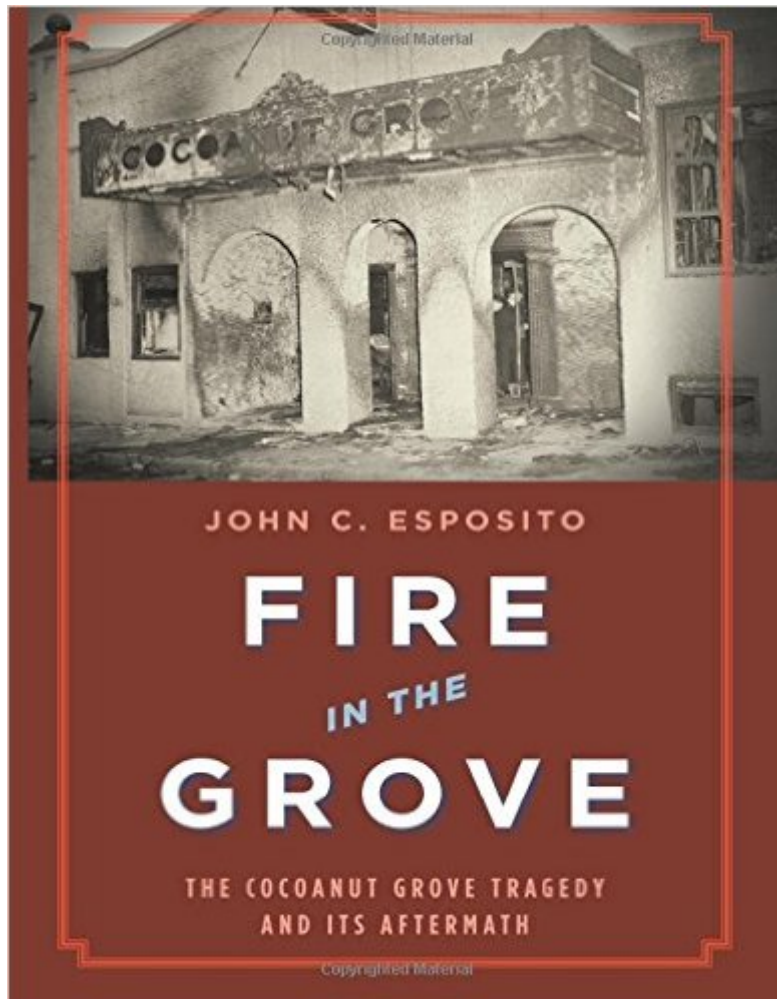


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Fire In The Grove: The Coconut Grove Tragedy And Its Aftermath



Synopsis

On Saturday night, November 28, 1942, Boston suffered its worst disaster ever. At the city's premier nightspot, the Cocoanut Grove, the largest nightclub fire in U.S. history took the lives of 492 people--nearly one of every two people on the premises. A flash of fire that started in an imitation palm tree rolled through the overcrowded club with breathtaking speed and in a mere eight minutes anyone left in the club was dead or doomed. The Grove was a classic firetrap, the product of greed and indifference on the part of the owners and the politicians who had knowingly allowed such conditions to exist. Against the backdrop of Boston politics, cronyism, and corruption, author John C. Esposito re-creates the drama of the fire and explores the public outcry that followed. In retelling the horrific events of one of America's most cataclysmic tragedies, Esposito has fashioned both an incomparably gripping narrative and a vibrant portrait of the era. But it is the intense, detailed narrative of the fire--harrowing yet compulsively readable--and the trials that followed that will stay with the reader well after they finish this remarkable book. "[Esposito] reminds us that the cautionary tale of the Cocoanut Grove is still relevant today." (New York Law Journal)

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It seems to me that I have read it too many times before. Back in 1903 a total of 602 people, mostly women and children, perished in a fire at a matinee at the Iroquois Theater in Chicago. Six years later 259 miners were killed in a fire at a coal mine in Cherry Il. And in 1911 another 146 young immigrant workers lost their lives at the Triangle Shirtwaist factory in New York City. It just breaks

your heart to read about the deaths of so many due to the greed, incompetence and irresponsibility of others. Now in 2006 author John C. Esposito, an original member of "Nader's Raiders" offers up "Fire In The Grove". This is the stirring account of that tragic evening in November 1942 when 490 people lost their lives at the fabled Cocoanut Grove night club in downtown Boston. It remains to this day the deadliest nightclub fire in American history. And it did not have to happen! Let me begin by saying that I could not put this book down. I consumed this book in its entirety in less than two days. John Esposito paints a very vivid picture of just what was going on inside the walls of the Cocoanut Grove on that fateful night. Esposito spends a good deal of time describing the floor plan of the nightclub. His verbal description is supplemented by a very useful illustration that the reader can refer to when needed. It quickly becomes apparent the many obstacles that patrons would face when attempting to evacuate this complex. Due to the gross negligence of management and others most of those that died never had a chance. So just who was responsible for the holocaust at the Cocoanut Grove? As you will learn in "Fire In The Grove" there is no shortage of potential candidates. Barney Welansky had owned the Cocoanut Grove for nearly a decade.

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