

DOWNLOAD PDF DISASTERS: WHY SOME ARE BIGGER NEWS THAN OTHERS

Chapter 1 : Flood Hazards, Prediction, & Mitigation

What are the factors that turn some natural disasters into human catastrophes? Why some natural disasters are more deadly than others one of the aftershocks will be bigger than the.

Throughout the last century flooding has been one of the most costly disasters in terms of both property damage and human casualties. Army Corps of Engineers estimates the total economic loss at between 15 and 20 billion dollars. Primary Effects Again, the primary effects of floods are those due to direct contact with the flood waters. As seen in the video last lecture, water velocities tend to be high in floods. As discharge increases velocity increases. With higher velocities, streams are able to transport larger particles as suspended load. Such large particles include not only rocks and sediment, but, during a flood, could include such large objects as automobiles, houses and bridges. Massive amounts of erosion can be accomplished by flood waters. Such erosion can undermine bridge structures, levees, and buildings causing their collapse. Water entering human built structures cause water damage. Even with minor flooding of homes, furniture is ruined, floors and walls are damaged, and anything that comes in contact with the water is likely to be damaged or lost. Flooding of automobiles usually results in damage that cannot easily be repaired. The high velocity of flood waters allows the water to carry more sediment as suspended load. When the flood waters retreat, velocity is generally much lower and sediment is deposited. After retreat of the floodwaters everything is usually covered with a thick layer of stream deposited mud, including the interior of buildings. Flooding of farmland usually results in crop loss. Livestock, pets, and other animals are often carried away and drown. Humans that get caught in the high velocity flood waters are often drowned by the water. Floodwaters can concentrate garbage, debris, and toxic pollutants that can cause the secondary effects of health hazards. Secondary and Tertiary Effects Remember that secondary effects are those that occur because of the primary effects and tertiary effects are the long term changes that take place. Among the secondary effects of a flood are: Disruption of services - Drinking water supplies may become polluted, especially if sewerage treatment plants are flooded. This may result in disease and other health effects, especially in under developed countries. Gas and electrical service may be disrupted. Transportation systems may be disrupted, resulting in shortages of food and clean-up supplies. In under developed countries food shortages often lead to starvation. Long - term effects tertiary effects - Location of river channels may change as the result of flooding, new channels develop, leaving the old channels dry. Sediment deposited by flooding may destroy farm land although silt deposited by floodwaters could also help to increase agricultural productivity. Jobs may be lost due to the disruption of services, destruction of business, etc. Insurance rates may increase. Corruption may result from misuse of relief funds. Destruction of wildlife habitat. Predicting River Flooding Floods can be such devastating disasters that anyone can be affected at almost anytime. As we have seen, when water falls on the surface of the Earth, it has to go somewhere. In order to reduce the risk due to floods, three main approaches are taken to flood prediction. Statistical studies can be undertaken to attempt to determine the probability and frequency of high discharges of streams that cause flooding. And, since the main causes of flooding are abnormal amounts of rainfall and sudden thawing of snow or ice, storms and snow levels can be monitored to provide short-term flood prediction. Frequency of Flooding In your homework exercise you will see how flood frequencies can be determined for any given stream if data is available for discharge of the stream over an extended period of time. Such data allows statistical analysis to determine how often a given discharge or stage of a river is expected. From this analysis a recurrence interval can be determined and a probability calculated for the likelihood of a given discharge in the stream for any year. The data needed to perform this analysis are the yearly maximum discharge of a stream from one gaging station over a long enough period of time. In order to determine the recurrence interval, the yearly discharge values are first ranked. The number of years of record, n , and the rank for each peak discharge are then used to calculate recurrence interval, R by the following equation, called the Weibull equation: The graph usually plots recurrence interval on a logarithmic scale. A

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best-fit line is then drawn through the data points. This would be called the year flood. For the data on the Red River, above, the discharge associated with the year flood is about 12, cubic feet per second. Similarly the discharge associated with a flood with a recurrence interval of 50 years the year flood would have a discharge of about 21, cubic feet per second. The year flood would have a discharge of about 25, cubic feet per second. Also note that a flood that reached a similar stage occurred on the Red River in Fargo in the year , only years before. Does this make the statistical analysis unreliable? The answer is no. As we shall see, it is possible to have two year floods occurring years apart, 50 years apart, or even 2 in the same year. This would say that in any given year, the probability that a flood with a discharge equal to or greater than that of a 10 year flood would be 0. Note that such probabilities are the same for every year. You can think of this in the same way you would think about rolling dice. The probability on any roll that you will end up with a six, rolling only on die, is 1 in 6 or Each time you roll that one die the probability is the same, although you know that it is possible to roll two or three sixes in a row. Thus, it is important to remember that even though a year flood occurred in Fargo in and , there is still a 0. The probability of a certain-size flood occurring during any period can be calculated using the following equation: We can use this equation to calculate how the probabilities change over time. See below The probability of a year flood occurring in 30 years the lifetime of the average home mortgage is Flood Hazard Mapping Food hazard mapping is used to determine the areas susceptible to flooding when discharge of a stream exceeds the bank-full stage. Using historical data on river stages and discharge of previous floods, along with topographic data, maps can be constructed to show areas expected to be covered with floodwaters for various discharges or stages. In constructing such maps aerial photographs and satellite images of prior floods are studied to help to determine the areas that would be covered. The illustration above shows a possible hazard map based on estimated discharges or river stages for a hypothetical year flood, year flood, and year flood. In addition, scale models are often constructed of areas prone to flooding. Such models only work if they are kept up to date with current flood prevention structures and drainage modifications. Monitoring the Progress of Storms If factors such as amount of rainfall, degree of ground saturation, degree of permeable soil, and amount of vegetation can be determined, then these can be correlated to give short-term prediction, in this case called a forecast, of possible floods. If a forecast is issued, then a flood warning can be communicated to warn the public about the possible extent of the flood, and to give people time to move out of the area. Such forecasts are very useful for flooding that has a long lag time between the storm and the peak discharge. Thus, in some areas known to be susceptible to flash floods, a flash flood warning is often issued any time heavy rainfall is expected because there is always the chance of a flash food accompanying heavy rainfall. In conjunction with the National Weather Service, various agencies in the U. For example - [http:](http://) Sometimes humans attempt to modify drainage systems to prevent flooding, but sometimes these efforts have adverse effects and actually help to cause flooding in other areas. Any modification of the landscape has the potential to cause changes in the drainage system, and such changes can have severe consequences. Channel Modifications Humans often decide that a stream should flow along a specified path for such reasons as flood control, enhancement of drainage, control of erosion, increasing access to the floodplain for development, or improvement of the appearance of the channel. Such channel modifications involve measures such as the straightening the channel, deepening or widening the channel, clearing vegetation from the banks, or lining the channel with concrete. These modifications are referred to as channelization. In order to control floods, channel modification should involve increasing the channel cross-sectional area, so that higher discharge will not increase the stage of the river. Straighter channels also allow higher velocity flow and, enable the stream to drain faster when discharge increases. Lining the channel with concrete provides a smoother surface over which the water can flow, thereby reducing friction and also increasing the velocity of the stream. While channelization for flood control may reduce the incidence of flooding in the channelized area, it often results in more severe flooding both upstream and downstream from the channelized area. Channelization can also interfere with the natural habitat of the stream system and decrease the aesthetic value of the stream. Channelization, or any other modification of a stream system,

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changes the validity of all historic data collected over the years on that stream. During flooding of the Mississippi River in and water levels rose to higher levels than expected from the statistical data, because modification of the stream had made the data invalid. The flood caused damage and rose to levels that might be expected from a year flood, even though discharge was only at a level predicted for a year flood. Thus, it appears that modifications of the drainage system had an adverse effect. Effects of Development on Flood Hazard Whenever humans modify the landscape in any way changes are to be expected in the way water drains from the land. Unless careful consideration is given to the possible drainage consequences, such landscape modifications can result in higher incidence of flooding. Development on floodplains should therefore be undertaken only with great care. Existing developments that have enhanced flooding problems are often costly to fix. Among the factors that enhance the flood potential are: But, channelization is also undertaken to allow development on the floodplain. If the channelization results in decreasing the cross-sectional area of the stream, as in the example above, then the same discharge that may not have produced flooding prior to channelization, may overflow the banks and cause extensive flooding after channelization. Subsidence - As will be discussed in a later lecture, subsidence often results in developed areas due to compaction of the sediment, both due to the increasing weight of structures and hydrocompaction associated with the lowering of the water table. Any time the elevation of an area is lowered, it becomes subject to collection of more water, and in severe cases, could drastically change the drainage pattern. Storm Sewers - In order to collect run off from streets, parking lots, and buildings, all of which block the infiltration of water into the soil, storm sewers are installed to provide underground drainage of the surface. While this may prevent local flooding of streets, it moves water more rapidly to the major stream systems and thus decreases the lag time and increases the peak discharge of the streams collecting the runoff from the storm sewers.

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Chapter 2 : 10 Major Natural Disasters Predicted In The Near Future - Listverse

The Disasters Emergency Committee, which brings 13 leading UK aid agencies together, has said that its joint Nepal appeal comes second only to the tsunami in the amount given in the first

Share80 Shares 3K Every year brings new hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and other natural disasters to the world. Although some areas are impacted more often by these natural disasters than others, most people fear extreme weather. Scientists that study these natural disasters have been predicting major storms and occurrences for centuries. Within the 21st century, many have made predictions of major natural disasters occurring in the near and distant future. Here are 10 catastrophic natural disasters that, according to scientific evidence, may occur at any minute. The entries are listed from least to most impactful. Concurrently, the US Geological Survey and the Forest Service have recorded that since , the acreage burned by wildfires in the US has tripled from 2. What has led to this dramatic increase in the US wildfire risk? Mickley, a senior research fellow in atmospheric chemistry at SEAS, stated that temperature will be the biggest determiner of future fires. The hotter it is, the more likely it is that a fire will start. With 30,â€”50, wildfires predicted to occur annually, the US might soon be experiencing its own version of Hell on Earth. Peter Hartree This prediction came true within a few weeks of it being made. In August , the Icelandic Meteorological Office increased the risk level for a possible eruption of Baroarbunga, a volcano located in Iceland. The increase was due to hundreds of earthquakes occurring around the site over several days, a good sign of a possible volcanic eruption. Scientists began to predict just what would occur if Baroarbunga erupted. Some said the ice around the volcano would melt, causing flooding. On August 23, , the volcano began erupting underneath the Dyngjajokull glacier. Over the course of the next week, thousands of earthquakes occurred near Baroarbunga and the area surrounding it, and on August 31, its Holuhraun fissure erupted. The Holuhraun fissure erupted for six months , officially ending on February 28, The fissure emitted, on average, enough lava to fill an American football stadium every five minutes. In the end, the volcano produced 1. On April 1, , a magnitude 8. This earthquake created the possibility for an even larger earthquake for Chile in the near future due to the location of the earthquake. The Iquique earthquake originated from a subduction zone where one tectonic plate, the Nazca Plate, is plunging underneath another, the South American Plate. When a tectonic plate moves under another, the faults can come under severe amounts of stress , and any release of tension causes seismic activity, namely earthquakes. It only relieved 33 percent of the tension on the fault, leaving the rest to be relieved in the near future. Masaaki Kimura, a seismologist and emeritus professor of submarine geology at the University of the Ryukyus, is currently predicting that another 9. Occurring on March 11, , the magnitude 9. Kimura has stated that he predicted the Tohoku earthquake four years before it happened, but his prediction and evidence were ignored by the Pacific Science Congress. Kimura believes that these earthquake eyes are the best predictors of where and when a major earthquake will occur. Current earthquake prediction is limited to a few seconds of warning. Kimura believes that the new earthquake will begin in the Izu Islands and will be a magnitude 9. It will cause a tsunami to hit Japan in a very similar fashion to the Tohoku earthquake. Fuji Eruption Japan, â€” When the Tohoku earthquake shifted the landmass of Japan, 20 of the active volcanoes in Japan showed increased seismic activity, leading experts to believe one may erupt any day. Calculations show that Japan should have a major volcanic eruption every 38 years. On the list of 47 active Japanese volcanoes is Mt. In July , a French and Japanese scientific team released a report claiming that Mt. Fuji is among the volcanoes most likely to erupt , causing concern for many Japanese citizens. Fuji is located only kilometers 62 mi from Tokyo. Fuji erupted, the team predicts that it would necessitate the emergency evacuation of , people from Tokyo. The city would most likely be covered in ash. The big questions are: When will it exactly occur, and will Oregon be prepared? This occurrence has been predicted since ; the Commission now states that it will inevitably occur. However, current sea level trends along the East Coast may leave major cities underwater by His study shows that the sea level is increasing 0. This study dovetails with a US Geological Survey study

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done by scientists in Florida that states that the sea level of the East Coast is rising three or four times faster than anywhere else in the world. Coastal areas in the northeastern US are currently considered to be more at-risk due to the major property values and built-up coastlines in places like New York City , which may be flooded by Steven Ward from the University of California Santa Cruz predict that the Cumbre Vieja volcano on the Canary Islands will erupt and create the largest tsunami in recorded history. In their jointly written and released paper on the topic in , Dr. If Cumbre Vieja were ever to erupt again, its left side would turn into a landslide that would cause the biggest tsunami in the history of man. They have deduced that the monstrous wave will travel at kilometers per hour mph , be meters ft tall upon first impact with land, and will reach Florida within nine hours of being created. Ward predict that tsunamis will hit faraway places such as England, Florida, and the Caribbean. Note that this is a worst-case scenario. A more piecemeal landslide would not cause a record-breaking tsunami. Nevertheless, if you are looking at beachside property in the South, you may wish to reconsider. The odds of a magnitude 6. If it were to hit, it would most likely come from the breaking of the San Andreas Fault , spanning the distance in southern California inland from Los Angeles, but there is some speculation as to which fault will be the origin point. No matter where the earthquake comes from, it is predicted to devastate all of California and other parts of the West Coast. The computer predicts that the earthquake will produce shock waves that travel 11, kilometers per hour 7, mph , causing severe damage to major freeways and buildings. Overall, the biggest concern for any major earthquake is fires, due to the amount of dry brush that could turn any small blaze into a raging inferno. The system is currently only able to release an alert 10 seconds prior to the beginning of an earthquake. A solar storm usually contains a solar flare, high levels of UV radiation, energetic particles that destroy the crucial electronic components of satellites, and many CMEs. This lucky miss for Earth may not repeat itself in the near future according to Pete Riley, a scientist at Predictive Science, Inc. After analyzing solar storm records from the past 50 years, his calculations concluded that there is a 12 percent chance of a major solar storm hitting Earth in the next 10 years. If this were to happen, it would potentially interfere with radio, GPS, and satellite communications, affecting the use of millions of electronics around the world. Power grids would also be affected due to power surges caused by the energetic particles, possibly causing major worldwide blackouts similar to the one that occurred in Quebec in However, a catastrophic solar storm may not occur in the near future. That said, major power companies and worldwide first response services are aware of the effects of solar activity and are investing heavily to defend against them. Roxanne and David are people with a healthy fear of natural disasters.

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Chapter 3 : Earthquake Prediction: Earthquakes: Why some natural disasters are more deadly than others

Other natural disasters that have resulted in a major loss of life include: An magnitude earthquake that struck Indonesia on March 28, killing more than 1, people.

Examples given on these forgotten emergencies included: A comparison whereby the Asian tsunami media blitz prompted unprecedented generosity. Follow-ups on natural disaster recovery During the immediate aftermath of the Asian tsunami, much was reported on the aid and generosity from around the world. Many countries offered large sums of money for aid. Yet, almost a year on, there has hardly been anything in the mainstream news broadcasts on the amount actually delivered, rather than initially pledged, or how it has been used. Issues such as the quality of the aid, or the conditions associated with the aid, or what countries may sacrifice when receiving such aid is hardly mentioned, certainly not as prime time news headlines. To be fair, while they may not make headline news, they may still get covered, though in less prime time situations, as the Red Cross also notes: Forgotten disasters are often chronic and diffuse, changing little day by day. Unlikely to qualify as news, such crises may feature as current affairs stories especially on the websites of news organizations. Humanitarian media coverage in the digital age , World Disasters Report , Chapter 6, International Red Cross As the Red Cross added, principles of aid demand that disaster response should build on local capacities and yet they reported examples of where this did not happen e. Sri Lanka receiving air-freighted bottled water. Why is building on local capacities important? It encourages and supports the local economy, especially at a time of disaster. Furthermore, local supplies are cheaper, and do not involve additional costs such as transportation. This is a general issue of aid, even in non-emergency situations, whereby much aid effectiveness is reduced by tying it to purchases from the donor. But just a few headlines on the aid delivery would not only allow the public to see how their governments have responded to their outpouring of generosity, but also allow the public to keep up the pressure, and, without a lot of public having to dig around to find this information. Limited type of coverage context or deeper issues often missing And, while there has been a lot of coverage of some of these disasters in the immediate aftermath and the subsequent relief effort, it is often limited around the factual issues which is important and should not be reduced , with very little deeper context. There are signs that things are changing. Issues generate stories Red Cross adds. The scares and culprits associated with climate change are the stuff of headlines. The media did also report on the failings and successes of the humanitarian agencies and their response in the wake of such monumental catastrophes, the unprecedented large donations that could result, and the often incredibly large number of organizations that would be very, very difficult to coordinate efficiently. The Red Cross report mentioned a number of times in this article was, for example, itself mentioned by some mainstream media outlets. The apparent increase in mainstream reporting on such issues may, however, also be a bit over-simplistic and the non-governmental organizations themselves often do not know how to make best use of modern media: According to Professor [Steve] Ross [of Columbia University], By a four-to-one margin, journalists say criticism and skepticism in the press about relief organizations has increased. However, argues disaster expert John Twigg, journalists should avoid easy answers: Media treatment of disasters is stereotyped. Relief is either heroic or failed there is nothing in between. Ross criticizes journalists for a lack of specialist knowledge about humanitarian issues and sources, tight budgets, impatience and crisis fatigue. But he also criticizes NGOs for inadequate media training, not sharing information publicly, confusing marketing with press relations, and not exploiting Internet-based tools. Humanitarian media coverage in the digital age , World Disasters Report , Chapter 6, International Red Cross Is there a sign of any positive change? The Red Cross is hopeful: Some media trends actually favor humanitarians: The Internet and hour news have vastly increased the market for humanitarian testimony. Humanitarian media coverage in the digital age , World Disasters Report , Chapter 6, International Red Cross But the media are less likely, of course, to report on themselves, certainly not in any headlines. In addition, discussion of more complex issues such as the causes

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of poverty are harder to come by it seems. Poverty and the crippling effects of third world debt are certainly issues that need more coverage by the mainstream. They are not issues only when the G8 meet, but they are unfortunately ever-present. So when the media appears to be reporting on poverty at the time of a G8 summit, are they really being driven by the agenda of the politicians rather than the issue of poverty? Given that some 30, children die on average each year from the effects of debt and poverty, one would surely expect more coverage of such a global issue than is currently given, and one would hope it is not just a fashionable news item when rich country leaders come together for a meeting. Back to top What is the direction of the media? If so is it the politicians that the media report and interview on to attempt an explanation which risks becoming propaganda? The G8 Summit debt relief proposals was certainly had positive spin put to it which the media did not report much on, thus giving the impression to the population that a lot was achieved. What does it take to become a headline? If a government makes a big deal out of a disaster somewhere in the world, we are sure to hear about it in the media. On-going wars where millions may have died may get hardly any coverage at all, as mentioned further above. Many of the links I have used above do come from mainstream sources, yet those are not the major headlines on prime time television broadcasts or newspapers. Sometimes they do form part of the major headlines but are only covered with a few sentences or maybe mentioned for a couple of days or so. Natural disaster coverage would seem to be one of the more safer political topics to cover. And yet, even if media coverage of natural disasters appears to be selective, this should begin questioning our assumptions of what world news from a media outlet really is: In the wake of the terrible Asian tsunami at towards the end of and its aftermath into, with the immense media coverage, there was hope that perhaps finally the Western mainstream media were making a turn and beginning to cover truly global events and provide real world news. Cynics at the time claimed the western media and their governments were only interested in the region because of all the western tourist areas that were affected and that the impressive wider coverage was for such reasons. At the time, it felt that this time those cynics were wrong. One year on, it is hard to claim that the cynics were wrong. The mainstream may have taken a step forward to report more about the rest of humanity in the time of natural disasters, but it still seems there is a long way to go in improving quality of coverage of natural disasters, deeper context, and more generally, of near-constant, less dramatic.

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Chapter 4 : NPR Choice page

Earthquakes: Why some natural disasters are more deadly than others I am a scientist who spent my life studying disasters. From the statistics controlling the timing of earthquake clusters, to leading a team to model the likely social and economic impacts of an extreme flood, I have endeavoured to understand how natural disasters become human.

Saturday, August 11, Earthquakes: Why some natural disasters are more deadly than others I am a scientist who spent my life studying disasters. From the statistics controlling the timing of earthquake clusters, to leading a team to model the likely social and economic impacts of an extreme flood, I have endeavoured to understand how natural disasters become human catastrophes. Through studies of older events and models of future ones, we find that the problems are only partly scientific or technological. The human dimension, the planning, the response and the social dynamics, often determine the ability of societies to survive the Big One, the natural disaster so large that it threatens the functioning of society itself. This time, the disaster is playing out in Indonesia, one of the most complex tectonic environments at the intersection of four tectonic plates. The sequence this month has been near or on a shallow fault system called the Flores Back Arc thrust. If it were offshore and deeper, everyone would receive less shaking. Without earthquake resistant construction, being near an earthquake above magnitude 6 is often deadly. In natural disasters, the poor suffer more than the rich. They are more likely to be in substandard buildings and therefore receive more damage but they also have fewer resources to cope with the aftermath. In Indonesia, we are seeing many collapsed buildings. Buildings can be built to withstand earthquakes but this costs more. The increased costs can be small, but the benefit is hidden until the earthquake occurs. It may take a back seat to immediate housing needs or desire for short-term profits. So far, three earthquakes above magnitude 5. Every earthquake makes another earthquake more likely. About 1 out of every 20 times, one of the aftershocks will be bigger than the mainshock. We then change the name and call the first one a foreshock. Aftershocks will be continuing for months or even years and more of them could be large enough to be damaging. We see the pictures from Lombok Indonesia this week after a series of large earthquakes and recognise the terror of dying in a natural disaster, when the earth itself is no longer steady. Most people are afraid for their lives in a natural disaster, but your chances of dying are very small. Even in the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 that buried Pompeii deep in volcanic ash, 90 per cent of the victims got out alive. With the advances in engineering and building construction, our odds have gotten better. Ten years ago, I led a team at the United States Geological Survey to model with the best science what would happen to southern California in a big earthquake on the San Andreas fault. Our estimate of casualties is 1, dead " out of 20 million residents. The chances of living are A Californian is hundreds of times more likely to die in an automobile crash than in an earthquake. Instead of worrying about dying in a natural disaster, you should be worried about living after a natural disaster. In all of our disaster scenarios, we found that the business disruption from lack of utilities caused economic losses over the next few months as large as what happened in the disaster itself. Before the great earthquake in destroyed it, San Francisco was the only city that mattered on the west coast of the United States. The decade after that earthquake was the largest growth decade in the history of Los Angeles, as people abandoned San Francisco and came south. The terrible Lisbon earthquake of is the largest natural disaster to have struck Europe. It destroyed most of the buildings in Lisbon and many smaller towns, killed many tens of thousands of people, permanently changed the Portuguese economy. From a major colonial power, Portugal shrank to a much smaller player on the global stage. Just about every major city in the world is at risk from natural disasters. We build our cities near the ocean that brings us trade " and hurricanes. We build near rivers for water and transportation " and must cope with the floods. The risk is growing as our cities become more complex. Modern urban life depends on systems, including communication systems, transportation systems, power grids, and water and sewage systems. A century ago, when a sewer pipe broke in an earthquake, you dug a latrine in your backyard. In modern Los Angeles, the loss of the sewer system in an earthquake is a potentially deadly public health crisis. Systems fail

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where they are already weak. The damaged levee is the one that will fail in a flood. Similarly, the human systems fail at their weakest points. A community whose people know and care about each other is the one that will pull through. A community divided, whose ideas of preparedness involve procuring guns or fortified bunkers, is at risk. The future is largely unknowable. We can see patterns and assess likelihoods, but time travels in only one direction. But we can say with confidence that it will happen somewhere. How that city will recover will be determined by its people and how they can pull together and care for each other.

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Chapter 5 : BBC Blogs - College of Journalism - Nepal: Why are some disasters bigger stories than others

While some smaller media outlets would no doubt be stretched trying to provide a lot of coverage for many simultaneous natural disasters, those listed above were not entirely simultaneous, and yet, the coverage of some of these disasters were less than others.

Hence you get the apocryphal arithmetic that one UK death in the same street equals 10 in the next town equal deaths in France and 1, in India. While such equations tend to be tongue-in-cheek, and are certainly not written down or codified by news organisations, there is more than a grain of truth in them. So how big a story has Nepal been against all the competing national and international claims on our attention, and how does it compare with others? Yet these statistics do not reflect the magnitude of the disasters. These are both small figures compared to Haiti where death tolls have been put at anywhere between , and , Sanjoy Mazumda reporting on the rescue effort in Kathmandu for BBC News So why has Nepal got so much coverage despite the relative small loss of life compared with the other two? Well, as with the tsunami, there were Britons caught up in the crisis in Nepal. There is also a strong Nepalese diaspora, in particular the Gurkhas, who won a long campaign led by the actress Joanna Lumley to be able to settle in this country. Many Brits have also trekked through or visited Kathmandu on holiday. And there are other factors. They found that the type of disaster - whether it was dramatic as opposed to long term - had a direct effect on its newsworthiness and the amount of aid donated. For the media, they are less complicated stories to tell, and for the public to respond to, than stories like the recent tragedies of migrants drowning in the Mediterranean or the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Syria. A YouTube video shows a survivor emerging from beneath an avalanche at Everest base camp In the case of Nepal new technology meant that pictures of the moment the quake hit emerged over several days, sustaining the story. As Mark Frankel, assistant editor of social news at the BBC, points out, there were many dramatic videos of the avalanche posted on YouTube. And like the tsunami the coverage was changed by new ways of reporting. Frankel mentions that there was some extraordinary drone footage posted. And reporter Nick Garnett from BBC 5 live used the new video streaming app Periscope to record the devastation in a village in the Sindhupalchok district on his phone. Finally, what was the effect on coverage of the timing of the Nepalese earthquake - occurring as it did on 25 April? A story can find itself being ignored because of another huge event occurring at the same time and capturing the media spotlight more effectively. The fact that, despite expectations, Princess Charlotte of Cambridge did not make her appearance until a week after the quake, and the general election did not come until nearly two weeks after, meant two huge stories did not crowd out the very real need to report on Nepal. Glenda Cooper is a lecturer in journalism at City University London and is completing a PhD on how new technology has affected coverage of humanitarian crises.

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Chapter 6 : Chapter 1: What is news?

Sophie Wright Why do some natural disasters kill more people than others? MEDC LEDC Urban area Rural area Magnitude Time of day Emergency services Slideshare uses cookies to improve functionality and performance, and to provide you with relevant advertising.

After disaster strikes, some people pick up the pieces and move on with their lives. Others find it far more difficult to continue and seem paralyzed by events beyond their control. Why is it so much more difficult for some people to deal with disasters than it is for others? The reason, according to one body of research, lies in the fundamental way the brain functions, and whether we believe we really are in control of our lives. Steve Maier of the University of Colorado in Boulder is a psychologist who specializes in neuro-chemistry, or the chemistry that regulates activities in the brain. He has been looking at this issue for some time and believes the answer lies in the level of control exercised by a very primitive part of the brain. So far his research, mostly involving laboratory rats, indicates that when bad things happen, a "very primitive" part of the brain is the first to react. That part of the brain evolved very early in animals, and for good reasons. In other words, fight or flee. So a primitive part of the brain orders the system to produce more energy, for example, and to beef up the repair mechanism in case of injury, and, of course, to hit the road. The Problem of Prolonged Peril "The trouble is in primitive organisms these negative events that happen are usually fairly brief in time," Maier says. That can elevate stress and depress the immune system, leaving the victim more vulnerable and unable to cope with the circumstances. But for others, the primitive area shuts down, letting more sophisticated parts of the human brain take control. A Difference in Dealing Why should it work differently for some than for others? The answer, Maier speculates, may lie at least partly in how we view our ability to deal with unpleasant circumstances. Citing Katrina as a "perfect example," Maier says this: However, there are things you can do to control the negative circumstances that it has left you in. Environment and Experiences But that brings us back to the original question. Why does it shut down in some people, but not in others? People who experience a fair level of control, or ability to cope, early in life are going to view events later as if they are controllable.

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Chapter 7 : Natural Disasters – Global Issues

Hurricane Katrina has reinforced the view of some researchers that the scale of any collective crisis has to be taken into account in any calendrierdelascience.com them, just as "disasters" are qualitatively different from everyday community emergencies, so are "catastrophes" a qualitative jump over "disasters".

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Chapter 8 : Eight ways climate change is making the world more dangerous | Environment | The Guardian

Some countries do not cope better than others in dealing with disasters such as earthquakes and volcanoes because they may not have as much money than other countries. For example South America has very little money.

By Tricia Wachtendorf; James M. Kendra Catastrophes are Different from Disasters: Jun 11, Dr. He is the author or editor of 27 books and monographs and numerous articles and chapters on disaster topics. Hurricane Katrina has reinforced the view of some researchers that the scale of any collective crisis has to be taken into account in any analysis. Systematic social science study of disasters natural and technological is about a half-century-old. One of the first problems addressed by the pioneer researchers was in what ways disasters as social occasions differed from everyday emergencies. In less than a decade of field research it was conclusively documented that community disasters were qualitatively and quantitatively different from routine emergencies. At the organizational level alone there are at least four differences: In disasters compared to everyday emergencies, organizations have to quickly relate to far more and unfamiliar converging entities. One study of what was a major but nonetheless community-limited massive plant fire in Canada found that organizations appeared on site. They included seven departments of local government, 10 regional government agencies, 25 entities from the provincial government and 27 organizations from the federal level, as well as 31 fire departments, 41 churches, hospitals and schools, four utilities, eight voluntary agencies, four emergent groups and also at least 52 different players from the private sector Scanlon, Adjustment has to be made to losing autonomy and freedom of action. Since community and crisis-time needs and values take precedence over everyday ones, all groups may be monitored and ordered about by social entities that may not even exist in routine times, or where the destruction of property is accepted to save lives in search and rescue efforts, or in the building of levees or firebreaks. Different performance standards are applied. For example, the normal speed of response and individualized care given to treating the injured is superseded by a need to curtail the level of care given to victims as well as spending time, efforts and resources on more equitably distributing the many victims in the available medical facilities. There is a much closer than usual public and private sector interface. The need for the quick mobilization of resources for overall community crisis purposes often leads to a preemption of everyday private rights and domains. This means that goods, equipment, personnel and facilities in the private sector are often without due process or normal organizational procedures requisitioned by public agencies for the common good. Everyone, be they individuals or groups, becomes subject to being taken over by governmental groups. Today it would be difficult to find any researcher who would challenge the distinction made. That said, we will use Hurricane Katrina and its impact in southern Mississippi and the New Orleans area as an almost textbook case of a catastrophe. However, since what happened in Katrina is not a new social phenomenon, we will first use earlier examples of what were called disasters but in our terminology would better be treated as catastrophes. The distinction we draw between catastrophes and disasters is not just an academic exercise although the distinction is also important for research purposes not discussed here. What is crucial is that catastrophes require some different kinds of planning and managing than do even major disasters. This is true whether the focus is on the planning for mitigation, preparedness, response or recovery. Because of space limitations however, we will focus mostly on the time period just before impact to the start of the recovery period. Disasters and Catastrophes A few of us have pushed this distinction for several decades. We particularly have in mind what happened in St. Of course catastrophes have also happened earlier in American society such as from the hurricane that hit Galveston in and the San Francisco earthquake and fire of as well as elsewhere in the last century, ranging from the earthquake that hit Messina, Italy in to the Tangshan earthquake in China in The differences that appear between disasters and catastrophes can be especially seen at the organizational, community and societal levels. For our purposes here, let us illustrate at least six general ways in which disasters and catastrophes differ. In a catastrophe compared to a disaster: Most or all of the community built structure is heavily impacted. For example,

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Hurricane Hugo destroyed or heavily damaged more than 90 percent of all homes in St. That made it impossible, for instance, for displaced victims to seek shelter with nearby relatives and friends, as they typically do in disaster situations. In contrast, only parts of a community are typically impacted even in major disasters. For instance, in the Mexico City earthquake of , considered a major disaster, at worst less than two percent of the residential housing structure stock was lost, with only 4. Those forced out of their homes went to live with friends and relatives in the metropolitan area. In addition, in catastrophes, the facilities and operational bases of most emergency organizations are themselves usually hit. After Hurricane Andrew in southern Florida, many structures that housed police, fire, welfare and local medical centers were seriously damaged or destroyed, making work operations in them impossible. While in a major disaster some such facilities may be directly impacted, the great majority typically survive with little or no damage. Likewise, as a result of the flooding many key organizational work places were made inoperable. Even most high-rise buildings in the city, although structurally surviving almost intact, were not useable because of the flooding in their basements and first floors and the lack of electric power. Local officials are unable to undertake their usual work role, and this often extends into the recovery period. Related to the observation just made, local personnel specializing in catastrophic situations are often unable for some time, both right after impact and into the recovery period, to carry out their formal and organizational work roles. For instance, in some recent catastrophes in developing countries such as Indonesia in the tsunami disaster, practically all medical personnel in some towns were fatalities. In impacted Florida communities after Hurricane Andrew, many social workers had no way of communicating with or being reached by past or possible new users of their services. The general inability to provide usual professional or technical services happens, if at all, only on a very small scale in major disasters, and if it does, lasts only for relatively short periods of time. Planning which assumes that local community officials should and will take an active work role in the immediate post-impact periods of a major disaster is very realistic and a valid view. This can be assumed. A negative consequence from outsiders having to come in is that the local-outsider organizational friction that only occasionally arises in disasters can become a major problem in a catastrophe. In Hurricane Katrina the above and related problems have and are surfacing. There was certainly a great deal of work-family role conflict in key emergency organizations. At least anecdotal stories suggest that only about two-thirds of police officers reported for and remained on duty that there were no such reports about the fire department may indicate additional organizational problems in the police department. Local mental health and welfare agencies also became inoperative. As outsiders move more and more to the front, there will be inevitable clashes between the locals and those from outside the local community. Help from nearby communities cannot be provided. In many catastrophes not only are all or most of the residents in a particular community affected, but often those in nearby localities are also impacted, This has often happened in the typical typhoons that hit the Philippines, and this also occurred in many areas around Chernobyl after the accident at the nuclear plant there. In short, catastrophes tend to affect multiple communities, and often have a regional character. This kind of crisis, for instance, can and does affect the massive convergence that typically descends upon any stricken community after a disaster. In a disaster there is usually only one major target for the convergence after a disaster. In a catastrophe many nearby communities not only cannot contribute to the inflow, but they themselves can become competing sources for an eventual unequal inflow of goods, personnel, supplies and communication For example, under other circumstances, the devastated small cities in southern Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina could have anticipated a convergence of help and assistance from the major metropolitan city in the area, but of course there was none at all. Most, if not all, of the everyday community functions are sharply and concurrently interrupted. In a catastrophe, most if not all places of work, recreation, worship and education such as schools totally shut down and the lifeline infrastructures are so badly disrupted that there will be stoppages or extensive shortages of electricity, water, mail or phone services as well as other means of communication and transportation. In such kinds of situations, the damage to residential areas tends to be correlated with similar destruction of nonresidential areas. Even in major disasters, there is no such

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massive-across the board disruption of community life even if particular neighborhoods may be devastated, as happened in the Mexico City earthquake of when life in many contiguous areas went on almost normally. Similarly this was true of the Northridge, Los Angeles earthquake of ; for instance, 12, people went as usual to the horseracing track in that California area the afternoon of the earthquake. In Katrina, there was across-the-board and almost total disruption of community functions. In the absence of systematic studies that will take months to appear, we can only have educated guesses about what happened in the face of the massive disruption. It appears that one of the earliest consequences was that there was much decentralized decision making, particularly of an emergent nature. This could be seen in the evacuation of the hospitals, in the preparations for impact in many hotels, and in much of what happened in the French Quarter in New Orleans. As the crisis evolved, decentralized decision-making continued to be the norm in entities ranging from households to organizations. And this continued as the immediate crisis lessened, and different social entities and categories started to return to New Orleans. The idea that there could be any centralized control imposed on these disparate decisions and varying community activities flies in the face of what researchers have found occurs in crises. The mass media system especially in recent times socially constructs catastrophes even more than they do disasters. All disasters evoke at least local mass media coverage. Some major disasters can attract attention from outside the community media, but usually only for a few days. In catastrophes compared to disasters, the mass media differ in certain important aspects. There is much more and longer coverage by national mass media. This is partly because local coverage is reduced if not totally down or out. There is even more of a gulf between the content of the electronic media and the print media with the latter focusing on looting and other dramatic visuals. There is far less of the normal filtering and screening of stories especially in the electronic media. Some of the more important consequences of these kinds of media activity were that in Katrina there was far more diffusion of rumors than occurs in disasters. While looting did occur, which is atypical for disasters, the anti-social behavior was widely depicted as typical when the prosocial behavior was by far the norm it should also be noted that a catastrophic situation is only one condition necessary to have mass looting. Finally, because of the previous five processes, the political arena becomes even more important. All disasters of course involve, at a minimum, local political considerations. But it is a radically different situation when the national government and the very top officials become directly involved. Even in very major disasters, a symbolic presence is often all that is necessary. In catastrophes, that symbolism is not enough, particularly for the larger society. Part of this stems from the fact that catastrophes as happened in Katrina force to the surface racial, class and ethnic differences that are papered over during routine times. It is easy to take partisan political advantage of such uncoverings especially when they go against widely held cultural values and norms in democratic societies. Another reason is that organizational weaknesses of responding organizations come even more to the surface. The structural weakness of the Federal Emergency Management Agency FEMA as a result of its subordinate position in the Department of Homeland Security DHS , as some disaster researchers had predicted for at least three years, became a major problem in the response. Even competent social actors are limited in what they can do in a structurally flawed social system. Have we discussed all already observed differences and more that may be subtler in catastrophes than disasters? No, we have not. Still more differences can be surfaced and found by looking at local community planning and asking what was assumed as being in place at impact time, keeping in mind that it is disasters and not catastrophes that are almost always assumed. We have primarily highlighted differences between disasters and catastrophes.

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Chapter 9 : Consent Form | Popular Science

Natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and floods can often come at the least expected time. Others, such as hurricanes and cyclones are increasing in severity and destruction. Typically, the poor are the worst hit for they have the least resources to cope and rebuild.

Get Full Essay Get access to this section to get all help you need with your essay and educational issues. Etna have to cope with earthquakes and volcanoes. Some countries do not cope better than others in dealing with disasters such as earthquakes and volcanoes because they may not have as much money than other countries. For example South America has very little money. The facts of that they have little money means that nearly all of their larger buildings have not got anything like the technology, which the richer countries like Tokyo have. In Mexico, also a poor country, measures for reducing earthquake risk have often not been able to be done because of economic problems. They also do not have the technology or equipment. Things like computer tensioning systems and shock absorbers in buildings are very expensive and would help to improve the chances of the survival of the building in an earthquake. Without the technology the buildings would probably be ruined or collapse during an earthquake and then more money would have to be spent to re-build the buildings. This money would mainly come from other countries that support and want to help that country. Population is also a problem. Although Tokyo has more money and technology than Mexico or countries in South America its population makes it very difficult to evacuate everyone to a safe place in time. Even if there is not such a big population it can be difficult to evacuate somewhere like Hawaii and the other Hawaiian Islands and to get everyone off the island. It would also be difficult to evacuate people that live near Mt. Poorer countries tend to have a poor education. This could be very dangerous in Tokyo, Mexico city or San Francisco because it is very built up and many tall buildings that could collapse, than in less built up countries like countries in South America. The GNP suffers therefore not enough money is available to spend on technology such as seismometers and Richter scales. They also may not have such a good medical service due to the GNP being low. There might not be enough ambulance services to help the wounded or injured to get to hospitals to be treated. They might not have as many hospitals in the needed areas to treat patients. During a disaster hospitals could be destroyed or damaged, unable to help any one. Also because of a lack of education there are not as many doctors or nurses than richer, more educated countries. It might be difficult for the medical services if the land was marshy and difficult to reach some people. They might not be able to cope as well as other countries because it might not have very good contact or communication with other countries when there is a disaster and need help or support. More essays like this: