



# Most Fortunate Unfortunates

The Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans

## MARLENE TRESTMAN

Spanning antebellum New Orleans through World War II, *Most Fortunate Unfortunates* presents the first complete history of the nation's earliest purpose-built Jewish orphanage.

**MARLENE TRESTMAN** grew up in New Orleans as a client of the Jewish Children's Regional Service, the successor to the Jewish Orphans' Home. A former special assistant to Maryland's attorney general, Trestman is the author of *Fair Labor Lawyer: The Remarkable Life of New Deal Attorney and Supreme Court Advocate Bessie Margolin*.

### PRAISE FOR *MOST FORTUNATE UNFORTUNATES*

"Attentive to race and gender, and contextualized within general and Jewish history as well as the history of childcare, *Most Fortunate Unfortunates* sets a new standard as a well-researched, well-written, warts-and-all history of the Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans."—**Jonathan D. Sarna**, author of *American Judaism: A History*

"What's remarkable about Marlene Trestman's *Most Fortunate Unfortunates* is its ability to shift scope, from the intricate details of a New Orleans institutional history—complete with names, faces, personalities, and incidents hitherto forgotten—to regional, national, and even international contexts."—**Richard Campanella**, author of *Cityscapes of New Orleans*

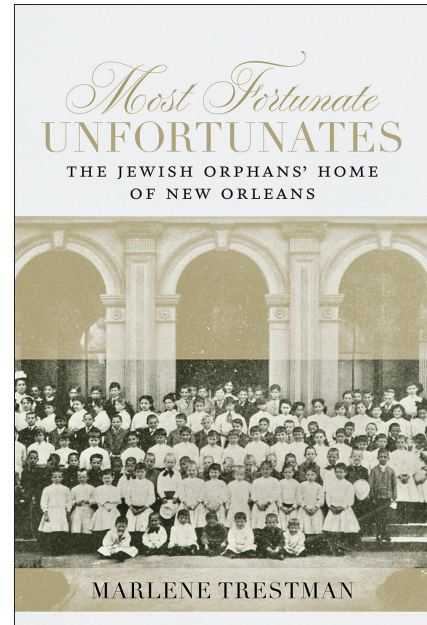
"With narrative empathy and scholarly rigor, Trestman gives readers insight not only into one specific orphanage, but also into the larger challenges, triumphs, and dilemmas of an American Jewish community determined to care for its children."—**Kim van Alkemade**, *New York Times*–bestselling author of *Orphan #8: A Novel*

"A comprehensive and engaging study of a pioneering Jewish orphanage in the United States."—**Reena Sigman Friedman**, author of *These Are Our Children: Jewish Orphanages in the United States, 1880–1925*

"*Most Fortunate Unfortunates* belongs on the reading list of everyone interested in childcare and education, as well as southern and American Jewish and general history."—**Mark K. Bauman**, founding editor of *Southern Jewish History*

"More than 140 interviews and oral histories augment this enlightening institutional history that follows the emergence of professional social workers and explores still-evolving childcare standards."—**Hollace Ava Weiner**, coeditor of *Lone Stars of David: The Jews of Texas*

"Trestman's *Most Fortunate Unfortunates* provides a wide-scoped, well-written, carefully documented, and extensively researched window into the story of Jewish institutional childcare in America over nearly a hundred years."—**Peter M. Wolf**, author of *The Sugar King: Leon Godchaux: A New Orleans Legend, His Creole Slave, and His Jewish Roots*



**OCTOBER 2023**

360 pages, 6 x 9, 37 halftones

978-0-8071-7290-2

Hardcover \$39.95, ebook available  
Louisiana / Jewish Studies

Published with the assistance of the  
V. Ray Cardozier Fund and the  
Mike and Ayan Rubin Endowment for the  
Study of Civil Rights and Social Justice



338 JOHNSTON HALL | BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70803

225-578-6294 | FAX 225-578-6461 | Orders/Customer Service 800-848-6224 | [www.lsupress.org](http://www.lsupress.org)