

Dead Weight: Based on a True Story

By Batt Humphreys

"Compelling and satisfying, Dead Weight is a moving historical novel, a heart-pounding legal thriller and a poignant love story. Batt Humphreys debuts with a memorable and beautifully written book which illustrates the triumph of the human spirit against all odds."

– Mary Jane Clark, *New York Times* bestselling author of *It Only Takes a Moment*.

"Batt Humphreys brings both a reporter's gift for research and a novelist's imagination to his vivid recreation of 1910 Charleston and one of the city's most shameful episodes of racial injustice."

– Ron Rash, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Serena*

In 2007 **Batt Humphreys** left CBS News in New York after a distinguished and eventful career in network news to return to his beloved South. But it wasn't long until the lure of the story brought him back to a headline. In this case, the headline was a century old.

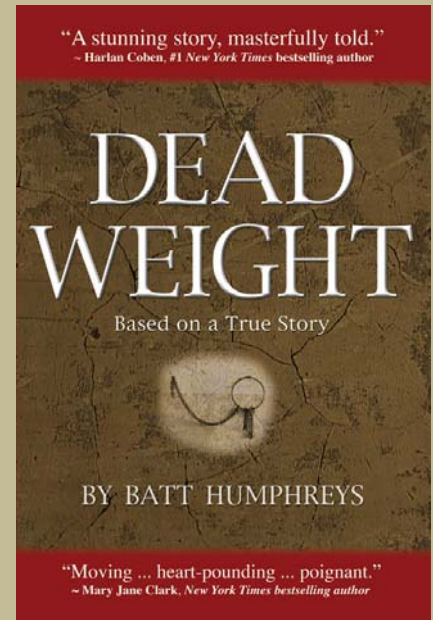
Based on the true story of the State vs. Daniel Duncan, ***Dead Weight*** details the 1910 trial, conviction and execution of Daniel Cornelius "Nealy" Duncan, a young black man of respectable employment and temperament, arrested on the eve of his wedding for the murder of a local merchant. In this heartbreaking tale about the role of race in the southern criminal justice system of the 20th century, reasonable doubt was disregarded, and there is every reason to believe an innocent man was hanged.

In *Dead Weight*, Hal Hinson is a fictional reporter from New York assigned to cover the Duncan trial. Through his narration we see the beauty of Charleston, the ugliness of the racial divide, and a struggle between two lawyers for the life of man accused of murder. The reader also comes to know the real character of the accused through the transcripts of actual court testimony.

History wrote the story's ending. After the hanging, Charleston was hit by a major hurricane. It dealt another harsh blow to the historic town and the hurricane became known in the community as "The Duncan Storm" – a form of divine retribution for the death of an innocent man.

Batt Humphreys has petitioned the state of South Carolina to pardon Duncan: "The pardon is a chance to correct an injustice and to restore honor, even if it never connects to his immediate family. For those who believe in the continuity of souls, somewhere he will know and somehow we will have helped restore what was taken from him."

Mr. Humphreys is available for interviews. Please contact Marjory Wentworth at 843-971-6930 or marjory@jugglingboardpress.com.



"A stunning story, masterfully told. This is historical sleuthing with a journalist's eye: real people and a real tragedy."

– Harlan Coben, *New York Times* bestselling author

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