



DISASTER & SOCIAL CRISIS RESEARCH NETWORK *ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER*

April-June 2004 No.18

A quarterly publication of the Disaster & Social Crisis Research Network of
the European Sociological Association

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This is the quarterly electronic newsletter of the Disaster & Social Crisis Research Network. The purpose of the D&SCRN is to promote the study, research and analysis of "natural", "technological" and "social" disasters with a view to contributing to the development of disaster resilient European communities, and preventing or mitigating the human, economic, social, cultural and psychological effects of crises and disasters.

The D&SCRN Electronic Newsletter is published four times a year (March, June, September and December). The previously published newsletters are downloadable at the network's new webpage www.erc.gr/d&scrn.

Announcements of conferences, book, film, and CD-ROM reviews, reportage on conferences, disaster diaries, brief articles on best or worst practices in disaster prevention and recovery, commentaries on disasters and crises, human interest stories relevant to disasters, etc. should be sent electronically to the editor, Susann Ullberg (susann.ullberg@fhs.mil.se) no later than the first of the month of publication.

Relevant contributions from the field of disaster and crisis research, as well as from applied disaster and crisis management practice, are most welcome!

Nicholas Petropoulos,
D&SCRN Coordinator
Susann Ullberg,
E-Newsletter Editor



No.18, April-June 2004

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Editor's Note: All "signed" texts express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the D&SCRN or those of CRISMART (Crisis Management Research & Training) in Stockholm.

⇔ D&SCRN Coordinator's Report

The 7th ESA conference-First Call for Panels and Session Ideas. The European Sociological Association is holding its 7th bi-annual conference at Nicholas Copernicus University in Torun, Poland, 9-12.9.2005. The general theme of the conference is "Rethinking Inequalities". Though the Executive Committee of ESA has not yet published any guidelines or rationale for this theme, undoubtedly it can constitute a good source of ideas for panels in the area of crisis, emergencies and disasters. For instance, several questions can be raised: Are marginal, disadvantaged groups (e.g. handicapped, minorities, classes, communities, countries etc.) the most victimized or most vulnerable? Does the relationship between class and victimization/vulnerability -if it exists- hold for all types of crises and disasters or is it contingent upon the type of mass emergency? Are the relationships between class and vulnerability theoretical, ideological or are there empirical data to support the unequal distribution of impacts? Who are the gainers and who are the losers from crisis and disasters? What are the mechanisms of social reproduction of crisis, disaster and emergency victimization/vulnerability? These and any many other questions can be become important foci for panels of the D&SCRN at the 7th ESA Conference in Torun. The above questions can be raised and answered at all levels of social organization (e.g. individual, organization, community, country etc.). Members of the Network are called upon to send their suggestions for panel/session topics and presentations to the Coordinator. Once we have collected the ideas and session topics relevant to the general theme of the conference, the Coordinating Committee can proceed to the designation of coordinators and to a more systematic call for papers.

World Congress of Sociology-Declarations of Interest and Cooperation. The next World Congress of Sociology (of the International Sociological Association) will take place the week of July 23-29, 2006 in Durban, South Africa (See also below). The theme of the Congress is "The Quality of Social Existence in a Globalizing World". Joe Scanlon of Carleton University, Canada is in charge of organizing the sessions for the ISA Research Committee 39 on Disasters. Some very interesting and apropos topics are being worked on (e.g. disaster research after 9/11; race, social justice and disaster; the impact of culture on

emergency planning; environment and disaster; disaster history, young scholars/issues for the future; open sessions etc.). Calls for papers are being (or will be) issued by the coordinators of these proposed sessions. He is especially interested in attracting participations of young scholars. For more information regarding the World Congress sessions, colleagues can communicate directly with Joe Scanlon (jscanlon@ccs.carleton.ca). Joe has also reacted positively on my suggestion that RC39 and D&SCRN organize 2-3 joint sessions. Possible topics for these joint sessions, which do not overlap with the other sessions, are "epidemics disasters" (e.g. AIDS, SARS, BSE etc) proposed by the D&SCRN Coordinator and "the role of science in crisis/disaster mitigation/instigation" proposed by Vera Vratasa. Other suggestions, relevant to the World Congress theme and to the European setting, are also welcome (erc@otenet.gr).

The DRC 40th Anniversary Conference. More than 100 scholars, researchers and practitioners and students, participated in the Disasters Research Center 40th Anniversary two-day (April 30-May 1, 2004) conference, "Disaster Research and the Social Sciences: Lessons Learned and Future Trajectories" that was held at the beautiful University of Delaware Campus, in Newark, Delaware. Among those attending the conference were also four members of the D&SCRN Coordinating Committee (R. Stallings, B. Porfiriev, S. Ullberg and N. Petropoulos). The conference was funded by the National Science Foundation and the University of Delaware and was organized by the staff of the Disaster Research Center.

Besides honoring the two co-founders of the Disaster Research Center, Profs. E.L. Quarantelli and Russell R. Dynes, the Conference gave an opportunity to the participants to discuss the history of disaster research, the impact of disaster research on practitioners, the necessity for an interdisciplinary approach to disaster research, the training opportunities for young disaster researchers, the use of new technologies in emergency planning and research, the funding for disaster research and the agenda for disaster research. A salient concern of many presentations, especially those from the U.S., was the impact of 9/11 on civil protection

reorganization, emergency planning and research priorities.

The professional side-benefits of the conference included: (a) a guided tour in the new DRC installations, (b) a CD containing important texts, documents and reports (e.g. disaster resistant communities, 9/11 organization response, warning systems, annual reports, publications, etc) prepared by the DRC researchers, and (c) materials distributed by other groups. An interesting document/poster in the last category included the "Terrorism Time Line: Major Focusing Events and U.S. Outcomes (1993-2002)" depicting a chronology of terrorist acts and the US government/ agency responses (www.disaster-timeline.com).

On behalf of the D&SCRN, I would like to express my gratitude to Profs. Dynes and Quarantelli for their multi-dimensional contributions to the establishment and development of the field of sociology of disasters. We also wish them health and longevity so that they continue to share their professional wisdom with us. Finally, I would like to thank and congratulate the DRC professional and administrative staff for the organization of this watershed conference. We are looking forward to the publication of the proceedings. For more information concerning the anniversary conference (the proceedings, materials, etc.), members of our Network can communicate with Tricia Wachtendorf (twachten@Udel.Edu) (See also below).

Reorganization, European Disaster Social Research Infrastructure and Publications--Proposals for Discussion and Consideration.

During the DRC anniversary conference, the Coordinator took the opportunity to discuss with other colleagues from Europe: (1) the possibilities of mergings/collaboration between the D&SCRN and other comparable European research networks, (2) the publication of a handbook/reader for emergency practitioners and (3) the development of a European-based quick-response survey network for comparative research, especially on common emergencies confronting European countries. These are important topics, which need further elaboration and documentation, especially with regard to organization, funding and training. They can also become topics for discussion among our members during the 7th ESA conference in Torun Poland.

D&SCRN Webpage—Functioning and Support.

Though our Network has acquired a webpage (www.erc.gr/d&scrn), we are still in the process of development and expansion. There has been a delay in the publication of the Murcia papers, due mainly to work overload on the part of the Coordinator. However, the plan is to have the available papers loaded by September 2004. Those who have not yet sent me the final version of their Murcia papers, they are urged to do it no later than July 15, 2004. Finally, following an announcement by the new Vice President for Research Networks, liola Ostner (European Sociologist, No. 17, Winter 03/04, p.6), the Coordinator has submitted a request to the ESA Executive Committee for partial support (300 Euros) of the Network's webpage activities.

Greek-Turkish Microproject Proposal on NGO Disaster Preparedness.

The joint micro-project proposal ("Turkish-Greek Cooperation for Disaster Preparedness in the fields of Medicine, Search and Rescue and Psycho-social Support") described in the previous E-Newsletter and submitted by the Emergencies Research Center (N. Petropoulos) and the ORDOS Rescue Organization (Cem Baytok) to the Representation of the European Commission to Turkey, has been approved. The project entails exchange of visits between NGO representatives of both countries, comparative assessments of the gaps and proposals for operational guidelines and cooperation between the two countries.

Research project on EQ public information needs.

The first phase of a study assessing the EQ information needs of several target groups in the Athens metropolitan region (e.g. the general population, grade and high-school students, school teachers and counselors, the aged, the migrants and special needs groups) and funded by the 3rd EU Community Support Program, was recently completed. A corresponding research report with conclusions and recommendations for the development of new forms of EQ public education materials and infrastructures was submitted to the project administrators.

The study, implemented by the Pedagogical Institute and under the scientific direction of the Network Coordinator, is part of multi-agency project whose purpose is to set up a multi-dynamic EQ information center that, among other things, will include a shake table, a virtual reality room, and a room for

conventional, electronic and interactive public educational materials.

The second phase of the Pedagogical Institute study, will be implemented following the setting up of the multi-dynamic information center and will involve the experimental assessment of the new information materials/infrastructures. The Coordinator welcomes any information concerning the assessment of public reactions to shake tables and virtual reality materials, as well as information on the exploitation of these infrastructures for learning purposes.

Education and training in disaster medicine.

The Education Working Group (Chair: Geert Seynaeve of the Ministry of Public Health of Belgium) of the World Association for Disaster and Emergency Medicine (WADEM) is organizing a meeting in Brussels, October 29-31, 2004, in order to develop international standards and guidelines for education and

training in disaster medicine. Besides participation in the October meeting with a paper on the 1999 Athens EQ, the Coordinator has been asked to make a text contribution by July 20, 2004 regarding the sociological insights in emergencies and disasters that should be integrated in the education and training of medical doctors and practitioners involved in response to mass emergencies. Although I have literature from US and Canada, any sociological literature, especially from European and non-European researchers, is welcomed and will be taken into consideration with the appropriate citation.

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↑ News & Updates



On 14th and 15th of June, 2004, Wageningen Disaster Studies organised an International working conference on the theme of 'Challenges of Complexity in Coping with Climate-related Disasters'. Weather-related natural hazards, - high winds, floods and droughts -, account for 90% of the natural disasters, 86% of the deaths and 99% of the population affected by disasters, majority of them in areas of the developing countries. More than ever, the impact of climate change lays bare some of the crucial challenges in disaster response. Climate change leads to more erratic patterns in the freak weather events that prelude disaster, making disasters more unpredictable. Classic top-down disaster planning based on predictability, the supremacy of technical knowledge, and a strict separation of disaster situations from normality become increasingly inadequate. Alternatives are beginning to be explored. These include, for example, management forms based on complexity, redirecting planning paradigms from optimizing benefit to choosing options of least regret, shifting from emergency response to disaster preparedness, and developing governance schemes on the basis of multi-stakeholder platforms and community participation.

The working-conference consisted of an intense two-day discussion on this subject, taking stock of new ways of approaching disaster management and analysing how alternative forms of governance work out in the political and social realities of empirical cases of disaster response. With cases from the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Honduras, and Tanzania, the session themes concerned: discourses of climate-related disaster and disaster preparedness; complexity in disaster and disaster response; domains of knowledge, adaptation and vulnerability, community-based responses to climate-related disasters, and multi-stakeholder governance and institutional linkages.

The conference was sponsored by UNESCO and Wageningen University and Research Centre. Further information on the conference and the papers presented, can be obtained from Thea Hilhorst, at thea.hilhorst@wur.nl



University of Malaya's Centre for Climate Affairs (UMCCA), Malaysia

This article describes the efforts undertaken by the University of Malaya's Centre for Climate (UMCCA) and the continuous efforts of Malaysia to promote networking through academic collaboration in the field of "Climate Affairs".

Throughout the 1990s there has been growing interest in and concern about various climate-related issues in many countries worldwide, including Malaysia. Concern is growing about climate impacts resulting from rainfall shifts (droughts and floods), temperature increases, sea level rise, El Niño and La Niña events that have contributed to the apparent increase in climate-related hazards with impacts more intense and frequent. They are becoming difficult and costly to manage. NGOs and the general public are addressing these problems and issues such as the effective dissemination of forecasts and information, as well as issues of environment, justice and equity in situations of extreme events (such as floods, haze episodes and droughts). Public health issues attributed to vector and waterborne diseases, for example, are strongly related to climate variations and extremes, and as such have they become increasingly important topics of concern to the Malaysian public, and the Southeast Asia Region.

There are societal benefits to be achieved from improvements in physical, biological and social science research output, information dissemination such as for early warnings of hydro-meteorological and other hazards, and in climate related monitoring systems. The growing awareness of the need to consider climate and climate related information in risk related decision making is paramount to national interests and according to a growing

number of researchers hinges on national security itself.

Improved understanding of climate science, impacts, policy and law, economics and ethics can have a beneficial influence on the quality and effectiveness of climate-related policies. The continuing necessity to cope with known as well as surprising climate-related hazards underscores the belief that the concept of climate affairs can be given serious consideration, as Malaysia enhances its Windows of Vision 2020.

Malaysia's vision of becoming a developed and industrialized nation must not be compromised with a society whose quality of life is threatened by climate-induced hazards. The University of Malaya takes this challenge to be the leading University in Climate Affairs studies in the Southeast Asian Region and be comparable to other established Climate Research Centres in the world through its capacity for research and training. As an educational institution the University would provide the necessary "Human Capacity Building" through its teaching and learning programs, and pave the way for good decision-making and governance that are much lacking amongst public and private managers.

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The fourth of the historical series of Economic Congresses of Turkey took place in Izmir (the first was in 1923) 5-8 May 2004, where one of the 22 working groups was dedicated to 'Disaster Management in Turkey'. This is achieved for the first time and it is likely that from now on a disasters department will be established within the State Planning Organization. The topic has been a part or sub-chapter of the 5-year national plans in Turkey since the 1999 earthquakes. This working group was established October 2003, with about 50 members, including major municipalities, universities, public departments and ministries, NGOs, firms, chambers, etc.

Also the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement in Turkey has initiated a National Council for Earthquakes involving a very large group from all walks of life. The Council is structured into 7 sub-groups: Institutional, Legal Information Systems, Building Stock, Building Materials, Financial Issues, Training and Education. A final meeting of all groups will take place in September.

Meanwhile work is carried out for the revision of Development Law. The objective is to improve the participatory nature of planning in this country, clarify responsibilities with strict liabilities, devise further apparatus of land-management and introduce risk-management tools.

A workshop is arranged in Istanbul on the topic "Hazard Risk Management in Europe and Central Asia Workshop Agenda" on June 28 - 30, 2004. Also, the Chamber of Architects of Turkey in relation with the International Union of Architects has arranged a 2-week international workshop in Izmir 2-14 July 2004 for students. Murat Balamir is also participating proximately in two disaster studies relevant conferences: first one is in Karlsruhe (Germany) on the 26-27 July 2004, conference "Disasters and Society", University of Karlsruhe (TH) (www.disasterandsociety.uni-karlsruhe.de). Secondly, the 13th World Conference of Earthquake Engineers, 2-6 August 2004 to take place in Vancouver. (www.13WCEE.com).

For further information on any of these topics, please contact Murat Balamir at balamir@arch.metu.edu.tr



Report on Major Hazards and Emergency Planning Workshop 2003

The Department of Chemical and Environmental Engineering of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), in collaboration with Health & Safety Laboratory and Health & Safety Executive of United Kingdom successfully organized a major hazards and emergency planning workshop from 7 to 9 October 2003. It was held at the Mines Beach Resort & Spa, Seri Kembangan, and 20 Km south of Kuala Lumpur. The workshop attracted 70 participants representing emergency response agencies, oil and gas industries,

manufacturing industries, and academics from all over the country.

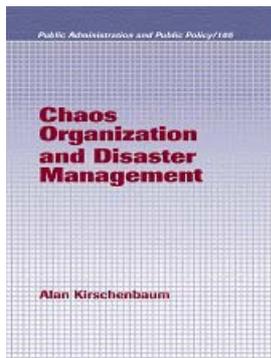
The workshop provided information on assessment, control and mitigation of major accident hazards in the oil, gas, chemical and related industries. The regulatory controls of major hazards and disaster management in Malaysia were encompassed in the program. The workshop included numerous case studies of major accidents in the country and abroad, and footage of major accidents. Mr. Marc McBride,

who is a fire scientist at the time at the Health and Safety Laboratory Buxton, United Kingdom, was the main presenter at the workshop. Dr. Fakhrul-Razi, the Head of Department of Chemical and Environmental Engineering (UPM), presented the "Directive 20" and how disaster management is organised in Malaysia. Mr. Fuad Abbas highlighted the Fire Safety Act, OSHA 94 and CIMAH 96 that comprise the safety regulations of Malaysia. Finally, Ms. Aini Mat Said

presented industrial disaster case studies from the Faculty of Human Ecology, UPM.

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➔ Recently Published



CHAOS ORGANIZATION AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

By: Alan Kirschenbaum (2003)

Kirschenbaum analyses definitions of preparedness, evaluations of risk, and set social structures that negatively impact formal disaster organization efficacy. He demonstrates the fundamental flaws of disaster management agencies by inspecting disasters from the perspective of potential victims and proposes an innovative model of disaster management centring on privatisation.

Published by Marcel Dekker, Inc
336 pages | Illustrated
Print ISBN: 0-8247-4715-1

For more information on this book, have a look at <http://www.dekker.com/servlet/product/productid/4715-1>

➔ Conference Coming Up

GENDER EQUALITY & DISASTER RISK REDUCTION WORKSHOP

10-12 August 2004 – Honolulu, Hawai'i

Your participation is invited in this action-oriented meeting for women and men working toward gender equality in disaster risk management and response. The workshop is sponsored by US AID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, University of Hawaii Social Science Research Institute, members of the Gender and Disaster Network and others. Practitioners, policy makers, planners, academics, activists and community members will focus on practical and feasible strategies for engendering the risk reduction agenda. The language of the conference is English and the conference site is the East-West Center of Honolulu. Contact Elaine Enarson or Cheryl Anderson for more information [genderdisaster@yahoo.com] and for updates check the conference webpage <http://www.ssri.hawaii.edu/research/GDWwebsite/>. Email Elaine Enarson at: eenarson@earthlink.net

➔ Conference Coming Up

ESA European Sociological Association

The 7th conference "Rethinking Inequities" of the ESA will take place at Nicholas Copernicus University, in Torun, Poland. *The D&SCRN will, as usual, organise a number of sessions within this conference.* As accounted for in the Coordinator's report above, sessions and chairs are being discussed at the moment. Additional suggestions for session themes are nevertheless warmly welcome. Please contact D&SCRN coordinator Nicholas Petropoulos at erc@otenet.gr. Further details on this conference will be published in upcoming issues, as the organisers of the conference give us more information.

➔ Conference Coming Up



Planning for the **International Research Committee on Disasters'** sessions at the World Congress of Sociology in Durban, South Africa, in July 2006 is now well underway.

The planning committee, headed by former Research Committee President Joe Scanlon, has reached agreement on several sessions and is working on others. The sessions already in place are:

- a. *A session entitled "Disaster Research: Guiding Light or Lost in the Shadows of the 9/11 World?," organized by Hank Fischer;*
- b. *A session of invited senior scholars entitled "The President's Panel," organized by Committee President Robert Stallings;*
- c. *A session on disasters and ethnic diversity, organized by Bob Bolin;*
- d. *A session for invited young scholars, organized by David M. Neal.*

There will be discussants assigned to all these sessions. Discussions are also underway with the editor of the *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* to see if some of these sessions can be turned into special issues of the journal. That was done after the Congress in Montreal and after the pre-Congress workshop at Macedon, Australia.

A number of other possibilities are being discussed. **Anyone who wishes to suggest a session should contact Professor Scanlon at jscanlon@ccs.carleton.ca** as soon as possible. It seems likely that our Committee will be limited to six or eight sessions.

Kathleen Tierney has agreed to referee the open papers. The deadlines for submission of such papers will be announced in the newsletter.

The first deadline, however, comes up this October when committees must have reached agreement on their own and joint sessions. Our Committee has reached tentative agreement with Research Committee 24 for a joint session on Disasters and the Environment and with Working Group 05—which deals with famine—for sessions focusing on historical research as well as contemporary research.

The planning committee has still not been able to work out plans for a pre-Congress workshop in South Africa, but Committee Vice President Andrew Coghlan is still working on that. Amrita Rangasami of the Famine working group has suggested that the Committee might consider, instead, a pre-Congress workshop in India. This is being discussed.

In an effort to assist would-be participants to obtain funding, the planning committee is trying to get decisions made early enough so the Research Committee president can send out formal letters of invitation.

The Congress runs from Sunday, July 23, to Saturday, July 29, 2006. The sessions for our committee are likely to be Monday to Friday afternoon that week.

July 2006 may seem a long way away, but in fact it is now just 25 months until we meet in Durban. That means that requests for travel funds in some cases will have to be submitted early next year to make 2006 budgets.

For further information contact Professor Scanlon at jscanlon@ccs.carleton.ca



Call for contributions for Conference on 'The Politics of Multi-Stakeholder Participation'
Wageningen University & Research Centre, Department of Environmental Sciences
The Netherlands
September 29th-October 1st, 2004

Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (also known as Dialogues, Fora, and Partnerships) are currently fashionable forms of multi-actor participation bringing together different stakeholders groups to tackle resource management problems. Expectations are high and first results look promising.

But what power and legitimacy issues within and around such platforms? How does the institutional environment respond to new platforms? What is the role of knowledge and information? Such issues will be debated from 29 September until 1 October, when Wageningen University organises an international conference on the theme 'The Politics of Multi-Stakeholder Platforms'.

Day one will focus on multiple-use conflicts in the water sector. Day two will include platforms in other sectors, such as [Disaster Preparedness](#) and Joint Forestry. The conference includes a field trip to the river Scheldt.

During the conference the preliminary findings of our case studies in Europe, Latin America, Southern Africa and South-Asia will be presented. Policymakers, practitioners and researchers from all corners of the globe have been invited to shed their light on the matter.

If you feel you could contribute interesting insights on this theme, please submit (in Word format) an abstract for a (15-minute) presentation to Jeroen.warner@wur.nl before August 1st, 2004. Further information can also be obtained from Jeroen Warner or Martijn Vink at +31-317-483931.

↪ Et Cetera



WANTS YOU...

...to review books relevant to sociology. If you are interested, get in touch with Max Koch at University of Ulster!

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