

# SOCIOLOGY OF DISASTER

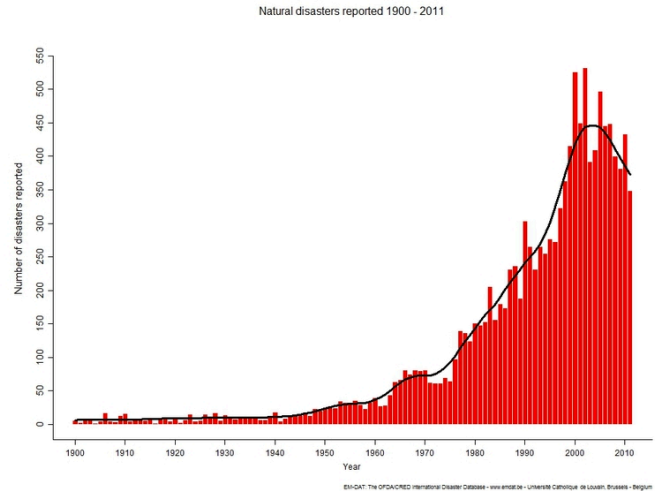
Michelle A. Meyer, PhD

Spring 2016 – Lecture: Thursdays 1:30-4:20

Office: Stubbs 18 (Northeast corner of basement) – Office Hours: Thursdays 8-11 am

## DESCRIPTION

Disasters are on the rise. Both climate change, increasing complex technologies, growing population, and increasing populations in risky areas means that more and more people and property will be affected by disasters over the coming decades. Disasters are inherently social from how we define them, determine which risks to take or mitigate, place ourselves in danger, or determine how to respond and rebuild. Further, disasters are inherently sociological because inequality is at the heart of determining who and what is at most risk of property loss, injury, and death. This course will cover the fundamentals of sociological and social science research on disasters. We begin with history of the field, identify specific terms and understanding of emergency management procedures, and then turn to current theorizing of social vulnerability to disaster and individual and community resilience.



We have three manifest objectives and corresponding tasks for the course:

1. Develop a general understanding of important concepts and research results in sociology of disaster.
  - a. Task: Collectively create a database of research methods, limitations, and concerns:  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/146vLnV8npRA6L4D1McNfsiXisrY4Uh174Shsfz1v0M/edit?usp=sharing>
2. Develop understanding of how key sociological concepts are used to understand disasters.
  - a. Task: Discuss readings with fellow sociologists during class time.
3. Learn to apply disaster concepts through data analysis.
  - a. Task: Write a research paper for publication with Dr. Meyer using data provided.

We have two latent objectives of the course.

1. Build skills at leading discussion and teaching.
2. Build your CVs with journal quality final paper and potential publication following the course.

## EVALUATION

### Weekly abstracts and discussion participation (30%)

- A. Active participation in discussion is a main method of learning in this class. Please arrive having completed the reading and be prepared to discuss with your colleagues the issues and ideas presented that week. Each student is required to speak up at least once per class period with a substantive comment. This will be scored as pass (spoke up) or fail (did not speak).
  - a. Unless otherwise discussed with Dr. Meyer, only 2 excused absences are allowed.
- B. Complete summary paper for the required readings for the week. Only discussion leaders are required to read the supplementary readings (though everyone is welcome to read them!). The summary will include: 1) full citations, 2) description of the research questions/issues of the weeks readings, 3) main findings, 4) one question for discussion. These are NOT opinion pieces, but summaries/integration of the readings. Upload directly into discussion post page. But be sure to keep a copy for yourself.
  - a. Due to Moodle on Wednesdays at 11:59 PM. No late summaries will be accepted.
  - b. You can miss 4 weeks of summaries throughout the semester (first week is exempt from abstracts). Thus, you will complete 10 weeks. Summaries will be graded as: above average (A), average (B), or below average (C).

### Discussion leading (30%)

- A. This class is 2/3 discussion and 1/3 lecture. Each week, students will lead discussion for the first 1.5-2 hours of the class. Dr. Meyer will close the class with main points and integrate material across the various topics.
- B. Depending on course enrollment, each student will lead class 1-2 times throughout the semester. (Hint, asking the questions from the summaries in class is recommended). Your ability to manage discussion, cover all the materials, cover the main points of the week, and get participation from your colleagues will be graded as above average (A), average (B), or below average (C) and count for 1/3 of your discussion leading grade.

- C. You will complete three things to lead class:
  - a. Read all the readings for the week, both required and supplementary.
  - b. Prepare abstracts on each of the supplementary readings for the week, and a regular summary for the required readings. Post your abstracts and summary to Moodle by Thursdays at 11:00 AM so others can read them before class. Abstracts and summaries will be graded as normal and constitute 1/3 of the discussion leading grade. Also, fill in the shareable google sheet on research methods for your week's readings.
  - c. Prepare a list of one discussion question per required reading, and three overarching questions for the topic of the week, and one policy/practioner-related question (as in what do these readings imply for society). Post these questions separate from the abstracts/summary to Moodle by Thursdays at 11:00 AM so others can prepare for class discussion.
    - i. Questions should require thoughtful consideration of the readings, be targeted at the main points of the readings, and avoid yes/no responses. Each question will be graded as above average (A), average (B), below average (C) and then averaged overall. Questions count for 1/3 of discussion leading grade.

### Final project (40%)

- A. The class will conclude with a journal quality paper. Dr. Meyer will provide data sets for use including a signed confidentiality form for the data. You will select a dataset and research question, complete the analysis, and then develop a full paper. Following the end of the semester, Dr. Meyer will work individually with each student to revise and then submit the paper as co-authors to a journal. This final project is meant to help you to build your CV with a publication and co-author with a professor. Even if not directly related to your research interests, all publications are useful! But you DO NOT have to publish for a grade. The final paper for the grade will be a well-written draft, and if you choose, you and Dr. Meyer will pursue publication together after the course completes.
- B. Papers can be submitted to the Natural Hazard Annual Workshop student paper competition in late April, or other competitions or conferences, upon approval by Dr. Meyer.
- C. Potential data and topics:
  - a. Content analysis of newspaper articles surrounding six disasters in Texas: Hurricane Ike, Hurricane Dolly, Bastrop Fires, Bear Creek Fires, West Fertilizer Plant Explosion, and Hood County Tornado. (qualitative)
    - i. This could be 2-3 papers depending on the themes developed.
  - b. Content analysis of government meeting minutes surrounding those six disasters. (qualitative)
  - c. Content analysis of social media surrounding those six disasters. (qualitative)
  - d. Analysis of interviews with organizational representatives in Florida pre-disaster. (qualitative)
  - e. Analysis of social capital, collective efficacy, and risk perception based on survey data from coastal residents. (quantitative)
  - f. Analysis of age and social capital in disasters based on survey data from coastal residents. (quantitative)
  - g. Review article of disaster research methods that updates Norris (2006) below.
  - h. Other ideas are welcome and we can discuss options. Must involve data analysis.

**TEXTS** Full citations are in reference section.

Overview books that we will read chapter by chapter:

1. Peacock, Morrow and Gladwin (1997): Get it directly from TAMU  
[https://secure.touchnet.com/C21490\\_ustores/web/product\\_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=1654](https://secure.touchnet.com/C21490_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=1654)

Full monographs, selected because of their in-depth research on important sociological issues of disaster. They are also easy/quick reads.

2. Erikson (1976)
3. Klinenberg (2002)
4. Tierney (2014)
5. Esnard and Sapat (2014)
6. Fothergill and Peek (2015)

Articles on Moodle listed below by week.

## TIMELINE

Note: This syllabus and class is meant to give a breadth of information on disaster research and provide a solid list of references for future use. Thus, we have many readings. It is expected that everyone will be skimming and reading for main points. DO NOT attempt to read each item in detail. I attempted to average the readings to about 20 pages or so a day. When in doubt or trying to triage, read from the books first.

### ***Week 1, 1-14-16 - What is Disaster? What the heck is this class about? Leader: Michelle***

*Required:* Quarantelli (1986), Tierney (2007), Norris et al. (2002); Fritz (1961)

### ***Week 2, 1-21-16 - History of the Field. Where did we come from, and are we sociologists? Leader: Michelle***

*Required:* Kreps (1984); Quarantelli and Dynes (1977), Chapters 1-3 of Peacock et al.; Chapters 1-2 of Fischer (2008); Chapter 1 in Tierney, Lindell and Perry (2001)

*Supplementary:* Stallings (2002); Quarantelli (2005); Kreps and Bosworth (1993)

### ***Week 3, 1-28-16 - Emergency Management Basics. Going round the disaster cycle. Part 1, overview, mitigation, preparedness, and communication Leader: \_\_\_\_\_***

*Required:* Stafford Act (1988); Chapters 1 and 3 of National Research Council (2006); Fitzpatrick and Mileti (1991); Lindell and Perry (2012); Slovic, Fischhoff and Lichtenstein (1982); Chapter 2 in Tierney, Lindell and Perry (2001)

*Supplementary:* Whole Community Approach (FEMA 2011); Peek and Sutton (2003); Finucane et al. (2000);

*Extra if you are interested (no need to read for class):* Baker (1991); Perry and Lindell (2003); Lindell, Prater and Peacock (2007); Perry (2004)

ASSIGNMENT: We will select final project topics and data this week.

### ***Week 4, 2-4-16 - Emergency Management Basics. Getting dizzy around the disaster cycle. Part 2, response, recovery.***

***Leader: \_\_\_\_\_***

*Required:* Chapters 4, 5, 6 in Peacock et al.; Abramson et al. (2010); Bolin and Stanford (1991); Smith and Wenger (2006); Pg 106-120 in Tierney, Lindell and Perry (2001)

*Supplementary:* National Disaster Recovery Framework (FEMA 2010); Disaster Housing (FEMA 2009); Rubin (2009)

*Extra if interested (no need to read for class):* Kendra and Wachtendorf (2003); Adam (2004); Brown, Milke and Seville (2011)

### ***Week 5, 2-11-16 - Social Vulnerability. A new paradigm from the heart of sociology and anthropology. Leader: \_\_\_\_\_***

*Required:* Chapters 1, 9 of Bankoff, Frerks and Hilhorst (2004) ; Chapters 1-2 of (Thomas et al. 2013); Adger (2006); Cutter, Boruff and Shirley (2003); Van Zandt et al. (2012)

*Supplementary:* Phillips and Morrow (2007); Finch, Emrich and Cutter (2010); Rivera and Miller (2007) Chapters 10 and 13 of Bankoff et al. (2004)

ASSIGNMENT: Completed preliminary review of data and developed work plan and timeline for analysis including weekly tasks. Have meeting with Michelle to review.

### ***Week 6, 2-18-16 - Social Vulnerability: Race, Ethnicity, and Income Leader: \_\_\_\_\_***

*Required:* Chapters 9-11 of Peacock et al.; Chapters 10 of *Social Vulnerability to Disasters*; Fothergill, Maestas and Darlington (1999); Fothergill and Peek (2004)

*Supplementary:* Elliott and Pais (2006)

*Extra if interested (not required for class):* Browne (2015); Messias, Barrington and Lacy (2012)

### ***Week 7, 2-25-16 - Social Vulnerability: Gender Leader: \_\_\_\_\_***

*Required:* Enarson (1998); Enarson, Fothergill and Peek (2007), Fothergill (1999); Chapter 7 of Peacock et al.

*Supplementary:* Anastario, Shehab and Lawry (2009); Anderson and Manuel (1994)

*If interested (not required for class):* Fothergill (2004)

### ***Week 8, 3-3-16 - Social Vulnerability: Family Leader: \_\_\_\_\_***

*Required:* Fothergill and Peek (2015); Chapter 8 of Peacock et al.; Drabek and Boggs (1968)

*Supplementary:* Tobin-Gurley, Peek and Loomis (2010); Bolin (1976)

*If Interested (not required for class):* Badakhsh, Harville and Banerjee (2010);

### ***Week 9, 3-10-16 - Social Vulnerability: Ability and Age Leader: \_\_\_\_\_***

*Required:* Klinenberg (2002), Stough et al. (2010), Chapter 8 of *Social Vulnerability to Disasters*

*Supplementary:* Ngo (2001); Bolin and Klenow (1983); Chapter 7, 9 of *Social Vulnerability to Disasters*

**Week 10, 3-17-16 - Community Collective Action and Social Capital: Are we all in this together? Leader:**\_\_\_\_\_

*Required:* Adger (2003); Aldrich (2011); Aldrich and Meyer (2015); Dynes (2006);

*Supplementary:* Benight (2004); Lowe and Fothergill Chapter in *Beyond September 11<sup>th</sup>* (2003)

*If interested (not required for class):* Aldrich (2012); Elliott, Haney and Sams-Abiodun (2010)

## **SPRING BREAK**

**Week 11, 3-31-16 - Community Corrosion and Technological Disaster: We are not all in this together. Leader:**\_\_\_\_\_

*Required:* Erikson (1976), Gill and Picou (1998); Chapter 12 of *Social Vulnerability to Disasters*

*Supplementary:* Freudenburg (1997); Gunter, Aronoff and Joel (1999); Ritchie and Gill (2007); Picou and Brunnsma (2009); Peek Chapter in *Beyond September 11<sup>th</sup>* (2003);

**Week 12, 4-7-16 - Community Institutional Processes: Organizations and Media Leader:**\_\_\_\_\_

*Required:* Sutton Chapter in *Beyond September 11<sup>th</sup>* (2003); Chapter 3 of Fischer (2008); Aldrich (2010); Alexander (2010); Tierney, Bevc and Kuligowski (2006)

*Supplementary:* Ben-Porath and Shaker (2010); Brudney and Gazley (2009); Calloway (2010); Fothergill (2003); Rodrigue Chapter in *Beyond September 11<sup>th</sup>* (2003)

**Week 13, 4-14-16 - International Focus: What we can learn and haven't learned from others Leader: Michelle**

*Required:* Wisner (2001); Chapters 5-6 of Dunlap and Brulle (2015); Norris (2006); Petryna (2004); Ariyabandu (2006)

*Supplementary:* Handouts from Sri Lanka, Sweden, Taiwan

ASSIGNMENT: Completed data analysis, bring tables or discussion of results to class for comments, and schedule separate meeting with Michelle to discuss.

**Week 14, 4-21-16 - Macro Processes, Capitalism, Displacement, and Governance Leader:**\_\_\_\_\_

*Required:* Esnard and Sapat (2014);

*Supplementary:* Chapter 4 of Freudenburg et al. (2009); Pais and Elliott (2008); Cross (2001)

**Week 15, 4-28-16 - Resilience and the future of disaster research and management Leader:**\_\_\_\_\_

*Required:* Tierney (2014); Chapter 12 of Peacock et al.

*Supplementary:* Adger et al. (2005); Norris et al. (2008); Bruneau et al. (2003); Cutter et al. (2008)

*If interested (not required for class):* Bakillah, Li and Liang (2015); Li and Sakamoto (2015)

**Finals Week (date and location TBD) May 2-7, 2016**

ASSIGNMENT: Paper due. Informal mini-presentations of final papers.

## **EXTERNAL LINKS AND USEFUL INFORMATION:**

Natural Hazards Center UC-Boulder (has online databases, funding, newsletters): <http://www.colorado.edu/hazards/>

NVOAD (2013)

Hurricane Katrina Bibliography: [http://wsnet.colostate.edu/CWIS584/Lori\\_Peek/Data/Sites/1/1-research/publicationpdfs/katrinabibliography.pdf](http://wsnet.colostate.edu/CWIS584/Lori_Peek/Data/Sites/1/1-research/publicationpdfs/katrinabibliography.pdf)

Coastal Atlas: <https://coastalatlas.arch.tamu.edu/>

Social Vulnerability: <http://webra.cas.sc.edu/hvri/products/sovi.aspx>

## **THINGS WE MISS OR ONLY SCRATCH THE SURFACE**

Education, Climate Change, Public Health, Policy, Planning, PTSD, Economics and Businesses, Crime, Music, Art, Beauty, Volunteers/volunteering, Risk and Risk perception, Animals

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