thin thread of order in the Louisiana Superdome. Ronald, the greedy developer trapped in the French Quarter, is fixated on money and the woman in the black fur coat.

They could not be more estranged, more different, and yet these lives are about to collide.

Through its pounding, gritty, shifting narrative, *Storm of Hate* considers the weight of the past, the horror of the present and the undying hope for the future. It explores humanity's paradox - while meaning is shaped by others, we are all very much alone.

About the Author

Jeff Todd is a journalist with experience in Canada, The Bahamas and the Middle East. He has published thousands of articles on a wide array of subjects. Jeff has travelled throughout Europe, North America, the Middle East, Asia and the Caribbean. He currently lives in Nassau, The Bahamas, where he is completing his second novel and serving as the Business Editor of the *Nassau Guardian*. www.onyourtodd.com



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Author's Q & A

1. What inspired you to write *Storm of Hate*?

In the summer of 2005, I was a fresh-faced and unemployed post-graduate student. I just finished my MA in 20th century British literature in the UK, and I moved back to my parent's house to plan my next move. I started writing. The writing, at first, had nothing to do with this novel, although one protagonist bears some similarities.

In any event, I recall quite vividly the images and stories that emerged from New Orleans in August 2005. I was particularly struck by the fact that the same weather system continued North into Canada, and I remember the day Ontario experienced heavy rainfall, the distant cousin of Katrina, I suppose. I went to a funeral that day. Soon thereafter, *Storm of Hate* took a radical turn. It was the first of many.

2. What surprised you most while writing this book?

Storm of Hate is not a story for the faint of heart. What surprised me most was my affinity for tragedy.

3. What were the challenges (research, literary, and logistical) in bringing this book to life?

While many scenes do not occur in New Orleans, writing a novel based on Hurricane Katrina was nevertheless a considerable challenge. It helped that many scenes occur indoors. But inevitably, my imagination could only go so far. It needed an added kick of authenticity that could only come from personal experience. I was fortunate to meet individuals willing to share some thoughts and memories of the hurricane, and life in New Orleans at large. That's what brought *Storm of Hate* to life.

4. What are the most important points that you would like readers to have gained and appreciate after reading your book?

I'm not sure I want to tell readers what they should take from the novel. It's not my place. But I do hope readers will enter into the worlds of these characters, and find them authentic, sympathetic and deplorable. As plots weave together, an over-riding paradox should be evident – while we're dependent on each other for meaning, we are all very much alone. Is there hope? That's up to the reader to decide.

5. Why is this story unique?

What makes *Storm of Hate* unique is the strength and originality of its characters. The narrative is shifting and cinematic. The pace is intended to be fast, pounding and gritty. I encourage readers to consume it in one or two sessions.



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6. What are the controversial issues in relation to Hurricane Katrina and events surrounding it?

a. The most controversial issue surrounding Hurricane Katrina is race. While I don't belabor the point, it certainly plays a role in the novel. Nate and Janna are an inter-racial couple that come from radically different worlds. At the Superdome, even the collection of law enforcement officers, pulled from various divisions and backgrounds, must grapple with these issues. Race contributes to the underlining tension in the novel, and provides a diversity of perspective in terms of how people react to the storm. Added to that is class and social standing, which complicates the matter even further.

b. Events that transpired in the Louisiana Superdome are a source of controversy. What I wrote was based on interviews with a SWAT officer, personal research, and of course, my imagination. That said, this is not representative of the experience. The degree of violence, drug abuse and other incidents such as rape is not entirely clear.

c. The response time to the plight of citizens is definitely a source of controversy. I touch on this issue near the end of the book, both in dialogue and then in action as frustrations reach a fevered pitch.

7. What advice would you offer your readers so they can make the best of the out of the novel?

Patience. The novel tends to jump around a lot. I play with time and place. Perspectives change frequently. In the end, I hope readers will pay attention to some of the nuisances in terms of foreshadowing, symbolism and analogy. I hope they will become immersed in the characters. And I hope readers will consume the novel quickly, and then read it again, slowly.