

Disaster & Social Crisis Research Network Electronic Newsletter

Nº. 39, July - November, 2009

<http://dscrn.crc.ensmp.fr/>

Coordinator's Report

Susann Ullberg

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Dear DSCRN members and colleagues, December is here and with it a new issue of our e-newsletter. Here you will find information on the last ESA conference as well as on newly released books and upcoming meetings.

Our sessions at the ESA conference in Lisbon on September 2-5 were carried out as planned. Fortunately everybody in the program was there to present their papers and we were pleased to have a fairly high attendance also by attendees other than those presenting papers. On the whole, the local conference organisers had done a great job and the meeting was well organised in their beautiful town of Lisbon. Problems in the conference organisation, such as the on line submission of abstracts and the registration, had almost been forgotten by then. In order to improve upcoming meetings, they were nevertheless discussed at the meeting that the RN Coordinators had with the Executive Committee on the first day of the conference.

Among the issues discussed there of direct relevance to the DSCRN members was the relatively new web page of the ESA (<http://www.europeansociology.org/>). The research networks have been offered to use this to communicate with their members and the virtual world. Now, thanks to the hard work of our web manager (as well as newsletter editor) Eduardo Runte, the DSCRN has just launched the new version of its web page (<http://dscrn.crc.ensmp.fr/>), as was informed at the DSCRN business meeting we had in Lisbon. You will find more information on this in the Web Manager's

Report below, but I nevertheless wish to inform you on the discussion at the business meeting. The issue of hosting a web page such as ours (of a non lucrative organisation) is always a matter of concern. Historically, as well as at present, we have been sponsored by the academic institutions of different members in the Coordinating Committee (CC) which have never charged us for this hosting. Yet, this makes us vulnerable when this member leaves this institution for whatever reason. The offer from the ESA would in light of this seem to be a rather convenient (and free of charge) option. Yet, the ESA has limited space and limited resources to update information. Due to the fragile economy of the ESA there are no funds either that could finance the costs of an independent web host. Thus, it was decided at our business meeting to put our efforts to our own web page and to explore the possibilities of financing such an independent web page hosting, while we also will use the ESA web page to provide basic information about the network and the link to our site of course. So, don't forget to check it out. We hope you will like it and welcome all comments and suggestions to improve it!

Speaking about the business meeting; two other important decisions were made. The first was to reduce the number of members in the Coordinating Committee from nine (9) to seven (7). This was my proposal grounded in the experience as the coordinator for the last period (2007-2009) when I realised that such a large number is not really necessary to keep up the work of the CC. On the other hand it is important to maintain representation in regional and institutional terms for which the business meeting agreed upon the number of seven members. A new CC for the period of 2009-2011 was therefore elected as follows:

- Susann Ullberg, Coordinator (Sweden) (re-elected)
- Eduardo Runte, E-Newsletter Editor & Web Manager (Brazil/France) (re-elected)
- Murat Balamir (Turkey), Member (re-elected)
- Maureen Fordham (UK), Member (re-elected)
- Nicholas Petropoulos (Greece), Member (re-elected)
- Sandrine Revet (France), Member (re-elected)
- Benjamín González (Spain), member (new)

On behalf of the new CC I wish to thank the outgoing members Lindy Newlove-Eriksson, Philip Buckle and José Rodrigues for their term, and welcome Benjamín González to the team. As a re-elected coordinator I also wish to thank the participants in the business meeting for the renewed confidence. I encourage all DSCRN members to communicate with any of us in the CC if you have any constructive suggestions for how to improve our work for the network!

Now, please enjoy the newsletter and don't forget to send us your contributions of all disaster and crisis related issues for the next one. Meanwhile I greet you from the University of Florida (USA) where I will remain until end of year working on my dissertation. Here and in all of the USA was Halloween celebrated this weekend, yet this celebration was slightly shadowed by the fear for the A-H1N1 influenza and the lack of vaccine for this. This is an emergent issue in the Northern hemisphere at present. I will not dwell upon it here in detail, but it is clear that as social scientists there are many questions around disaster preparedness and communication in particular, and economy and politics in general, that can we can, and ought to, pose to understand and discuss both the causes and the consequences of this phenomenon.

Your sincerely

//Susann Ullberg

Contents

Coordinator's Report.....	1
Editor's Note.....	2
D&SCRN Web Manager report (January – June, 2009).....	2
Resources.....	3
Jobs, Fellowships, Grants.....	3
Calls for Papers.....	3
Upcoming Events.....	4
9th ESA Conference Papers.....	7
The DSCRN Electronic Newsletter.....	8

Editor's Note

Eduardo Runte

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Dear DSCRN members and colleagues, this is the issue number 39 of our newsletter. You have probably noticed that it has been a while since the last newsletter. At the ESA conference in Lisbon in September, I suggested we should reduce the periodicity of the newsletter. We used

to publish four issues per year, and from now on, we will publish only three. The reason for this change is simple. We thought that with four issues per year, the newsletters were coming out a bit “thin” in terms of content. The coordinating committee accepted my suggestion, in hope that our members and colleagues will have more time to write their contributions to the newsletter. We will try to maintain a schedule with the newsletter coming out in the first days of December, April, and August.

The purpose of the newsletter is to provide a medium for exchanges between those who work – as researchers or practitioners – in the field of disaster and social crisis. In that sense, the newsletter is really made by you, the readers. All forms of contribution are accepted: short reports of ongoing and finished projects; stories “from the field”; comments on recent events; calls for papers; pictures... If unsure, contact me!

Eduardo

DSCRN Web Manager report (January – June, 2009)

Eduardo Runte

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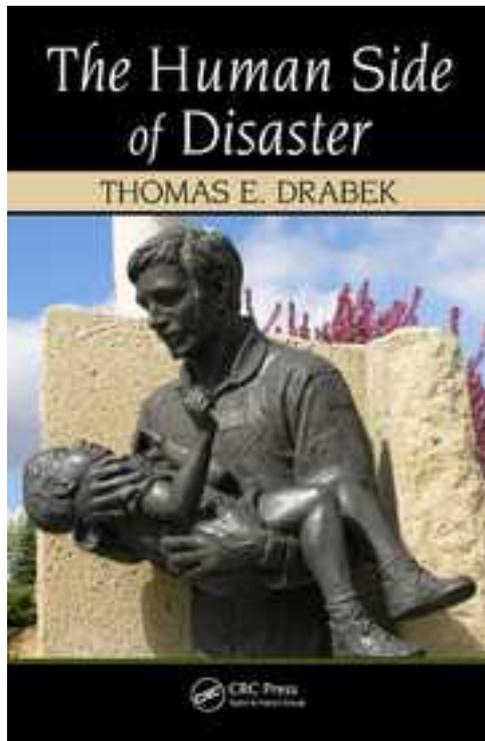
1. **New website!** That is right! We have revamped our website to make it more functional and attractive. There are still a few bits to improve on, but we are sure you are going to enjoy the new look. If you notice anything that does not appear to work, please send me an email. If there are any features that you would like to see on the website, let me know. It might be sometime before I can get to it, but I will try to accommodate every suggestion.
2. **New members:** The DSCRN has not received any applications for membership in the period. This is the first time since late 2007 that there are no new members. We at the Coordinating Committee would like to urge you to encourage your colleagues to join us. To forms of membership are available: full membership, for those who are members of the ESA; and associate memberships for those who are not members of the ESA. Visit our website for details.

Resources

Books, articles, reports, and recent studies by DSCRN members and colleagues. Book prices reflect prices at the time of survey. The DSCRN cannot guarantee the prices informed. Prices in US dollars.

The Human Side of Disasters

By Thomas Drabek, University of Denver, Colorado



When disaster strikes, people react, and usually, fear levels rise. Temporarily, however, one motivation supersedes all others: survival of self and those nearby, especially loved ones. Based on the author's years of research and teaching experience, *The Human Side of Disaster* scientifically evaluates human responses in the face of disasters. This examination informs emergency managers and response teams and teaches them how to anticipate human behaviors in-crisis.

The book begins with four scenarios based on interviews and real events that introduce the human side of disaster. The stories examine how attention to, or lack of, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation affect outcomes. Each subsequent chapter refers back to the original Experiences chapter and provides insights that can be applied not only to events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and floods, but also to man-made threats including industrial accidents and acts of terrorism. The author explores how people's responses can be predicted, the long term effects of disaster on the psyche, and the key issues involved in recovery.

A balanced interpretation of research, results, and experience, the book demonstrates how traditional

warning methods and high-tech systems can work together to improve communications, evacuations, and reconstruction efforts. It highlights the role of the human element in any disaster situation and demonstrates how to use that element as part of a planned disaster response.

Jobs, Fellowships, Grants

11 Doctoral Grants in the Humanities and Social Sciences

http://www.isa-sociology.org/pdfs/fellow_kennedy_2009.pdf

Graduate School: John F. Kennedy-Institute for North American Studies. Free University of Berlin, Germany. Applications: January 31, 2010

Calls for Papers

The 17th Annual Charles F. Fraker Conference

The Turning Point: Crisis & Disaster

March 25, 26 & 27, 2010 at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

The term "crisis" itself is difficult to detach from current political and economic developments. The impetus of this conference is to discuss the rhetorical use (and/or abuse), of this word by examining how ideas of crisis and disasters have been thought and expressed through aesthetics, history and theory.

How do we define "crisis"? What are the less explored contexts of this word that we can consider? How does crisis relate to disaster (if it does)? Through examinations of textual representations and textual manifestations of crisis, we seek to resuscitate the idea of crisis as a turning point that requires judgment and discernment and whose implications extend to: Culture, Identity, Sexuality, Politics, Economics, Nature, Ethics, Religion, Representations of Death and Life, History and its Constructions, Technology... This list of topics is neither exhaustive nor restrictive!

Submission Deadline: December 21st, 2009

Submission Instructions: Presentations may be given in English, French, Italian, Portuguese or Spanish and should be related to Francophone, Hispanic, Lusophone or Italian cultures. Please send a 250-300 word abstract to fraker2010abstracts@ctools.umich.edu. Questions? Contact the Organizing Committee at fraker2010@umich.edu.

New Cultural Frontiers

<http://www.newculturalfrontiers.org/Default.aspx?p=submitpaper>

A new electronic journal dedicated to recognizing and promoting the research of doctoral students and young researchers. Submissions: December 31, 2009

Human rights and the social sciences

<http://www.isa-sociology.org/contr105.htm>

Special issue of Societies Without Borders. Submissions: January 1, 2010

Information and Communication Technologies and the Current Crisis: How Are They Connected?

<http://www.triple-c.at>

Special Issue of tripleC Cognition, Communication, Cooperation: Open Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society. Submissions: February 1, 2010

Children & families in poverty

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/cfp/cjpcpcfp.pdf>

Journal of Children & Poverty. Call for articles. Submissions: March 1, 2010

Upcoming Events

Disaster and risk: from empiricism to criticism

International symposium – 18th-19th June 2010 in Paris (CERI-EHESS)

Julien Langumier (RIVES, CNRS UMR EVS) : langumier@yahoo.fr

Cécile Quesada-Moaeteau (CREDO, CNRS UMR 6574) : quesada.moaeteau@gmail.com

Sandrine Revet (CERI, Sciences Po-CNRS) : revet@ceri-sciences-po.org

The widespread media coverage of disasters and our growing and unavoidable awareness of their increasing frequency and intensity under the influence of global warming have been prompting social science to treat disasters and “at risk” situations as research questions during the last two decades. Besides, a lot of studies – from the sociology of politics to the sociology of rights through the sociology of sciences or organizations – have developed in France during the last decade in order to understand risks generated by technological and industrial progress (GMO, mobile phones, nuclear...) and the social and political processes appearing in their wake on the public scene (“framing a public problem

into collective risk”, mobilizations, formation of “victim groups”...). However, despite the relevance and importance of these studies, the angles chosen sometimes lead to a reduction of the analysis of disasters to presuppositions such as an exception or an emergency, and confine the understanding of risk to the practical categories of vulnerability / resilience / prevention. Moreover, the approaches focusing on the representations elaborated by the populations are sometimes used to propose a culturalist analysis that relies on a dichotomy between experts and laypeople. In order to go beyond these reductions and frontiers, this symposium proposes to consider disasters and risk as a continuum of construction (the disaster being presented as the horizon of risk), by dealing with the local processes that arise during such situations, and by highlighting the complexity of involved dynamics. The “local” is here considered in a permanent interaction with other scales (global or national through the post-emergency assistance world and the operational systems of prevention, care or reconstruction...).

It is still common to notice, in some studies on disasters, that attention focuses first on the emergency and then on the first aid and immediate assistance activities, underlying the exceptional attributes of the situation and the freezing of crisis time. In the same spirit, a lot of studies focus on the prevention activities that follow a disaster, thus also defining the time frame as exceptional and often failing to recognise the ordinary time and daily routine involved. However, the notion of a “frozen time” before a “return to normal life” should be questioned in the light of field research and empirical bodies (contemporary or historical) that beg to integrate disasters into longer time frames and deal with the daily life recreated by local actors. Thus, emergency situations caused by disasters of any kind give birth to a specific time frame during which many issues and social dynamics emerge and new configurations arise between groups. Notably, the interventions of States and charitable or humanitarian actors on behalf of populations, as well as the implementation of prevention plans, modify local context. The interaction between the practices of populations and those of the aid or risk prevention institutions involve a confrontation between different worlds, between institutional actors and inhabitants, between humanitarian actors and beneficiaries, between media stories and experience, between local and global. From that perspective, the “return to normal life” may appear as the first fiction of disasters.

“At risk” situations and disasters also often involve culturalist interpretations that rely on the generic and opposing concepts of victim and rescuer, fatalism and management, rational and irrational. We can also find this dichotomy in the studies that deal with interpretations of disasters and contrast the concept of “calamity” to the post-modern concept of “risk”.

However, the concepts of ‘risk culture’ and ‘disaster sub-culture’ are not sufficient to interpret all the empirical data. On the contrary, ethnographic investigations or, in a historical perspective, archive research, reveal hybrid processes between different logics and ancient practices of risk management relying on know-how born from an empirical knowledge of the environment as well as complex belief systems. The logic of ‘‘coping with’’ risk and disasters leads all the actors (inhabitants, institutional authorities, managers...) to perpetual compromise, questioning the boundaries some studies draw in terms of ‘‘culture’’, thus participating in a kind of ideal invention of the collective drama.

Finally, the disaster is often considered as an event that puts the vulnerability of a system to the test or reveals the resilience potential of a society or a social group. However, the notions of resilience and vulnerability seem unlikely to convey the proliferation of these local reconfigurations, of the many definitions elaborated by the inhabitants of territories affected by disasters or qualified as ‘‘at risk’’. The issues of resettlement, reconstruction and housing; the uses of identity resources and disaster politics by the ‘‘victims’’, or of the resources of prevention plans by the ‘‘vulnerable populations’’; the normative and competitive interventions of humanitarian actors, rescue organizations and prevention actors; the entry on the political scene of different groups; the reconfiguration of collective memories through a renewed relationship with the past; the quest for explanations through logics of blame attribution and the search for people responsible for the drama represent so many complex dynamics that are fundamental to understand. All these issues must be put into perspective with larger dynamics that can be observed in interactions with the sphere of international actors that intervene in risk and disaster situations, unveiling the contemporary transformation of the notion of security. Thanks to empirical bodies, social science provides vital knowledge about these rich and complex contexts.

The symposium thus calls for social science research (contemporary and historical) that relies on empirical studies (fieldwork, research in the archives...) to study the social and political dynamics involved in these situations and more specifically analyze the interactions between populations and the different actors that intervene to prevent or manage collective drama. The reflection will be organized along three main lines:

1. From the event to the research object

Research will be presented that aims at restoring the density and depth characterizing disasters and risk situations by reinserting them inside dynamic and heuristic scales, that is, by analyzing these events and situations from perspectives that articulate micro and macro, local and global, long time frames and

emergency, small disasters and big catastrophes, etc.... The methodological reflections on corpuses, on the practice of fieldwork in these specific contexts, or on the archives chosen to investigate these topics also help to understand how a research object is constructed from the themes of risk and disaster.

2. Beyond the ‘‘risk culture’’: confrontation and circulation of knowledge and practice

We will introduce studies that analyze hybrid practice, reconfiguration and adaptation born from disaster and risk situations. Hoping to go beyond a certain form of ‘‘culturalism’’ that leads to simplistic dichotomies between ‘‘expert’’ and ‘‘profane’’ knowledge and practices, we encourage papers that investigate confrontation between different types of knowledge and analyze the circulation of tools, actors or practice between the different interacting social worlds.

3. The politics of disaster and risk

By reintroducing the analysis of the dynamics that are born within risk or disaster situations, we want to understand the political use of these situations by different actors. Notably, what are the resources they use to elaborate critiques, rally together and develop forms of appropriation or of resistance against ‘‘governance’’ operations, often presented, by their instigators, as outside the political field, or analyzed by social sciences in terms of ‘‘bio-politics’’? By observing, from local fields, the interventions of different national and international actors (States, International Organizations, Non Governmental Organizations) we will question the transformations of the concept of security these interventions – and their legitimization processes – contribute to.

Organization of the Symposium:

Association for the Research on Catastrophes and Risks in Anthropology (ARCRA): <http://www.arcra.fr/>

Julien Langumier (RIVES, CNRS UMR EVS): langumier@yahoo.fr

Cécile Quesada-Moaeteau (CREDO, CNRS UMR 6574): quesada.moaeteau@gmail.com

Sandrine Revet (CERI, Sciences Po-CNRS): revet@ceri-sciences-po.org

Scientific Committee

- Olivier Borraz, sociologist (CSO, Sciences-Po-CNRS)
- Thierry Coanus, urban engineer (RIVES, UMR CNRS EVS)
- Nicolas Dodier, sociologist (GSPM, EHESS)
- Virginia García Acosta, anthropologist (CIESAS, Mexico)
- Claude Gilbert, politologist (PACTE/MSH-Alpes,

CNRS)

- Julien Langumier, anthropologist (RIVES, UMR CNRS EVS)
- Anthony Oliver-Smith, anthropologist (University of Florida)
- Grégory Quenet, historian (Université Versailles Saint Quentin)
- Cécile Quesada-Moateau, anthropologist ('Atenisi Institute(Tonga)-CREDO, UMR CNRS 6574)
- Sandrine Revet, anthropologist (CERI, Sciences Po-CNRS)
- Françoise Zonabend, anthropologist (LAS, EHESS)

Schedule

The scientific committee will select the communications and announce its choice no later than the 15th of October. The final papers must be sent before the 15th of March 2010. The symposium will take place in Paris on the 18th and 19th of June 2010.

ISCRAM2010 Conference

Defining Crisis Management 3.0 - 7th International Conference on Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management

Seattle, USA



May 2-5, 2010

The theme for ISCRAM2010 is Defining Crisis Management 3.0. Our aim is to look forward at the conference and consider how our rapidly changing technologies may change the way that we respond to crises in our ever more interconnected world. As always the conference will be multidisciplinary drawing together perspectives from across all socio-technological domains. Human behaviours are as important to us as the technologies that enable us to share information and situation assessments quickly and in increasing volumes.

About ISCRAM:

The ISCRAM Community is a worldwide community of researchers, scholars, teachers, students, practitioners and policy makers interested or actively involved in the subject of Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management. At its annual international conference alternating between the US and Europe, the ISCRAM Community gathers to present and discuss the latest

research and developments in this growing area during an interactive and stimulating 3 day program. The ISCRAM Community also organizes an International Summer School for PhD students and ISCRAM-CHINA, an annual conference for ISCRAM research in China. Full information on ISCRAM can be found at www.iscram.org.

XVII International Sociological Association

World Congress of Sociology

Gothenburg, Sweden



International Research Committee on Disasters (RC-39)
Regular Sessions: July 12-16, 2010

<http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010/>

All the slots for RC 39 papers at the World Congress in Sweden have now been filled and there is a waiting list of persons who want to present. The organizers -- Joe Scanlon and Lori Peek -- are asking those whose papers have been accepted to let them know if, for any reason, they won't be able to make it (jscanlon@ccs.carleton.ca; lori.peek@colostate.edu). They understand that sometimes persons have to withdraw for financial (travel money is not available) or other reasons. Joe and Lori are anxious to notify those on the waiting list as soon as possible should slots open up.

Most sessions involve four short papers (12 minutes each) with half an hour for discussion. There is also a special session for doctoral candidates, a special session on Sweden -- attendees will include two of the founding members of our committee -- and a special presentation at the business meeting by Bill Anderson, who will talk about the pioneering research of Russell Dynes, one of the founders of the Disaster Research Center.

Those who plan to attend -- whether or not they are presenting a paper -- should start booking accommodation and start making travel plans. The hotels are now listed on the International Sociological Association web site under the line item for the World Congress (<http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010/>). Presenters should note that the final program schedule has not been worked out nor have chairs and discussants been finally assigned. Anyone planning to attend only part of the Congress may discover they miss their own session or a paper they want to hear.

The Congress requires the organizers to have a formal program in by January 31st but attendees are not

required to register until May 4th. Note that all attendees must register and that presenters who do not register by that date will be dropped from the program. The actual program does not include abstracts but abstracts are published separately. Anyone who wishes their abstract published must also have sent in their abstract by May 4th. We will remind you as those dates approach.

In addition to the formal disaster sessions, which run every afternoon including Saturday and evenings Monday through Friday, the organizers are hoping to have Tuesday and Thursday brunches. At the first brunch, the plan is to introduce all doctoral students so attendees will know who they are and be able to talk to them about their research. At the second brunch, the plan is to call attention to any books in our field published since the last Congress in South Africa in 2006. Authors who are present will be introduced. Usually attendees also get together socially after at least some of the evening sessions.

Travel to Sweden

Gothenburg is a university city just across the water from Fredericshavn, Denmark and has excellent train service north to Norway and Oslo, east to Stockholm and (by ferry and train or by train alone) west and south to Copenhagen. There is now a bridge connecting Copenhagen, Denmark to Sweden. There are also some small beautiful fishing villages north of Gothenburg worth a day trip.

Rail travel in Europe including all Scandinavian countries is easy for non-Europeans especially with a Eurail pass (ideally a first class pass). There is usually a small extra charge for a seat which can be booked at any railway station. Passes can be obtained for a specific number of days or for so many days in a longer period. They must be stamped before first used and produced (when asked for) with a passport. Trains usually run on time and the signs at stations are visible and clear. Just one caution: different cars on the same train go to different destinations – it is important when travelling by train to make certain not only that you are on the right train but in the right car. (We once met a Canadian who had left her seat to go to the dining car and returned only to discover her car with her baggage had left the train.)

Train travelers if they wish can head south from Sweden to Germany, France, the Netherlands and other European countries including the Republic of Ireland. Eurail passes are not valid in the United Kingdom which has its own pass system. Buying standard tickets for short trips is not expensive but long distance first class travel is much cheaper with a pass. It is of course also possible to travel by air but changing travel dates is usually difficult and expensive when air travel is involved. It is easy when traveling using a rail pass.

Airline Discount

Airlines which belong to the Star Alliance are offering a 20 per cent discount to those who travel with their members to the Congress. You can get the discount by calling the reservations office and quoting the event code SK02A05. Registered participants plus one accompanying person traveling to the event are automatically granted a discount of up to 20%, depending on the class of travel. Participating airlines are:

- Air Canada
- Asiana Airlines
- Austrian Airlines,
- bmi,
- LOT Polish Airlines,
- Lufthansa
- SWISS International Air Lines
- Scandinavian Airlines & Blue1
- Singapore Airlines
- TAP Portugal
- THAI
- Turkish Airlines
- United

Booking office information can be found at: www.staralliance.com/conventionsplus

9th ESA Conference Papers

Following the practice of previous DSCRN sessions at ESA conferences, we asked the speakers to produce extended summaries of their presentations. These documents are intended to give an idea of what issues were debated at the many sessions we held at the conference to those who, for one reason or another, were unable to attend the event.



The extended summaries are now posted on our website. If you are a conference speaker and your paper is not

online, please contact the website manager, Eduardo Runte at dscrn.website@gmail.com.



The organizers of the DSCRN sessions would like to thank all speakers and members of the audience for their enthusiastic participation in this large event.

The DSCRN Electronic Newsletter

This is the periodic electronic newsletter of the Disaster & Social Crisis Research Network. The purpose of the DSCRN 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 DSCRN Electronic Newsletter is published three times a year (December, April and August). The previously published newsletters are downloadable at the network’s webpage: <http://dscrn.crc.ensmp.fr/>.

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, Eduardo Runte (dscrn.news@gmail.com) no later than the first of the month of publication. Contributions to the newsletter should preferably be written in a concise format (½-1 page long maximum) in order to make reading comprehensive albeit focused. Ideas should be referenced (Author, year), but there is no need for a complete reference list.

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

All “signed” texts express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the coordinator, the editor or of the DSCRN.

Susann Ullberg, DSCRN Coordinator

Eduardo Runte, E-Newsletter Editor