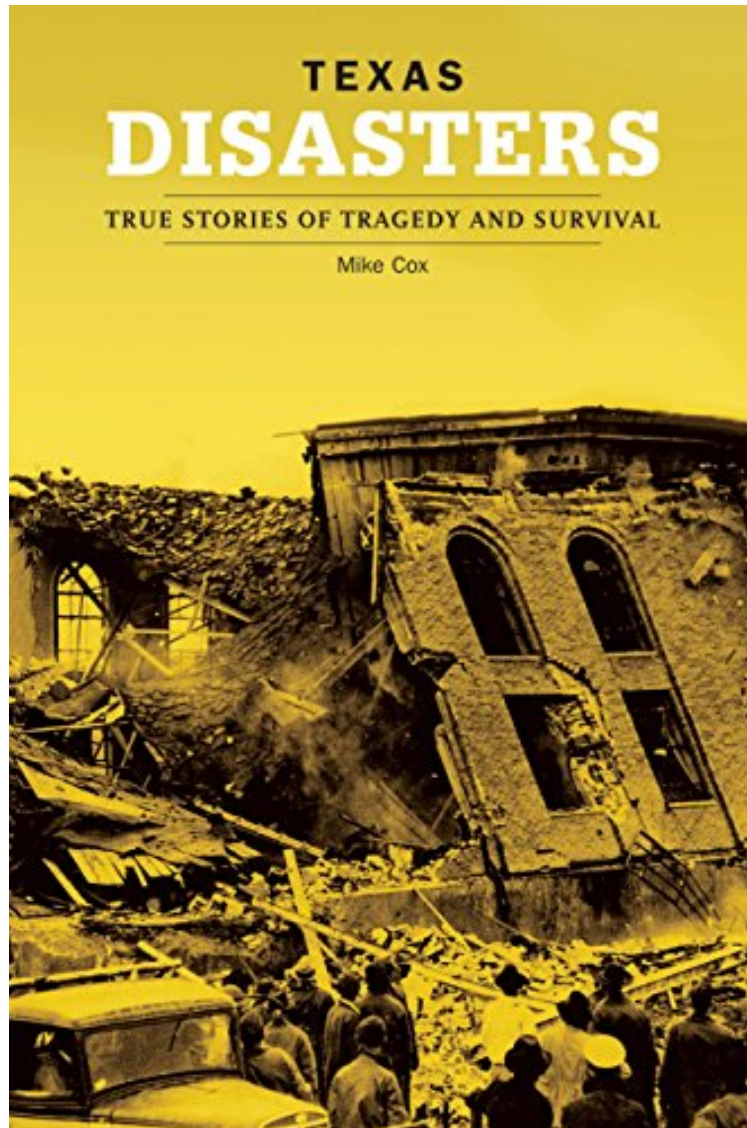


[Download] Texas Disasters: True Stories Of Tragedy And Survival (Disasters Series)

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Mike Cox

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Mike Cox : Texas Disasters: True Stories Of Tragedy And Survival (Disasters Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Texas Disasters: True Stories Of Tragedy And Survival (Disasters Series):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Fresh Perspective on Texas History By James O. Guleke II One approach to history, the traditional approach, is the biography or linking the biographical sketches of the significant

actors of a time to chronicle the time. Another approach, and the approach used by author Mike Cox in *Texas Disasters: True Stories of Tragedy and Survival*, is to develop a theme through telling the stories of the events over time. In taking the second approach, Author Cox writes of disasters in Texas—both natural and man-made. He describes in detail 20 disasters beginning with the first recorded, the 1554 sinking of three gold and silver bearing Spanish ships off South Padre Island, through the deadly and destructive Hurricanes Katrina and Rita of 2005 hurricane season, and then lists in appendix sixty-nine others (tops in terms of loss of human life killing fourteen or more) that have occurred, or at least that have left some discoverable documented trail. As Cox notes, "disaster often becomes a catalyst for positive change." For instance, the 1900 Galveston hurricane, in man's promise to himself to never let it happen again, gave birth to the commissioner model of municipal government, in order to more efficiently meet the local needs of anticipating and responding to a natural emergency. The 1921 San Antonio flood gave rise to a flood control system that in the 1968 era of Hemisfairs and Urban Renewal provided a structure upon which the Riverwalk and the economic engine for the most popular international tourist destination in the state arose. The 1937 New London school natural gas leak explosion resulted in tighter regulation of architects and engineers and the addition of mercaptan to odorless natural gas to give it a chance for detection by humans before explosions occurred. The 1947 Texas City fertilizer plant explosion gave rise to federal regulations for the handling of hazardous materials. The 1953 Waco tornado prompted the use of World War II radar as a tool for local weather stations to predict and therefore to be able to alert the public of killer storms in enough advance to get out of harm's way. The 1979 Wichita Falls tornado inspired the development of storm-safe rooms in houses. And the 1985 Delta Airlines crash at DFW Airport heightened the need for more study of wind-shear and the resulting of better windshear detection systems and pilot training to avoid or to handle downdrafts in critical stages of flight for better safety of the air traveling public. As Cox writes, "[w]hile some measure of good came out of several of Texas's worst tragedies, other disasters caused heartbreak and havoc in the short term" While their effects may not have lingered on the community as a whole, their effects on individuals changed lives forever. For an interesting read, one that the reader can do in 15-minute increments, this book is worth the price of admission.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. uplifting, heroic stories of survival
 By Reader Views
 Reviewed by Richard R. Blake for Reader Views (10/06)
 Mike Cox has written a gripping definitive account of twenty of the most devastating disasters in the history of the state of Texas. Cox, an acute observer, recounts these stories of tragedy through the eyes of a news reporter. His accounts are readable, compelling and engaging. Cox covers a period of over four hundred years of Texas history in the book. The account begins with the wreck of three Spanish ships off the coast of South Padre Island in 1554, and concludes with hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2006. Although Katrina came ashore in Louisiana the impact of Texas hospitality and the supreme effort to aid the 400,000 evacuees demonstrate that in adversity Americans unite in the effort to save lives and restore property. The author provides an amazing number of prints and photographs that reflect the disasters, debris, and destruction of flash floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, blizzards, and explosions. Twisted houses, buildings leveled, smoke and fire damage are only a few of the results shown in these illustrations. Dislocated families, lives lost, and mass graves of unidentified bodies, are among the horrors related in these true stories of tragedy. Fires subsequent to the initial disaster were often more devastating than the original cause. The stories come from people who lived through those dreadful experiences. Mike has captured the essence of how the man of the street pitched in to reach out on a human level of compassion. Cox gives specific examples of this in many of the stories. Men and women became heroes during the aftermath of the ravage, devastation, and destruction of nature's fury. The following is typical of the action of civic leaders and heroes of the day: Following the Galveston hurricane in 1900, "Help began pouring in as fast as rescue and aid workers could reach Houston." Mike Cox uses these accounts of disaster as a wake up call to civic leaders and citizens alike to focus on preparedness in the event of future similar catastrophes. The historical account and commentary in "Texas Disasters" is well researched and documented. The bibliography is comprehensive and impressive. This is a collection of uplifting, heroic stories of survival in the face of overwhelming adversity. Book received free of charge.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. True Texas Disasters
 By Sherri Green
 They say reporters write the first draft of history. Mike Cox, a seasoned journalist and public safety spokesperson, offers a lively and intensely human second draft on some of the worst disasters to strike Texas since Spanish colonization. This book is an excellent read for those who prefer to learn about history through the poignant stories of people who lived it, instead of through wordy, academic analysis. Cox's descriptions put you at the scene, often through the recollections of witnesses and survivors. The featured stories bring to life twenty famous Texas disasters. In many cases, their lessons led to new inventions and protocols that help keep us safer today. The appendix, meanwhile, offers an exhaustive reference list of tornados, hurricanes, steamboat explosions and other calamities to strike the Lone Star State. Hailing from Lamar County, I had to skip ahead and read about the 1916 Paris fire!

The enormity of Texas's many major disasters are an appropriate match for the state's large size. This is an area of the country where tornadoes are a frequent threat, but in addition to the many violent twisters, residents have experienced fires, floods, drought, blizzards, shipwrecks, and other devastating events, including a yellow fever epidemic in 1867, which earned that year the grim moniker "The Year of Death." Twenty dramatic true stories are retold in this well-

researched collection, including: The deadly quarter-mile-wide tornado that roared through the town of Goliad in 1902, killing 114 people, injuring 230, and demolishing 150 structures. A 1937 natural gas explosion at a school in New London, which blew the whole building into the air and killed 298 students and teachers. A 15-foot wall of water that in 1965 swept down the canyon in the West Texas railroad town of Sanderson, killing whole families but uniting the racially divided town in rescue efforts. The 1947 explosion of the SS Grandcamp, a French vessel docked in Texas City and laden with ammonium nitrate, which had caught fire and later ignited another ship carrying the same cargo. The two blasts killed 576 people, injured thousands more, and jarred residents of Houston 40 miles to the north.

"Texans always pitch in and help each other after a tragedy..."