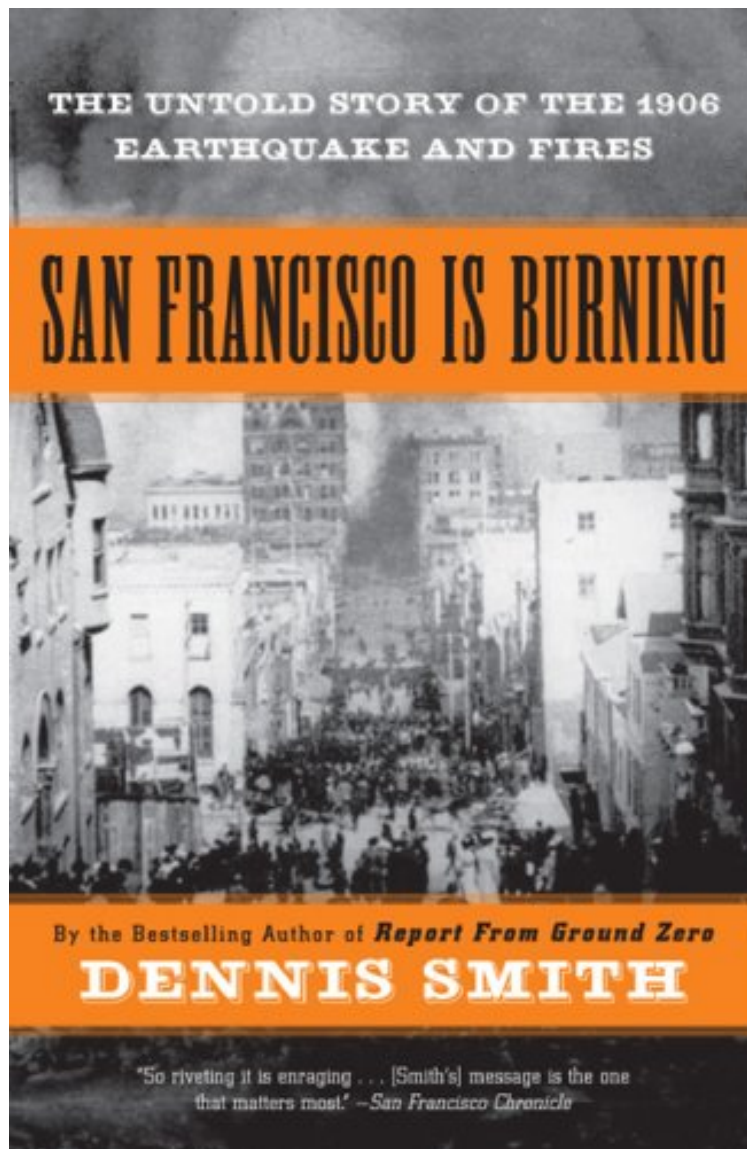


(Online library) San Francisco Is Burning: The Untold Story of the 1906 Earthquake and Fires

San Francisco Is Burning: The Untold Story of the 1906 Earthquake and Fires

Dennis Smith

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Dennis Smith : San Francisco Is Burning: The Untold Story of the 1906 Earthquake and Fires before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised San Francisco Is Burning: The Untold Story of the 1906 Earthquake and Fires:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Must Read for Anyone Planning Emergency Response or

ServicesBy LightstarA huge amount of research went into this book. Mr. Smith has a wonderful way of taking facts and putting them in a very readable and interesting narrative. Many parts are hard to read because it is a very sad subject but many parts are hard to put down because the details are so interesting. The author gives us fascinating profiles of the people who truly cared for the city and its people and went without rest for days trying to save it but got no recognition or appreciation for their efforts. He also looks at the corruption and self-interests that victimized those who were already in a dire situation. This should serve as a cautionary tale. The book shows that if the public is allowed to contribute and work together in rescue efforts disasters may be averted. The courage the people who stayed and pitched in showed is often ignored in the histories that are written of that time. The author tells the story of the San Francisco Earthquake in 1906 that should have been a manageable disaster but through human ego and ignorance turned into an uncontrollable fire that devastated the city. And the continued cover-up by the public officials have laid the groundwork for an even bigger disaster in the future. I have read many books about the earthquake but I believe this was the most compelling and interesting of the lot. I appreciated the fact that he ended the book with a contrast and assessment of the readiness of today's San Francisco to handle another such disaster. His conclusion should frighten anyone who lives there. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Marvelous research and writing

By Christopher Moss
The author tells the story of the huge and devastating fire that followed the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco in the style sometimes referred to as "creative nonfiction". As a result the book is a delight to read, full of dramatizations of authentic events and side commentary of a most relevant type. My husband and I liked it so much we kept reading past our usual bedtime just to learn more about the events and such great characters, real people, such as Lt. Frederick Freeman. The author's knowledge of fire departments did nothing but inform the book further. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Not your usual '06 story

By Doug_SJ
This is not a book about the earthquake. While the quake is discussed, it is referenced as the trigger event for the book that follows. It is about the fire and the sometimes heroic efforts of those involved. Have read several books about the quake and the stories have tended to focus on the cataclysmic shake and mention there was a huge fire made worse by later decisions. This book dives deep. Would be a stupendous reference for a walking tour of the city. Some of what is related may be lost on those who have never been to San Francisco and walked the hills, it is still a great book.

Killing hundreds and leaving a city in ruins, the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 stands as one of the greatest natural disasters in American history. But the aftermath of the quake—the fires that raged across the city for days and claimed the lives of thousands more—was an all too human disaster whose story has remained largely untold. Until now. Employing the same vivid prose and storytelling skill that made his *Report from Ground Zero* a national bestseller, Dennis Smith reconstructs those harrowing days from the perspective of the people who lived through them. Smith draws on hundreds of individual accounts and official documents to unearth the true story of the fires—from the corrupt officials who left the city woefully unprepared for disaster, to the militia officers who enforced martial law with deadly force, to the individual heroes who battled the blaze and saved untold lives. *San Francisco Is Burning* is a thrilling disaster tale that brings a lost chapter of history back to riveting life.

From Publishers Weekly
Firefighter turned author Smith (*Report from Ground Zero*) performs an exhausting autopsy on the temblor and subsequent fire that devastated San Francisco 100 years ago. With 92 chapters, the narrative effect is one of a nervous cameraman trying to take in everything (the chapter on Enrico Caruso jumping from his bed at the Palace Hotel is one paragraph long) and managing to make a distant event seem even more remote. The author takes aim at the procedures of the official response and the chain of command, considers whether the army did more than the navy and presents "what-if" scenarios that will appeal most to students of how to manage a natural disaster. An "especially cruel irony" was the fact that saloons were ordered closed on the day of the fire, yet there, in bottles, jugs and kegs, "was undoubtedly enough wine to extinguish the early fires." Smith too often pauses to backfill the careers and family histories of various personalities or discuss the tectonics of earthquakes. His firefighter's-eye-view of the disaster will have a tough time competing with Simon Winchester's terrific *A Crack in the Edge of the World: America and the Great California Earthquake of 1906*, due out in October. (Sept. 26) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "An American epic, a masterwork.... Smith teaches so much we need to know. Simultaneously his literary skills mesmerize us. Best of all he inspires." ---Thomas Fleming, author of *The Illusion of Victory: America in World War I* From the Back Cover "Riveting." The Washington Post "So riveting it is enraging [Smith's] message is the one that matters most." San Francisco Chronicle "A finely woven human story of tragedy, death, heroism and blunder. This book is an eye-opener in many ways, and a good read, to boot." The Associated Press