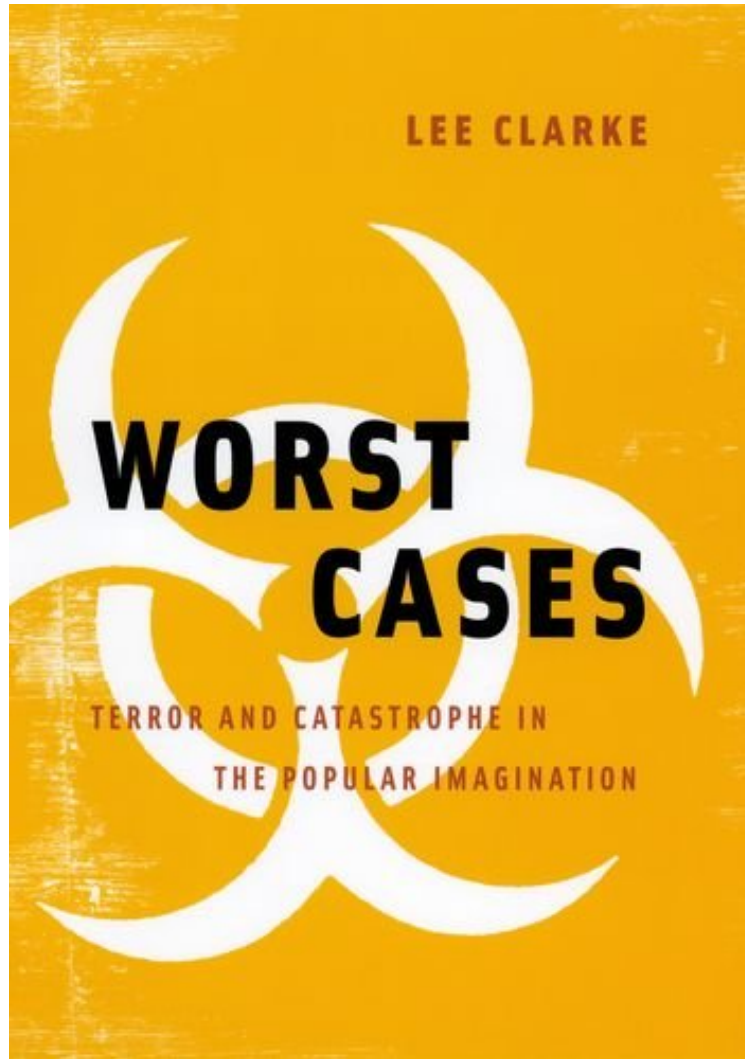


[FREE] Worst Cases: Terror and Catastrophe in the Popular Imagination

Worst Cases: Terror and Catastrophe in the Popular Imagination

Lee Clarke

*DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub*



 Download

 Read Online

#167196 in Books University Of Chicago Press 2005-11-15Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .80 x 6.00l, 1.03 #File Name: 0226108597200 pages | File size: 56.Mb

Lee Clarke : Worst Cases: Terror and Catastrophe in the Popular Imagination before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Worst Cases: Terror and Catastrophe in the Popular Imagination:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An excellent read for any decision-maker facing the unthinkableBy David EdwardsAfter seeing firsthand the public responses to the 9/11 attacks in NYC and the March 11, 2011 earthquake and ensuing Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear nightmare in Tokyo, I think that any person with organizational decision-making responsibility, whether technical or managerial, will benefit greatly from reading Professor Clarke's book carefully. Low-probability, high consequence "black swan" events are an unavoidable reality for all of us - and Professor Clarke makes some great practical recommendations for dealing with these events: (1) "preemptive

resilience", eschewing the centralization of disaster resources in large bureaucracies/expert networks and facilitating the role of regular people/workers in disaster planning and response, (2) disciplined counter-factual thinking by policymakers, experts, and in general anyone with decision-making responsibility, and (3) having a greater understanding of, and appreciation for, the limits of ourselves and those around us to prognosticate and control future outcomes. "Worst Cases" is definitely a five-star book.² of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Sky could be falling! By Paul James Harper Traditional risk managers have used probabilistic methods when determining which potential disasters to prepare for. Professor Clarke points out many of those assessing the probabilities have vested interests that 'shrink the ruler' when measuring the likelihood of a particular disaster occurring. They tend to discount the 'irrational' attitudes of the public who often evaluate risks according to 'possibilistic thinking. The Cassandra's are often being proved right these days. Professor Clarke also points out the value of thinking about the worst cases in a sensible way to improve disaster planning. Finally his argument for empowering "first responders" during 'worst cases' is compelling. By first responders he means the person next to you in a building on fire, in your business, the teacher in your school, etc. The Police, Fire, Ambulance, Military are "official responders" and they are simply not there in the beginning. Don't treat the public like mushrooms. Tell them the truth. They will not panic. Given information that the people trust the majority of people will respond rationally in a crisis. A lot of the views that Clarke put forth are shared by the following Authors: Looks at improving infrastructure to deal with worst cases. The Edge of Disaster: Rebuilding a Resilient Nation The concept of "Intelligence Minutemen" Thomas Jefferson's quote "A Nation's best defense is an educated citizenry" sums up Steele's philosophy. The New Craft of Intelligence: Personal, Public, Political--Citizen's Action Handbook for Fighting Terrorism, Genocide, Disease, Toxic Bombs, Corruption We don't need to give up moral values to combat terrorists. People want to help. They need to be informed not frightened and manipulated. Unconquerable Nation: Knowing Our Enemy, Strengthening Ourselves³ of 3 people found the following review helpful. Grave Diggers as Critical Infrastructure By Michael Makar Great book for emergency planners. A professor who teaches disaster management once said, "think big, really big". He is right. This book explores the realm of low-probability, high consequence events and realistic planning for them or the futility of planning. Lee Clark talks about critical infrastructure, how it relates to the social fabric of society and once a disaster strikes, critical infrastructure changes, hence, grave diggers, may be very important in the recovery phase. This book is a must in every emergency planners professional library.

Al Qaeda detonates a nuclear weapon in Times Square during rush hour, wiping out half of Manhattan and killing 500,000 people. A virulent strain of bird flu jumps to humans in Thailand, sweeps across Asia, and claims more than fifty million lives. A single freight car of chlorine derails on the outskirts of Los Angeles, spilling its contents and killing seven million. An asteroid ten kilometers wide slams into the Atlantic Ocean, unleashing a tsunami that renders life on the planet as we know it extinct. We consider the few who live in fear of such scenarios to be alarmist or even paranoid. But Worst Cases shows that such individuals like Cassandra foreseeing the fall of Troy are more reasonable and prescient than you might think. In this book, Lee Clarke surveys the full range of possible catastrophes that animate and dominate the popular imagination, from toxic spills and terrorism to plane crashes and pandemics. Along the way, he explores how the ubiquity of worst cases in everyday life has rendered them ordinary and mundane: very real threats like a killer flu or an American Hiroshima have become so common that they have lost their ability to shock us. Fear and dread, Clarke argues, have actually become too rare: only when the public has more substantial information and more credible warnings will it take worst cases as seriously as it should. A timely and necessary look into how we think about the unthinkable, Worst Cases will be must reading for anyone attuned to our current climate of threat and fear.

"...gripping thesis and prose a must-read for any sociologist (nay, for any curious thinker), not just risk or disaster researchers." -- Contemporary Sociology, May 2006, Eugene Rosa, Edward R. Meyer Distinguished Professor, Washington State University "Worst Cases is packed with gems for laypeople and scholars alike." Robert A. Stallings, University of Southern California -- Contemporary Sociology, May 2006, Robert Stallings, University of Southern California "tour de force" "immersed in sociological tradition, focusing on social and political structures, social organizations, stratification, inequality...important insights..." -- Contemporary Sociology, May 2006, Havidan Rodriquez (Director, Disaster Research Center) University of Delaware, John Barnshaw, Disaster Research Center, University of Delaware From the Author I am not an alarmist, but I am alarmed. That's why I wrote Worst Cases. It is also why my tone and language are non-technical. I am a sociologist but I wrote Worst Cases so that non-sociologists can read it, hopefully profitably. There are those who say we shouldn't worry about things that are unlikely to happen. That's what your pilot means by saying, after a turbulent cross country flight, "you've just completed the safest part of your trip." We hear the same thing when officials tell us that the probability of a nuclear power plant melting down is vanishingly small. Or that the likelihood of an asteroid striking the earth is one in a million, billion, or trillion. Chance is in our favor. In fact, chance is often not in our favor. Disaster and failure are indeed normal, and as a colleague of mine puts it, things that have never happened before happen all the time. A fair number of those things end up being

events we call worst cases. When that happens we are given opportunities to learn things about society, and human nature, that are usually obscured. Thomas Hardy said that "if way to the Better there be, it exacts a full look at the Worst." In this book I look at the Worst full in the face. What I see is frightening, but also enlightening. I hold, tenuously, to the idea that knowing a thing permits comfort with that thing. Sometimes the comfort comes from greater control. Sometimes it comes just from knowing the enemy, or the scary thing, which proffers a way forward, toward more safety. There is horror in disaster. But there is much more too, for we can use calamity to glean wisdom, even hope. Just as Hardy said.

About the Author Lee Clarke is a sociologist at Rutgers University. He is the author of *Mission Improbable: Using Fantasy Documents to Tame Disaster*, published by the University of Chicago Press, and *Acceptable Risk? Making Decisions in a Toxic Environment*. He is also the editor of *Terrorism and Disaster: New Threats, New Ideas*.