POL375: Disaster Politics and Policy
Fall 2020

Paul Manson	In-person: Psych 103
pablo@reed.edu	Mondays
Rees House	13:25-14:45
x 7656	
	Online: Zoom
	Wednesdays
	13:25-14:45
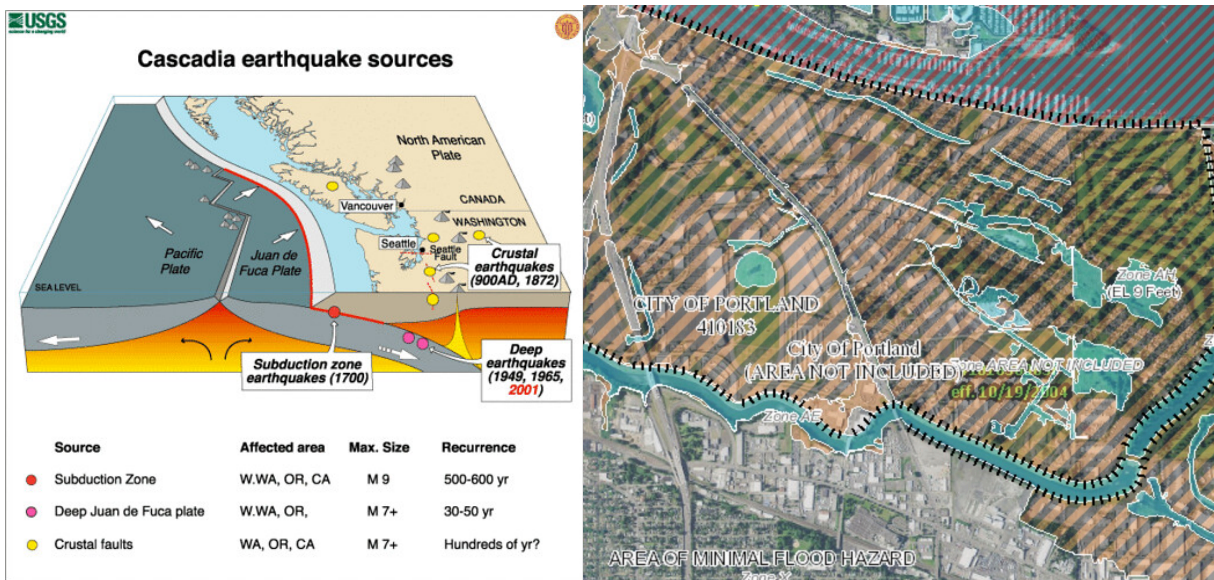
Course Summary:

Disasters are the intersection of risk, vulnerability and society. Often one hears of increasing "natural disasters" - but are they natural? Who is impacted more by these events and why? And how do societies respond to these events? How do we select some dangers over others to prioritize? Why are some disaster impacts seemingly repetitive or continually impacting the same types of communities?

This course will review how communities have developed with disasters, continue to be impacted by them, and how research and politics work to improve (or worsen) our risks and responses to disaster. We will explore how various models of disasters and risk have been deployed over time, and how new ideas around resilience, sustainability and democracy provide new avenues for thinking about disasters.

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Course Goals:
The course introduces students to a series of concepts for hazards planning and disaster management. In particular it focuses on introducing concepts around risk and disasters with a focus the social, political, and economic forces that shape risk. The course also introduces students to basic concepts in hazards risk management including: exposure, sensitivity, and the ability to cope. Finally, the course introduces students to resilience theory, its history and development, and its role in hazard planning and disaster management. The students are asked to critically evaluate these various theories through a review of historical events, literature, and written assignments. Specific goals include:

- Natural Hazard Awareness: Broad understanding of the physical and environmental hazards that create disasters. Understanding of the types of risks and vulnerabilities tied to these hazards.
- Social and Economic Dimensions of Disasters: Critical awareness of the social and economic determinants, factors and outcomes of disaster events, particularly the distribution of vulnerability, assets to cope, and tools to mitigate.
- Policy and Planning Concepts for Hazards and Disasters: Survey of the policy tools and concepts applied in the US for managing hazards and disasters.

Learning Objectives:
This is the part you need to hold me accountable for! By the end of the course students should be able to:
- Define and understand the various types of natural and human hazards that communities face. They will be able to problematize these definitions and conceptualize these definitions both spatially and temporally.
- Define and critically evaluate the role of social and economic forces in the creation of risk and how risk is distributed in society.
- Gain insight on, and apply US Federal disaster policy to state and local planning processes.
- Evaluate hazard and disaster plans and be able to develop or collaborate on similar plans.

Reading and Required Texts:
At the end of this document is the course reading schedule – it includes details on when we will be reading various pieces and when items are due.

> Birkland, Thomas A. 2006. *Lessons of Disaster: Policy Change after Catastrophic Events*. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press.
>
> Douglas, Mary, and Aaron Wildavsky. 2010. *Risk and Culture: An Essay on the Selection of Technological and Environmental Dangers*. Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of California Press.
>
> Erikson, Kai T. 2012. *Everything in Its Path*. Riverside: Simon & Schuster.

Solnit, Rebecca. 2010. *A Paradise Built in Hell: The Extraordinary Communities That Arise in Disaster*. New York: Penguin Books.

Tierney, Kathleen J. 2014. *The Social Roots of Risk: Producing Disasters, Promoting Resilience*. Stanford, California: Stanford Business Books, an imprint of Stanford University Press.

Wisner, Ben, Piers Blaikie, Terry Cannon, and Ian Davis. 2003. *At Risk: Natural Hazards, People's Vulnerability and Disasters*. 2nd ed. Routledge.

Brief Description of Assignments

Three main assignments are expected of you this term. More detailed handouts will be provided. Assignments are due at the beginning of class for the day listed on the schedule! The assignments are:

Discussion

Be prepared to participate in class. This means understanding the reading and being prepared to discuss. Bring your readings and notes to class, this counts as part of participation!

In light of the unique and distributed nature of our COVID-19 learning environment I am also assigning two separate office hour sessions this term. Make sure you book a meeting with me in the first and second half of the term. It can be a casual meeting or you can bring questions and challenges to me. But I want a "face-to-face" with you at **least twice this term**.

Précis and Discussion Facilitation

A goal for this course is for you to understand and develop your own appreciation of the models of risk, disasters, and society. There are many moving concepts and theories that we will work with. To make sense of these, through the course, you will be charged with leading two of our weekly discussions. (Often with a co-lead.)

To do this I ask you to develop a précis twice for different sessions this term. The précis will cover of one or more of the readings for the week and distribute it to the rest of the class at least five days in advance of the meeting. Note: for weeks were we focus on a book, you may subset to a chapter or two.

The rest of the class will be expected to have read it and discuss your claims. This will be about three pages in length. This is also an opportunity for me to provide feedback prior to the term paper.

<u>Research Term Paper</u>
The final assignment for the term is your term research paper. You are free to choose a topic of your desire, so long as its in the bounds of this course's goals and objectives. I ask you formulate a <u>proposed title and abstract</u> by Week 12 and share that with me in advance. The paper is expected to be 15-25 pages.

Learning in the COVID-19 Environment:

The upending of our lives due to the COVID-19 Pandemic is real and hard on many levels. I am mindful of the myriad of challenges this has presented and will continue to present for all of us. I proposed this course before the pandemic became "real" and now we have to decide how much we want to engage it![*] I also am mindful that life is not as simple – so please reach out to me if challenges arise.

I have divided this course into two sections, one online and one in-person. The reasoning for this is to allow for student choice and to also accommodate any illness or closures we might face this Fall.

Expect my lecture component to add empirical and applied policy depth to the readings assigned. I want to make sure we have plenty of grist for the mill, and at the same time its engaging and relevant to your interests. With this in mind I've designed talks to allow for details and experience from the field to be added to the course.

COVID Classroom Protocols

<u>For In-Person</u>: First and foremost, your candor on symptoms and your compliance with masks and hygiene matter greatly to the success of our class, and the College this Fall. Please do not hesitate to play it safe if you suspect symptoms. Masks are critical – no excuses for forgetting them or having them fail. Carry a backup!

We will be meeting in Psychology 103. This room is set up exactly for the number of students registered in the course. I have to admit – it is not a setup that will look familiar at Reed.

You will have an assigned seat at a desk, spaced out according to protocol. The space between the desks is not enough to allow for passing. Therefore, your entry and seating will be a little like the airlines. Please queue up in the order I assign and maintain distance from classmates and others. We will board from one side of the classroom to the other and exit similarly. Your seat, like flying, will be assigned. I probably will not be allowed to run beverage service midflight.

Another quirk with this seating is that no one can leave mid-class without moving multiple students. I must ask you to be prepared to sit for the entire seminar and

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[*] What counts for "real" is a key theme in this course – so in some ways these current events are a chance to experience these challenges.

not leave the classroom for any reason.† If you know you will need to get up mid-class, please let me know in advance and I will make appropriate arrangements. I also ask you to refrain from eating or drinking (unless policy changes where we can re-invite tea or coffee into our classes.)

For Online: I have been teaching online since the pandemic began and realize it is not the same. I will use exercises, small group activities, and interactive tools to help keep the energy flowing. I am mindful that you may be in different time zones or home "office" settings. Let me know of any challenges you face on the technology or space side of things.

Online Content

Both sections will participate in seminars on their appointed days. The other meeting will consist of self-directed online video mini lectures on the topic of the week. I ask that you view these before class. For the in-person session this means you will want to view them over the weekend or before class. Please make sure this is done in a timely manner! These will be posted to Moodle.

Course Policies

Please review these policies – they guide expectations for all students so that its fair for everyone.

Attendance: We are learning through readings, discussions, and our own research. All of this requires a community to test ideas, explore theories and to discover new concepts. So attendance is critical! It helps you, it helps your fellow scholars, and it is required. If something comes up – the best thing you can do is talk to me. Email me or stop me after class.

Late Work: Deadlines are listed on the schedule for assignments. All researchers and scholars struggle with meeting deadlines. But the mark of a great academic (and professional) is not just being intelligent but also delivering their thoughts on time. Meeting deadlines is not an arbitrary requirement – it is essential to a community of scholars. Permission is easier to ask for than forgiveness.

Classroom and Personal Conduct: Thorough and exciting learning settings are often a little uncomfortable. Ideas will fly, arguments will fail, and succeed. Sometimes it's a little embarrassing. We are all coming from different places in life, and with different experiences that are all valid. Don't take bumps in the road personally – it is part of the process.

At the same time, there is a limit to how far arguments or claims can go.

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Engage ideas – not individuals.

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† Note – I ask this to keep things clear and planned. If an emergency arises, we have options. But to extend the airplane metaphor, prepare for a short commuter flight where there is no lavatory on board.

Personal attacks are known as *ad hominem* – and while they are a staple of certain contemporary rhetoric but they are not acceptable here. Prejudicial, discriminatory statements, or hurtful attacks will be called out – and will become a learning moment.

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment for my students and for the campus as a whole. Please be aware that as a faculty member, I have a responsibility to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination. If you would rather share information about sexual harassment, sexual violence or discrimination with a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, the medical and counseling staff at the [Health and Counseling Center](#) is normally exempted from these requirements. For more information about Title IX, which regulates the role of Colleges and reporting, please visit the [Reed College Title IX program page](#).

Technology: I have fully gone digital myself – I work, read and take notes on my devices. But there is something these artifacts do to us as people, they can create distance or provide an escape from communication. Please, make an extra effort to listen, make eye contact and stay engaged. Sometimes its ok to just listen – and listen actively. For those online this is even harder – I appreciate your efforts to use non-verbal tools to stay engaged! Emojis, reactions, chat windows, thumbs up, maybe even little signs… anything to help keep that energy going.

Plagiarism: Scholars seek to explore new ideas and communicate them effectively. This takes an enormous level of work – so taking these ideas and representing them as your own is serious. Plagiarism is not just copying text – it includes paraphrasing or rewording ideas without attributing them to the source.

For a discussion of plagiarism, see here:
https://www.reed.edu/writing/citation_and_style_guide.html#Plagiarism

Disability Resources/Support: I am committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, accessible, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. I know as we move into this new COVID-19 era we are making assumptions as faculty about "what works" and please let me know if a design impacts your ability to participate! The [Disability and Accessibility Resources](#) office provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

Life, School and Chaos: Balancing school, life, work, and the world around us can be a challenge. The class and your commitments here are very important – and others depend on them. The Reed academic life is a strenuous one, but the worst thing you

can do is have challenges and not ask for help. We can only address these challenges if you ask!

Readings:

Note, this is an interdisciplinary reading list – political scientists are joined by public administrators, urban planners, sociologists, anthropologists, and some economists. My hope for these readings are to organize them in three general groupings over the term. The first is about orientation and problem definition. We will explore the history of disasters, develop some common understandings of disaster dynamics, and explore some models for disasters. The early texts also provide some shared disaster cases to use later in critiquing or exploring theory. The second is to then shift into a mode of understanding the particular politics and policy impacts of disasters. Third, is a change to diversify and look at new avenues for disaster work, namely a focus on recovery and resilience. My goal is to give you a sense of the breadth and depth – but also a chance to explore diverse and interdisciplinary ideas.

Week 1: Introduction to Course, Basic Concepts Hazards, and Constituting our Course
   Solnit, Rebecca. 2010. *A Paradise Built in Hell*
   "Disaster-Zone Research Needs a Code of Conduct."
         https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03534-z (August 17, 2020).

Week 2: Foundations and Framings
   Erikson, Kai T. 2012. *Everything in Its Path*. (Part One, pp 1-48)
   Quarantelli, E. L., and Russell R. Dynes. 1977. "Response to Social Crisis and Disaster."
         Annual Review of Sociology 3: 23–49.
   Quarantelli, Enrico Louis. 1987. "Disaster Studies: An Analysis of the Social Historical
         Factors Affecting the Development of Research in the Area."
   Wisner et al. 2004. *At Risk*. (Chapter 1)

Week 3: Building Foundations for Risk and Society
   Erikson, Kai T. 2012. *Everything in Its Path*. Riverside. (Part Two, pp 51-132)
   Tierney, Kathleen J. 2014. *The Social Roots of Risk.*(Chapter 1-2, skim 1)
   Wisner et al. 2004. *At Risk*. (Chapter 2)

Week 4: Problematizing Risk, Disasters, and Communities
   Erikson, Kai T. 2012. *Everything in Its Path*. Riverside: Simon & Schuster (Part
         Three, pp 135-259)
   Tierney, Kathleen J. 2014. *The Social Roots of Risk.*(Chapter 3)
   Wisner et al. 2004. *At Risk*. (Chapter 3)

Week 5: Risk – Cultural Foundations

Douglas, Mary, and Aaron Wildavsky. 1983. *Risk and Culture: An Essay on the Selection of Technological and Environmental Dangers*. University of California Press.

Tierney, Kathleen J. 2014. *The Social Roots of Risk.*(Chapter 4)

Week 6: Risk - Society and Organizations

Beck, Ulrich. 1992. 17 *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. Sage Publications Limited. (Chapter 1)

Finucane, Melissa L. et al. 2000. "Gender, Race, and Perceived Risk: The 'white Male' Effect." *Health, Risk & Society* 2(2): 159–72.

May, Peter J., and Chris Koski. 2013. "Addressing Public Risks: Extreme Events and Critical Infrastructures." *Review of Policy Research* 30(2): 139–59.

Slovic, Paul. 1993. "Perceived Risk, Trust, and Democracy." *Risk Analysis* 13(6): 675–82.

Tierney, Kathleen J. 2014. *The Social Roots of Risk.*(Chapter 5-6)

Week 7: Resilience Everywhere and Not a Drop to Drink

Campanella, Thomas J. 2006. "Urban Resilience and the Recovery of New Orleans." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 72(2): 141–146.

Folke, Carl et al. 2010. "Resilience Thinking: Integrating Resilience, Adaptability and Transformability." *Ecology and Society* 15(4): 20.

Holling, C S. 1973. "Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems." *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 4(1): 1–23.

Masten, Ann, and Jelena Obradović. 2008. "Disaster Preparation and Recovery: Lessons from Research on Resilience in Human Development." *Ecology and Society* 13(1).

Tierney, Kathleen J. 2014. *The Social Roots of Risk.*(Chapter 7)

Vale, Lawrence J., and Thomas J. Campanella. 2005. "Conclusion: Axioms of Resilience." In *The Resilient City: How Modern Cities Recover from Disaster*, , 335–356.

Week 8: Sociology of Disasters

Bijker, Wiebe E. 2007. "Dikes and Dams, Thick with Politics." *Isis* 98: 109-123.

Cutter, Susan L., Bryan J. Boruff, and W. Lynn Shirley. 2003. "Social Vulnerability to Environmental Hazards." *Social Science Quarterly* 84(2): 242–261.

Klinenberg, Eric. 1999. "Denaturalizing Disaster: A Social Autopsy of the 1995 Chicago Heat Wave." *Theory and Society* 28(2): 239–95.

Tierney, Kathleen, Christine Bevc, and Erica Kuligowski. 2006. "Metaphors Matter: Disaster Myths, Media Frames, and Their Consequences in Hurricane Katrina." *The annals of the American academy of political and social science* 604(1): 57–81.

Week 9: Policy Responses to Disasters

Birkland, Thomas A. 2006. *Lessons of Disaster: Policy Change after Catastrophic Events*. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press. (1-30; 103–156; 157–195)

Comfort, Louise K., Thomas A. Birkland, Beverly A. Cigler, and Earthea Nance. 2010. "Retrospectives and Prospectives on Hurricane Katrina: Five Years and Counting." *Public Administration Review* 70(5): 669–678..

Kapucu, Naim. 2008. "Planning for Disasters and Responding to Catastrophes: Error of the Third Type in Disaster Policy and Planning." *International Journal of Public Policy* 3(5–6): 313–27.

Week 10: Disaster Planning

Berke, Philip R. 1998. "Reducing Natural Hazard Risks Through State Growth Management." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 64(1): 76–87.

Burby, Raymond J. 2006. "Hurricane Katrina and the Paradoxes of Government Disaster Policy: Bringing about Wise Governmental Decisions for Hazardous Areas." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 604(1): 171–191.

Rumbach, Andrew, Esther Sullivan, and Carrie Makarewicz. 2020. "Mobile Home Parks and Disasters: Understanding Risk to the Third Housing Type in the United States." *Natural Hazards Review* 21(2): 05020001.

Sarewitz, Daniel, Roger Pielke, and Mojdeh Keykhah. 2003. "Vulnerability and Risk: Some Thoughts from a Political and Policy Perspective." *Risk Analysis* 23(4): 805–810.

FEMA (2019) [National response framework](). (Skim, read last.)

Week 11: Technological Disasters

Downer, John. 2011. "'737-Cabriolet': The Limits of Knowledge and the Sociology of Inevitable Failure." *American Journal of Sociology* 117(3): 725–62.

Gramling, Robert, and Naomi Krogman. 1997. "Communities, Policy and Chronic Technological Disasters." *Current Sociology* 45(3): 41–57.

Perrow, Charles. 1984. *Normal Accidents : Living with High-Risk Technologies*. New York: Basic Books. (Introduction, Chapter 1 and 3.)

Week 12: Disasters and Contested Spaces
 TERM PAPER TITLE, ABSTRACT DUE

Jacobs, Fayola. 2019. "Black Feminism and Radical Planning: New Directions for Disaster Planning Research." *Planning Theory* 18(1): 24–39.

Jasanoff, Sheila. 2007. "Bhopal's Trials of Knowledge and Ignorance." *Isis* 98(2): 344–350.

Rivera, Jason David, and DeMond Shondell Miller. 2007. "Continually Neglected: Situating Natural Disasters in the African American Experience." *Journal of Black Studies* 37(4): 502–22.

Tobin, Graham A. 1995. "The Levee Love Affair: A Stormy Relationship?" *Journal of the American Water Resources Association* 31(3): 359–67.

Ueland, Jeff, and Barney Warf. 2006. "Racialized Topographies: Altitude and Race in Southern Cities." *Geographical Review* 96(1): 50–78.

Week 13: Moral Claims and the Political Economy of Disasters

Baum, Howell. 2011. "Planning and the Problem of Evil." *Planning Theory* 10(2): 103–23.

Dreier, Peter. 2006. "Katrina and Power in America." *Urban Affairs Review* 41(4): 528–549.

Freudenburg, William R., Robert Gramling, Shirley Laska, and Kai T. Erikson. 2008. "Organizing Hazards, Engineering Disasters? Improving the Recognition of Political-Economic Factors in the Creation of Disasters." *Social Forces* 87(2): 1015–38.

Klein, Naomi. 2005. "The Rise of Disaster Capitalism" blog post: http://www.naomiklein.org/articles/2005/04/rise-disaster-capitalism

Smith, Neil. "There's No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster" http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Smith/

Wisner, Benjamin. 2001. "Risk and the Neoliberal State : Why Post-Mitch Lessons Didn't Reduce El Salvador's Earthquake Losses." *Disasters*: 251–68.

Week 14: Aftermath of Disaster: Recovery Long-Term Impacts

Berke, Philip R., and Thomas J. Campanella. 2006. "Planning for Postdisaster Resiliency." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 604(1): 192–207.

Kapucu, Naim. 2014. "Collaborative Governance and Disaster Recovery: The National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) in the US." In *Disaster Recovery*, Springer, 41–59.

Olshansky, Robert B. 2006. "Planning after Hurricane Katrina." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 72(2): 147–153.

Smith, Gavin. 2011. *Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: A Review of the United States Disaster Assistance Framework*. Fairfax, Va.: Public Entity Risk Institute. (Selections)

Tierney, Kathleen J. 2014. *The Social Roots of Risk.*(Chapter 8)

Wisner et al. 2004. *At Risk* (Chapter 9)