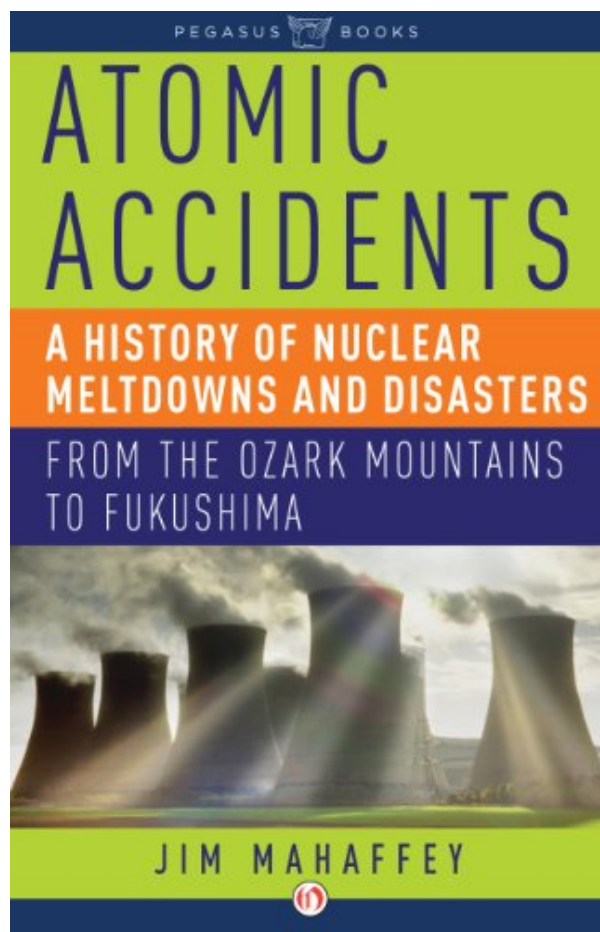


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NUCLEAR MELTDOWNS AND DISASTERS:
FROM THE OZARK MOUNTAINS TO
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From Booklist

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About the Author

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Mahaffey, a long-time advocate of continued nuclear research and nuclear energy, looks at each incident in turn and analyzes what happened and why, often discovering where scientists went wrong when analyzing past meltdowns.

Every incident has led to new facets in understanding about the mighty atom—and Mahaffey puts forth what the future should be for this final frontier of science that still holds so much promise.

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- Format: Kindle eBook

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Most helpful customer reviews

36 of 38 people found the following review helpful.

Exciting, entertaining and educational review of the development of nuclear power

By C. E. J. MD

This book, a gift from its author, was much more interesting than I expected it to be. It's a fascinating account of the many things that have gone wrong in our quest for development of atomic power. Written in an entertaining and often humorous style, it reveals what we have learned from our mistakes, only to find new mistakes to make. Unexpectedly exciting, but perhaps unavoidably including much technical detail, one is left with a great appreciation of the pioneers of nuclear energy. We are also left with a cautious optimism for the future of nuclear power. I was very surprised that much of this information is public knowledge. Also, one is left with a profound respect for neutrons.

27 of 28 people found the following review helpful.

An Amazing Feat! Gripping!

By George Poirier

One would think that a book detailing the history of nuclear/atomic accidents, with lots of technical detail, would likely be of interest only to the most devoted nuclear/reactor physicists/engineers. Not so in this case! Certainly there are a lot technical descriptions of how reactors and other apparatus are made and how they operate, as well as play-by-play descriptions of how the various accidents occurred and their aftermaths. The descriptions are clear, most specialized terms are explained and the events leading to the various disasters are told in a most captivating way. But in my view, what makes this book so special is the author's writing style, particularly his careful choice of words when describing the events that transpired: wittiness, tongue-in-cheek narratives, subtle sarcasm, etc. I often found myself laughing out loud at the way the author presents some of his material. Because of all of this, at least in part, I believe that this book can be enjoyed by a fairly broad readership.

One might expect that a tome like such as this one would contain a number of mistakes – editorial or

otherwise. I must admit that I found very few. Other than a couple of misprints, i.e., on page 12, radium-266 should be radium 226 and on page 283, cesium-167 should be cesium-137, I did find one error of greater significance which may of interest to nit-pickers like me: footnote 82 at the bottom of page 99 is incorrect. In particular, the roentgen (R) and the rem are entirely different quantities. Very briefly, the roentgen applies only to X-ray and gamma-ray photons and is defined in terms of the ionization of air, i.e., the absolute value of the total charge of the ions of one sign produced per unit mass of air. Roentgens can be converted to rads (or rems) to human tissue using appropriate conversion factors whose values depend on the energy of the incident photons.

Overall, I believe that this book is a major contribution to the literature that describes various aspects of the nuclear field, which has often been perceived by the general public as being disturbing and obscure, in understandable, relatively jargon-free, language. It puts various nuclear accidents into perspective and makes the structure and operation of several nuclear devices more widely accessible.

19 of 21 people found the following review helpful.

Crash Course in Nuclear History & Dynamics

By Mallory Heart Reviews

I totally loved this book, which sounds odd considering the topic; but it is so educational, so diligently researched, and well-written that it is actually entertaining. As a child of the Korean Conflict and Cold War, anything atomic has always been a hot topic for me. The author's research has been exceptionally deep and wide-ranging, and I feel as if I've just finished a year's university course in the topic; that's how much I've learned.

I reviewed an ARC provided by the publisher via NetGalley.com

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