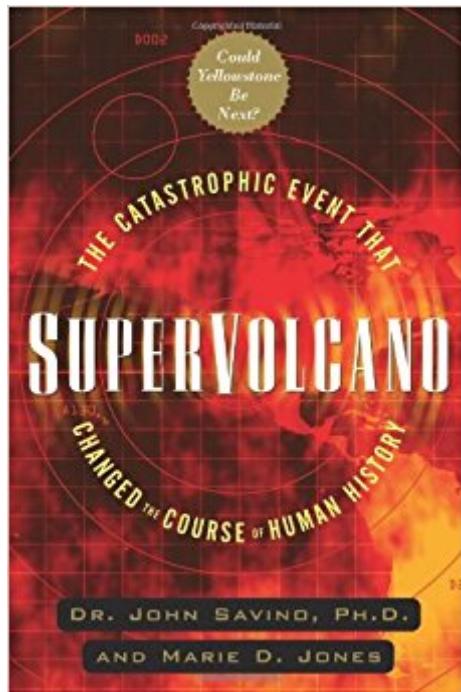


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# Supervolcano



## Synopsis

Approximately 75,000 years ago, an event occurred that almost wiped out human life. According to a stunning new theory, this singular event may also have completely altered the genetic evolution of humankind. It was an event that released 3,000 times the energy of Mt. St. Helens. The new book, *Supervolcano*, explores this eruption of the Toba supervolcano in Sumatra, Indonesia, its far-reaching impact, and the strong possibility of another supervolcano eruption in our lifetime. Supervolcanoes are considered one of the five biggest threats to humankind, along with asteroids, nuclear war, disease, and global warming. But of those, supervolcanoes are the only threat that cannot be prevented. And their effects are catastrophic. So devastating was the Toba eruption and the sheer amount of ash it released into the atmosphere, it altered the global climate for years, creating a mini Ice Age that obliterated massive amounts of plant, animal, and human life. A new theory claims this earth-shattering event also caused a severe "population bottleneck" in humans, leading to the eventual extinction of all other branches of our species with the exception of one...the branch that survived Toba and became modern humans. *Supervolcano* will explore: -What supervolcanos are, where they are found, and why they are so deadly to life on earth. -Toba, the largest of the known supervolcanoes in the past 27 million years, and how its catastrophic environmental aftermath brought humanity to the brink of extinction. -How genetic, geological, and computer studies show that each human today is related to a survivor of Toba. -How we can prepare for the next supervolcano, which many earth scientists believe could be right here in our own backyard--Yellowstone National Park. And why they believe an eruption at Yellowstone could be as catastrophic for humanity as Toba.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"When a supervolcano goes off...it produces energy equivalent to an impact with a comet or asteroid. You can try diverting an asteroid, but there is nothing at all you can do about a supervolcano."--Dr. Ted Nield, Geological Society of London

Dr. John Savino, Ph.D. is a geophysicist with a background in earthquakes and volcanoes. He has assisted the Department of Energy (DOE) in reviewing research conducted by earth scientists at several national laboratories and universities. Dr. Savino has also participated in the DOE's Public Outreach Program, delivering presentations on earthquakes and volcanoes. He has presented papers at numerous scientific conferences and published articles in refereed journals, technical reports, and abstracts in conference and meeting programs. He lives in Big Bear Lake, California. Marie D. Jones is the author of PSience: How New Discoveries in Quantum Physics and New Science May Explain the Existence of Paranormal Phenomena. She lives in San Marcos, California.

As one viewer has put it, who teaches, that this is poorly written. I'm going to have to disagree. As a person who has spent 30+ years as a 1st responder; this is enlightening and eye opening content. Maybe some of the razzle-dazzle at the chapter beginnings was a bit much, but comas and grammar were inconsequential. This book, for me helps further my interest and enlightenment in earth science. Of late, I have come to accept that when I grow up, I would like to be a geologist and study these earthly aberrations. Not every body is a college professor with a narrow mind. This book to me, feeds the hunger to learn more about this study. I started my interest with learning early of a dormant/extinct volcano in the Poconos and reading, Simon Winchester's, "Krakatoa" and then somewhere in time, 2 books on Mt Pele'e, one was "LaCatastrophe", by Alwyn Scarth. By then I was hooked on the interest of this subject and have, over time read a number of books on volcanology and will continue to expand my knowledge. I come away with something new or clearer with ea. read. If you read "Why Geology Matters", by Doug MacDougall and the 1st edit. of "Volcanos", by Peter Francis, and "Volcanos in Human History", Jelle Zellinga de Boer, Donald T. Sanders, & Robt. D. Ballard, some subjects maybe difficult to grasp, as how they are written. But as you read different authors, one will put it in more palatable grammatical structure that eases digestion/comprehension. Some concepts are hard to grasp and get your head around to begin

with. This gives a broad over lay of a volcano of Toba s' class; it's history, geology as well as other sites, and a basic intro to plate tectonics, the bottleneck evolution genetic factor, and a hypothetical example of this type of catastrophe in present day playing out, which is not a pretty picture. The exceptions I noted out right, were the double reference to "Katrina" as a class "3" event in the later chapters of the book, instead of "5", as it has been widely reported; and the reproductions were not of the high quality, some blurred as if they were pulled off a copy machine too fast. I would have liked more information about Toba itself. The fact is that one of these IS going to go off some time. and God forbid that we see it, but if it does, what would you do? And something like this WILL affect all living things. Hopefully, I will be able to digest my recent copy of "Dynamic Earth" and "Structural Geology" soon.

A lot of interesting information, a lot of conjecture. There were some facts I was unaware of, but also a lot of psycho-babble. How the effects of the Toba eruption would effect the psychology of survivors, and be transmitted to people today by 'cellular memory'. No proof to back that up. It's ok to present theories in a nonfiction book, but too many theories in one book tend to make it all seem wildly improbable. Toba did erupt, and there does seem to be proof of a subsequent evolutionary bottleneck, but there was too much....fluff, for lack of a better word, to make this book into something I could take as fact. I like to use nonfiction as reference books, because I am interested in everything. This book does not meet my criteria. Results: if you want to know all about supervolcanoes, read a different book.

When I saw this book advertised here on , it seemed like the kind of book I enjoy reading, so I ordered a copy. At first glance, this book seems a little lightweight. It is full of pictures, diagrams and scary-looking fonts of the type that tend to fill the pages of speculative books. In addition, although the author is a geophysicist with a Ph.D. he seems to refer to more articles in popular publications such as USA Today and Readers' Digest and abstracts of papers than you would expect of an expert in the field. These limitations aside, the book is actually an interesting read and seems to reflect pretty solid science in most cases. It includes an interesting history of volcanoes and supervolcanoes and the impacts they have had as well as special coverage of the main topic of the book, the Toba supervolcano that created an evolutionary bottleneck about 70,000 years ago. There are interesting references to some of the latest discoveries and developments in a number of fields and fairly even-handed coverage of topics that are still somewhat controversial such as the cause of prior mass extinctions and the so-called KT impact event. There is only one chapter that is

very strange. In chapter 8, the author delves into the highly speculative idea of cellular memory, or the suggestion that memories of traumatic events can be stored at the cellular level outside of the brain and thus be passed on. Beside the fact that this is a very controversial area of inquiry, he fails to adequately explain why he even brings up the topic. In addition to the physical effects of a supervolcanic eruption, the author seems to be highly interested in the psychological effects. The book ends with a fictional scenario for an eruption of the Long Valley Caldera after a large earthquake in southern California, and a discussion of what preparations can and should be made in anticipation of any volcanic eruption. Overall, the threat of a supervolcano eruption seems very small, and in that sense, the book seems to be tapping into currently popular doomsday scenarios. However, the parts of the book that deal with basic background information and the historical precedents are interesting and fairly well-written. They are compact and easy to read.

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