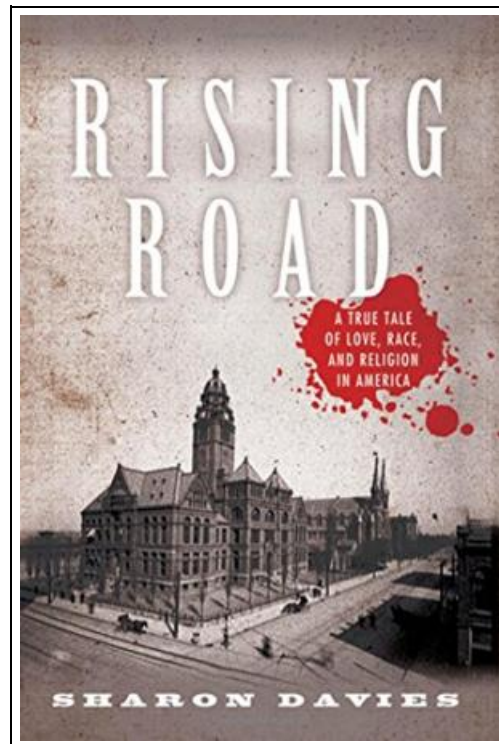


Rising Road: A True Tale of Love, Race, and Religion in America (Hardback)



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RISING ROAD: A TRUE TALE OF LOVE, RACE, AND RELIGION IN AMERICA (HARDBACK)



Oxford University Press Inc, United States, 2010. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. In Birmingham, Alabama in 1921, an unstable and fiercely anti-Catholic Methodist minister named Edwin Stephenson shot and killed James Coyle, an Irish Catholic priest, in broad daylight on the rectory steps of his church. As it so happened, the fiercely intelligent priest had married the minister's 18-year headstrong daughter Ruth -who secretly turned to Catholicism at the age of 12-to Pedro Gussman, a 42-year old Puerto Rican of indeterminate racial ancestry. The resulting trial has virtually disappeared from historical memory, but it was a sensation at the time. It featured all of the elements of intolerance that dominated the era: Southern racism, anti-Catholicism, and xenophobia. Adding to the intrigue, the minister, a member of the recently revived Ku Klux Klan, hired future Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black as his defense attorney. Black would become a legendary champion of civil rights later in life, but in 1921, he was a few years away from joining the Klan himself. Entering a plea of temporary insanity, Black based his claim on his belief that the Puerto Rican husband was black, which not only was an affront to the Southern racial order, but clearly in violation of the state's anti-miscegenation laws. Sharon Davies tells this incredible story through a narrative of the romantic relationship between Ruth Stephenson and Pedro Gussman, but she positions it in its historical context: the hard-but-fraying racial and religious orders of 1920s America. Through the story of a heinous crime and its aftermath, Davies provides an epic account of the consequences of prejudice at the height of the Jim Crow era.



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