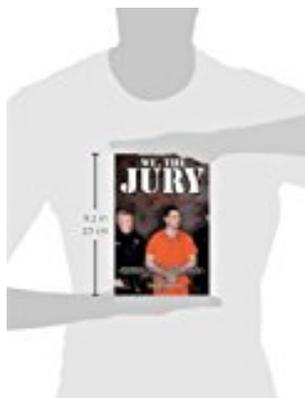


[PDF] We, The Jury: Deciding The Scott Peterson Case

Greg Berattis, Tom Marino, Mike Belmessieri, Dennis Lear, Richelle Nice, John Guinasso, Julie Zanartu, Frank Swertlow, Lyndon Stambler - pdf download free book



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Description:

About the Author Stambler is a reporter for *People* Magazine.

Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. One of Scott Peterson's jurors contemplated suicide. Another joined a self-help group, desperately seeking equilibrium. Another walks along the San Francisco Bay on her lunch hours, thinking of Laci Peterson. Others are in counseling and on antidepressants.

All seven who collaborated on "We, the Jury: Deciding the Scott Peterson Case" say they never will be the same because of the harrowing trial. But none regrets sending the Modesto man to death row.

"I know he did it. I don't think he did it," Julie Zanartu said. She doesn't eat ribs anymore, having been traumatized by gruesome courtroom photos of Laci Peterson's badly decomposed remains at the bay shoreline.

"I sometimes wake up crying," juror Richelle Nice, dubbed "Strawberry Shortcake" by reporters covering the case, said in the book. "What is wrong, I think? What went wrong in my life? What happened to me? That is why I am on so much medication."

"We, the Jury," describes the panelists' disgust when hundreds of people, crowded outside the Redwood City courthouse, cheered as the guilty verdict was announced.

"I really thought that was sick," Dennis Lear said in the book.

Juror John Guinasso said: "I made a startling assessment. Maybe they were cheering the process, and not because it was Scott Peterson, but simply because justice was done."

The book's intriguing points include:

The jurors initially were impressed by defense attorney Mark Geragos' confident swagger and ease at public speaking, and underwhelmed by Stanislaus County prosecutors' plodding, boring delivery.

"Stanislaus County was farm country," a passage reads, "and these were farm lawyers — no match for the express train from Los Angeles."

Though prosecutors insist they never panicked, they had good reason to early in the trial, the jurors said.

They pinpointed Frey's secretly taped phone conversations with her lover, Scott Peterson, as a turning point.

Jurors found the tapes even more valuable in death-sentence deliberations because they confirmed Peterson's callous, deceitful nature -- in his own voice.

"These tapes exposed him as a man who planned events to accomplish a devious and heinous goal," Guinasso said.

Jurors remembered Geragos' hollow promise in his opening statement to prove his client "stone cold innocent" as they deliberated Peterson's guilt five months later.

"He was innocent in all our eyes until the evidence proved him to be stone cold guilty," Nice said.

Birgit Fladager, now Stanislaus County district attorney, essentially saved the day with her "pizzazz," connection with jurors and "woman's touch." Her father called her "sort of like a steel fist in a velvet glove."

Swertlow and Stambler weave the jurors' stories of their crucial deliberations into a tale of arrogance, duty and frustration. Most compelling are accounts leading to the early exits of three jurors who were replaced by more reasonable alternates, they wrote, eventually bringing unanimity.

"Some cried and were comforted by other jurors. Many of us were completely exhausted. I remember seeing (one) in the corner of the room, muttering to herself. It was very tough, but it was the right verdict.

"There were no celebrations, no high fives, no congratulatory gestures," Guinasso continued. "These deliberations were thorough. If anything was going to condemn Scott Peterson, it was the legal process, not any one of us."

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