



Eruptions that Shook the World

By Clive Oppenheimer

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What does it take for a volcanic eruption to really shake the world? Did volcanic eruptions extinguish the dinosaurs, or help humans to evolve, only to decimate their populations with a super-eruption 73,000 years ago? Did they contribute to the ebb and flow of ancient empires, the French Revolution and the rise of fascism in Europe in the 19th century? These are some of the claims made for volcanic cataclysm. Volcanologist Clive Oppenheimer explores rich geological, historical, archaeological and palaeoenvironmental records (such as ice cores and tree rings) to tell the stories behind some of the greatest volcanic events of the past quarter of a billion years. He shows how a forensic approach to volcanology reveals the richness and complexity behind cause and effect, and argues that important lessons for future catastrophe risk management can be drawn from understanding events that took place even at the dawn of human origins.

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Editorial Review

Review

"I have to thank God on my knees that Oppenheimer's book did not exist at the time I made my decision to become a filmmaker. I might have become a volcanologist instead." Werner Herzog, Film director and producer

"With his characteristic sparkling brilliance, Oppenheimer expertly recasts the latest scientific findings on how volcanoes work as a compelling and readable account that conveys the enduring human fascination for Nature's fiery outbursts and their capacity to transform life on this planet." Professor Iain Stewart, Geologist and BBC TV presenter

"In his explosive book Clive Oppenheimer brilliantly shows how the history of volcanoes and people is a tangled account. From our earliest ancestors to travellers battling with the effects of ash clouds on airline flights, our evolutionary destiny has been played out in the shadow of volcanoes, often with disastrous results." Professor Clive Gamble, Archaeologist, Royal Holloway, University of London

"This is forensic geology in the widest sense and an exciting guided tour of the major volcanic and climatic disasters experienced by human kind. Oppenheimer has a rare talent for bringing the science and history together in a clear and engaging way." Professor Michael Rampino, Geologist, New York University

"Writing in his inimitably lively and witty style, Clive Oppenheimer takes us through deep time and deep into volcanoes, teaching us how they work and demonstrating how powerful eruptions have often jostled the human toehold on survival. This tour de force is an astonishingly provocative roadmap to the once and future history of Earth." Dr. Dave Pieri, Volcanologist, NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory

"Oppenheimer romps through the geological past, detailing some of the major volcanic events and their global impact. ... well worth diving into." Kate Ravilious, New Scientist

"The hellfire-and-brimstone case studies ... seem like a product of a Hollywood screenwriter's imagination ... only they describe real events." Laurence A Marschall, Natural History October 2011

"Set out to make the average reader's murky perception of volcanoes a bit clearer, and managed to write a compelling tome fit for any to enjoy, coming as close to brilliant storytelling as a scientist is able...The more dry explanations were succinct, the exciting bits explored thoroughly and boredom averted completely. Oppenheimer made his prose modern by drawing comparisons with carefully chosen pop culture terms and euphemisms that should stay relevant for some time to come. 5 OUT OF 5 STARS" Meredith Greene, San Francisco Book Review

"Oppenheimer uses all sorts of evidence to unravel the stories behind some of the greatest and most significant volcanic cataclysms. ... I recommend Eruptions That Shook the World" Don L. Anderson, Physics Today

"...Oppenheimer explores the entanglement of human history and volcanic activity with rare and insightful brilliance....This book should be on the shelves of all volcanologists, historians, and environmental planners. It is a lively read for all citizens concerned with human futures." -T. L. T. Grose, CHOICE

About the Author

Clive Oppenheimer is a Reader in Volcanology and Remote Sensing at the University of Cambridge and a Research Associate of 'Le Studium' Institute for Advanced Studies at ISTO (University of Orléans/CNRS). His research focuses on understanding the chemistry and physics of volcanism, and the climatic and human impacts of eruptions in antiquity. He has carried out fieldwork worldwide in collaboration with archaeologists, atmospheric scientists and other geologists. Since 2003, he has studied the lava lake of Erebus volcano with the US Antarctic Program. In 2005 the Royal Geographical Society presented him with the Murchison Award 'for publications enhancing the understanding of volcanic processes and impacts'. Dr Oppenheimer is a co-author with Peter Francis of a leading volcanology textbook and has contributed widely to television and film documentaries on volcanoes, including Werner Herzog's 'Encounters at the End of the World' and most recently, for Discovery, the History Channel, the BBC, Teachers' TV and National Geographic.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marilyn Apperson:

This book untitled Eruptions that Shook the World to be one of several books in which best seller in this year, here is because when you read this e-book you can get a lot of benefit upon it. You will easily to buy this specific book in the book retailer or you can order it through online. The publisher of this book sells the e-book too. It makes you easier to read this book, as you can read this book in your Touch screen phone. So there is no reason to you to past this guide from your list.

Nathan Herr:

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