[PDF] A Civil Action

Jonathan Harr, John Shea - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: A Civil Action Author: Jonathan Harr, John Shea

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Description:

Every element of great drama--tragic deaths, titanic greed, a flawed hero--already existed in Jonathan Harr's *A Civil Action*. John Shea's reading provides the finishing touch: a great voice. Shea, an Obie Award-winning stage actor, is probably best known for his roles in a handful of films in the '80s, including *Missing* and *Windy City*. His smooth, disciplined reading guides us through some of the book's heavy traffic--lots of medical information, many characters with complex backgrounds, multiple carcinogenic chemicals--without for a second allowing us to get lost in those details. We never forget we're heading toward one of modern journalism's great clashes of good and evil, and even if we know in advance which side wins, the narrative path to that conclusion is always riveting. (Running time: 4 hours, 4 cassettes) --Lou Schuler

From Publishers Weekly This tale of a somewhat quixotic quest by an idealistic young lawyer concerns his efforts to secure damages from two corporate giants, Beatrice Foods and W.R. Grace, for allegedly polluting the water in Woburn, Mass., a Boston suburb, with carcinogens. Jan



Schlichtmann had hoped that a victory would send a message to the boardrooms of America and felt that the cluster of leukemia victims in Woburn (the disease had claimed the lives of at least six children) guaranteed his success. But he reckoned without certain developments: first, the case went to a federal court, a less sympathetic venue for damage suits than state courts; second, the trial judge appears to have been unsympathetic to his case; third, at least one of the defense witnesses lied; four, defense attorneys evidently failed to deliver all relevant documents to Schlichtmann's team. The case against Beatrice was thrown out, and the plaintiffs accepted a settlement of \$8 million from Grace. Personally bankrupt, Schlichtmann considered himself a failure. Former New England Monthly staffer Harr has told the story expertly, although more exhaustively than most readers may wish. Author tour; movie rights to Disney.

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