THE MODERN WORLD IN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE
(The Anthropology of Disaster)
Anthropology 300U
CRN: 15517
MWF 10:15 – 11:20; CH 271
Fall 2015

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Office hours: Thurs 2:30 -3:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This class presents an upper division introduction to cultural diversity in a global context, using
disaster as a lens through which to study social relations and ethical responsibility. We begin by
discussing and then challenging the distinctions between natural hazards and disasters, man-
made and natural events, and sudden and slow-moving catastrophes. Turning to the topic of
political economy, we consider the effects of preexisting inequalities (e.g., race, ethnicity, class,
and gender) and vulnerabilities (poverty, marginality), and examine individual, family, and
community resilience as a function of social networks and social capital. We explore
psychological predispositions in assessing the risk of potential disasters and discuss the
importance of knowledge and the anxiety of uncertainty in the aftermath of catastrophes. The
course concludes with an analysis of successes and failures in the administration of humanitarian
aid. Students will have ample opportunities for in-class discussion and debate and will interact
with representatives from the City of Portland and Providence Health and Services on potential
Portland disasters and local emergency management planning.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
This course: By the end of the quarter, students will be able to

- Define natural hazard and disaster and apply the definitions to particular events
- Understand what anthropology can contribute to the study of and response to disasters
- Understand and analyze the effects of disaster on the built environment, human health,
and social relationships
- Identify and critically assess structural determinants of vulnerability and resilience
- Understand, analyze, and use anthropological theories about cultural diversity and the
social construction of identity as they relate to governance in disaster response
- Understand and analyze how humans assess risk and react to uncertainty
- Evaluate the role of the anthropologist in critiquing and facilitating the administration of
humanitarian aid
- Create, assess, and critique representations of disaster in the popular press, creative
fiction, and academic writing.

University Studies
- Communication: Students will enhance their capacity to communicate in various
ways—writing, graphics, numeracy, and other visual and oral means—to collaborate
effectively with others in group work, and to be competent in appropriate communication
technologies.

- **Inquiry and critical thinking**: Students will learn various modes of inquiry through interdisciplinary curricula—problem-posing, investigating, conceptualizing—in order to become active, self-motivated, and empowered learners.

- **The diversity of human experience**: Students will enhance their appreciation for and understanding of the rich complexity of the human experience through the study of differences in ethnic and cultural perspectives, class, race, gender, sexual orientation, and ability.

- **Ethics and social responsibility**: Students will expand their understanding of the impact and value of individuals and their choices on society, both intellectually and socially, through group projects and collaboration in learning communities.

**D2L (Desire 2 Learn – Online Learning Management System)**

Students can access D2L using an Odin username and password to login at [https://d2l.pdx.edu](https://d2l.pdx.edu). Use of D2L will be demonstrated on the first day of class. Please run a system check (as prompted by D2L when logging in) if you encounter difficulties in accessing this resource. If problems persist, contact the instructor or the OIT Help Desk immediately.

The course syllabus, assignment sheets, discussion forums, and links to class readings will be available on D2L. Students may read the materials online or print copies for use during class discussions. All student reading responses and essays will be submitted through D2L.

**CLASS REQUIREMENTS**

Students taking this course pass-no-pass are required to earn at least a 'C-' to pass. The following assignments will form the basis for evaluating performance. Further instructions for each activity will be posted on D2L.

- **Reading responses (10%)**. Three short reading responses are due throughout the term (Mon Oct 5, Wed Oct 21, Fri Nov 13) before the beginning of the class (= by 10:15AM) on the day we will discuss the readings or topic.

- **3-4 page essay (25%)** on hazards and disasters. Due Monday October 19 by midnight.

- **Creative endeavor and reflection essay (25%)**. Write a fictional story or screen play, or craft a piece of artwork or music about a disaster. Write an essay relating your work to anthropological theories on identity, vulnerability, and resilience (Section 2). Due Monday, November 2 by midnight.

- **Media analysis (25%)**. Analyze media coverage of a contemporary disaster in light of course readings on uncertainty, knowledge, and risk (Section 3). Due Wednesday, November 25 by midnight.

- **2-3 page essay (15%)** on relief and recovery (Section 4). Due Weds, December 9th by midnight.

**Policies**

Please retain for your own records a copy of all the work you submit. All written work must be completed to receive a passing grade in this class. Late papers will lose one letter grade for each day past due except in the event of severe illness or emergency; the clock stops ticking when the student contacts the instructor to arrange a new deadline.Requests for extensions on deadlines should be made in writing ahead of the due date.
Plagiarism (intellectual theft) is a very serious academic offense. Students are responsible for reading the department handout on academic honesty and the student code of conduct, both of which are posted on D2L. Suspected infractions will be turned over to the Office of the Dean of Student Life for investigation. Please ask the instructor or contact the Writing Center if you have any questions about plagiarism.

Courteous use of technology is allowed in the classroom, including accessing reading materials on laptops or tablets and typing notes into an electronic document. Checking email and accessing social media websites is disrespectful and distracting; students who engage in these activities while class is in session will be asked to shut down their technology immediately and will be barred from using it for the remainder of the quarter. All cell phones should be silenced during class.

Students with a documented disability needing accommodations in this course should immediately inform the instructor.

Anthropology majors should seek advising at least twice a year from faculty members in the Anthropology Department for advice related to meeting graduation requirements and achieving career goals.

COURSE OUTLINE

Section 1: Introduction to the Anthropology of Hazards and Disasters
Past, present, and potential earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic explosions

The Economist

Takahashi, Satsuki

Schulz, Kathryn

Anthropological theorizing on disaster
Hoffman and Oliver-Smith

Oliver-Smith, Anthony and Susanna M. Hoffman

Industrial accidents and pollution: Read EITHER Guillette OR Johnston

Guillette, Elizabeth
Johnston, Barbara Rose

Climate Change:
Film: Heat: A Global Investigation (selections)
Read TWO of the following THREE pieces (Colopy, Colombi, Wilks)
Colopy, Cheryl
Colombi, Benedict J.
Wilk, Richard

Section 2: Social Aspects of Disaster – Structural Violence, Vulnerability, and Resilience
Anthropological theorizing about vulnerability and resilience
Jones, Eric C. and Arthur D. Murphy
2009 Linking Broad-Scale Political Economic Context to Fine-Scale Economic Consequences in Disaster Research. In The Political Economy of Hazards and Disasters, Eric C. Jones and Arthur D. Murphy, eds. pp. 3-10. New York: Altamira Press. (Read pp. 3-6; skim the rest.)

Psychological and sociological theorizing about vulnerability and resilience
Satterfield, Terre, C.K. Mertz and Paul Slovic
Phillips, Brenda D. and Maureen Fordham
Gender and disaster: Read TWO of the following THREE (Hyndman, Cupples, Horton)
Hyndman, Jennifer
Cupples, Julie
Horton, Lynn
2012 After the Earthquake: Gender Inequality and Transformation in Post-disaster Haiti. Gender & Development 20(2):295-308

Case study: Race and Hurricane Katrina
Film: Still Waiting: Life after Katrina, by Ginny Martin and Kate Browne (58 minutes; 2007)
Oliver-Smith, Anthony
Anglin, Roland.

Read ONE of the following TWO on Katrina (O’Neill, Bay)
O’Neill, Karen M.
Bay, Mia.

Section 3: Risk, Knowledge, and Uncertainty
Film: Fukushima: The Next Wave. (28 minutes, 2013)

Theorizing about conceptualizing and evaluating risk
Ehrlich, Paul R.
Slovic, Paul
Wailoo, Keither and Jeffrey Dowd.

Video: The Spill (Frontline, 60 minutes, 2010)


Knowledge and uncertainty
Read ONE of the following FOUR (Lauer, Button, Stephens, Nader & Gusterson)


Read ONE or TWO of the following FOUR (Galchen, Learn, Francis, Haas & Rosman)


Section 4: Risk Management Cycle: Preparedness, Response, Recovery, Mitigation

Aceh – Recovery

Daly, Patrick and Yenny Rahmayati

Mahdi, Saiful

Standards, Plans, and Challenges (Readings to accompany guest lectures)

Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission (OSSPAC)

Diamond, Jared and Nathan Wolfe.

Sphere Project

Haiti – Recovery

Film: Haiti: Where Did the Money Go? (51 minutes; 2011)

Schuller, Mark

Schuller, Mark and Pablo Morales.

Piarroux, Renaud, et al.

Walton, David A. and Louise C. Ivers.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Schedule is subject to change, but assignment due-dates will not be moved earlier.

- Reading responses are due on D2L before class (i.e., by 10:15 AM) on the day we discuss the item.
- Assignments are due by 11:59 PM (one minute before midnight) on the due date.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Readings, films, assignments due</th>
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<td>Read: The Economist, Takahashi, Schulz</td>
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<td>Read: Jones &amp; Murphy</td>
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<td>Read: Satterfield, Mertz, &amp; Slovic</td>
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<td>Read: Phillips and Fordham</td>
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<td>Film: Still Waiting - Life after Katrina</td>
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<td>Read: Anglin, One out of two on Katrina</td>
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<td>Read: Slovic, Wailoo &amp; Dowd</td>
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<td>Due: Essay on humanitarianism</td>
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