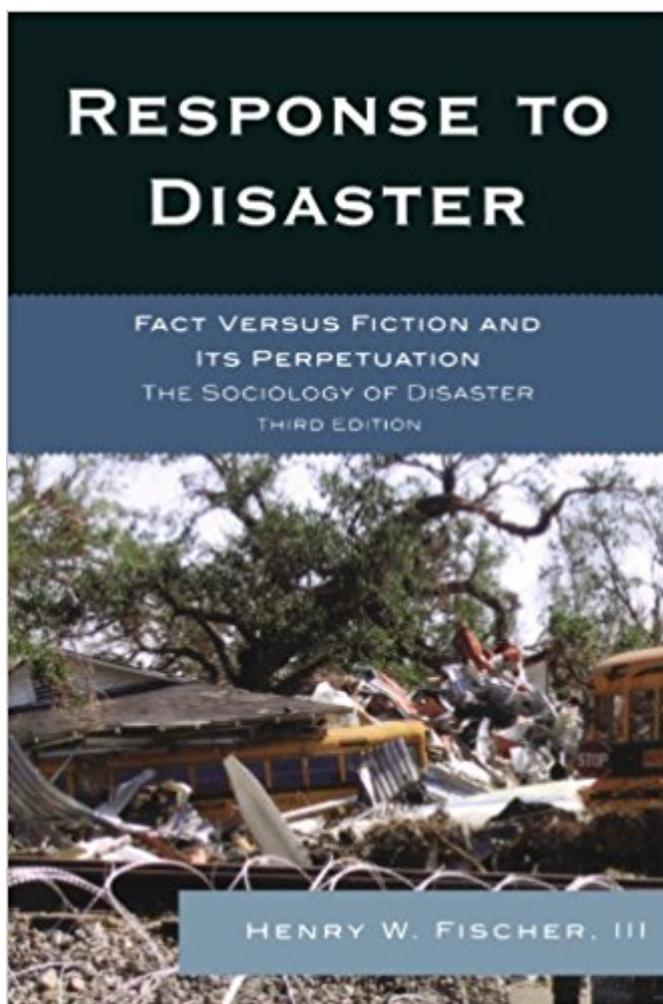


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# Response To Disaster: Fact Versus Fiction And Its Perpetuation



## **Synopsis**

Response to Disaster combines the original research of author Henry W. Fischer with the literature used today to describe behavioral and organizational challenges commonly experienced before, during, and after disasters. Actual problems are presented and compared to those often misperceived to occur, known as disaster mythology. Fisher examines case studies conducted during the post-impact and long-term recovery periods of major and minor disasters worldwide. He asserts that the role of the mass media assists in eliciting needed help with an effective response, but also perpetuates disaster mythology. Fisher presents striking comparisons between the perception of disaster in the eyes of the general public, the actual situations emergency responders face, and the way mass media reporters broadcast information. Additionally, the problems encountered by emergency response organizations are compared and contrasted with general public and media perceptions of disaster response. Fisher presents the response to September 11, 2001, the south Asian tsunami, and hurricane Katrina in this comprehensive third edition.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Henry W. Fischer, III, (Ph.D.), has served as director of the Center for Disaster Research and Education (CDRE) at Millersville University of Pennsylvania. He is an active member of the International Research Committee on Disaster, has served as the editor of UnScheduled Events and the Contemporary Disaster Review, and has been a consultant on behavioral response to disaster and terrorism for the U.S. federal government.

This book is only going to be interesting to academic sociologists. That is, it is only relevant to people who are keenly interested in academic details and are willing to put up with atrocious academic-speak, including constant use of jargon and passive voice. I read this as a companion to "popular" books on disaster survival, such as Laurence Gonzales's "Deep Survival" and Amanda Ripley's "The Unthinkable." But this book is very different. Fischer writes to debunk the "disaster mythology" that claims society falls apart in disasters, with widespread looting, disorder and social chaos. He does a good job debunking it. But wow, is this book boring and poorly written. If you can stand that, and are looking for statistical proof that people usually behave better, rather than worse, during disasters (other than certain cultures), you can find it here.

Fischer provides some excellent findings on the "accuracy" of media reporting of disasters and how that reporting shapes public perception, political action, and resource (\$\$\$) allocation in disaster. This is a must-read for anyone in the Emergency Management profession or any public official. Needless to say, it would be refreshing for our mainstream media to read it as well...hope springs eternal. Highly recommend this book!

Response to Disaster is written by Henry W. Fischer III who is a highly qualified subject matter expert in the field of Emergency and Disaster Management as the Founding Director of the Center for Disaster Research and Education at Millersville University in Pennsylvania. Without spilling the contents of this book, this text is required reading in some college level courses in the field of EDM. I found the information presented within as very timely and very informative despite having been involved in large scale special events and major disasters since a very young age - younger than most and now spanning a couple or several decades. From my vast experiences in many different aspects of emergency and disaster response as well as special events, the media helps to not only shape the disaster response, if managed properly they can be instrumental to a great disaster response or conversely the media can make a much larger disaster out of the existing disaster if not managed adequately. I highly recommend Response to Disaster by anyone who responds to major disasters or is involved in any aspect of Emergency or Disaster Management. Consider Response to Disaster as the Sociology of Disaster.

easy to read and the author is to the point

Good book with surprising conclusion and plenty of research, possibly has some political bias, but

mild enough to ignore. Great eye opener in any case!

Great!

What a terrific exploration of society's responses to disaster (and the media's portrayal of it)! This is a must-read for students, teachers, and all the rest of us. You never know when disaster may strike...and this book will weather any storm.

Good book

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