

The Politics of Disaster in the Middle East and Beyond
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Course Description:

This course examines the politics of natural and man-made disasters, including war, forced migration, drought, famine, earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, and epidemics. Focusing on the Middle East, it also presents comparative cases from Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and North America. In doing so, the class will examine the unique ways that different types of disasters interact with governance structures; social and economic inequalities; medical infrastructure; gender; race and ethnicity; and political cleavages. Throughout the course, students will learn basic elements of research design and methods in addition to welcoming experienced disaster response and analysis practitioners to class. Finally, the Politics of Disaster in the Middle East and Beyond addresses some of the philosophical aspects of working in and studying disaster-affected contexts, bringing an ethical sensibility to policy-relevant analysis.

Assignments and Grading:

Workload: *The reading load for this class includes about five academic articles/six academic book chapters a week, with tradeoffs to allow for the inclusion of policy reports, analysis, blog and opinion pieces, and primary sources where appropriate. Please do not be intimidated by weeks with many readings; several are probably page-long reports or blog posts! Students are expected to skim judiciously and to take notes in order to facilitate their participation in class discussion.*

Participation: *You are expected to attend class regularly having completed the assigned readings. Your engagement in class discussions and activities should be thoughtful and respectful. I recognize that people have different comfort levels with relation to speaking in class and will incorporate different types of participation opportunities (e.g., open discussion, debate, directed Q&A, small group work, interaction with visiting speakers). My evaluation of your participation is based on the quality of your contributions rather than their frequency or volume.*

Points: 20

Assignment #1: Who responds? Profile of a responding agency (assigned randomly)

Due date: February 12

Points: 20

Description: Write a 300-500 word overview of the agency you are randomly assigned, including its history; relationship to the government (e.g., is it a stand-alone agency or under another agency's umbrella? Is it a United Nations agency, inter-governmental, national, local, or a non-governmental organization?); its funding and how its funding operates (e.g., taxpayer funded, project-oriented funding disbursement); its role in disaster prediction, preparation, response, management, and/or recovery; and brief summaries of recent major efforts.

Assignment #2: Disaster briefing (students sign up)

Due Date: Different for each student. Must be submitted Friday noon before following Tuesday's class, posted on Blackboard for entire class.

Points: 20

Description: Each week following Session 2 and ending with Session 11, groups of 2-3 students will submit outlines that present a four-page (TNR 12pt. font w/ 10pt. footnotes, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and a separate Chicago-style, author-date bibliography that does not count in the page requirement) basic overview of the disaster under study for that week or a related disaster TBD by Prof. Parkinson. This overview should include bullet points that highlight major features of the country affected (e.g., regime type/POLITY score, leadership, major socio-political cleavages, per capita GDP at time of crisis, Gini coefficient); regions affected; and critical statistics (e.g., number of displaced, number of casualties). Additionally, it should include a timeline of critical junctures/decision points; a paragraph-long description of the nature of the disaster and any related crises it triggered; a paragraph on the extent of international relief efforts/intervention, and any key notes the group feels are pertinent to the class's ability to discuss dynamics surrounding the crisis. Groups may also include 3-5 illustrative media headlines related to the crisis (local media preferred if possible, translations of local language media by competent speakers accepted as well as English)

Final Assignment: Policy or Research Proposal

Due Date: Draft due May 14 for final session, final version due by 5pm May 17

Points: 40

*Description: Submit a 4,000-5,000 word document that suggests a policy innovation, proposal for program evaluation, or research project related to a major international disaster (broadly conceived) not covered extensively by the class readings (e.g., studying the relationship between drought and civil conflict in Syria is not permitted). Students should draw on course readings, academic research, policy documents, primary, and/or media sources. Policy proposals should be based around a key challenge or problem evident in disaster response. Research proposals should include a specific. **Specifics will be addressed in detail in a separate document.***

Required Texts:

Jones, Lynne. 2017. *Outside the Asylum: a Memoir of War, Disaster and Humanitarian Psychiatry*. Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Maxwell, Daniel G., and Nisar Majid. *Famine In Somalia: Competing Imperatives, Collective Failures, 2011-12*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

McGilvray, Dennis B, and Michele R Gamburd. *Tsunami Recovery In Sri Lanka : Ethnic and Regional Dimensions*. London: Taylor and Francis, 2013.

Session 1: January 29**Overview: What are current crises in the Middle East?****Skills lab: What is a disaster? Conceptualizing “disaster” and “emergency”**

- Comfort, Louise K. “Risk, Security, And Disaster Management.” *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2005, pp. 335–356., doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.8.081404.075608.
- William Donner, Havidán Rodríguez. 2008. “Population Composition, Migration and Inequality: The Influence of Demographic Changes on Disaster Risk and Vulnerability.” *Social Forces*, Volume 87, Issue 2. Pages 1089–1114, <https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.0.0141>
- Kinsella, Helen M. 2006. “Gendering Grotius: Sex and Sex Difference in the Laws of War.” *Political Theory* 34 (2): 161–91
- Farmer, Paul. 1996. “On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below.” *Daedalus* 125 (1): 261–83.
- Collier, David, and Steven Levitsky. 1997. “Research Note: Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research.” *World Politics* 49 (3): 430–51. <https://doi.org/10.1353/wp.1997.0009>.

Session 2: February 5**War and Humanitarianism: What are the politics of humanitarian intervention? (Syria)****Brief Presentations: Who responds to disasters?****Skills lab: Counterfactuals and Critical Junctures**

- Lawrence, Adria. 2013. *Imperial Rule and the Politics of Nationalism: Anti-Colonial Protest in the French Empire*. New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press. Skim intro, read Chapter 3.
- Yacoubian, Mona. 2017. “Critical Junctures in United States Policy toward Syria: An Assessment of the Counterfactuals.” 3. Washington, DC: Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide.
- Paris, Roland. 2014. “The ‘Responsibility to Protect’ and the Structural Problems of Preventive Humanitarian Intervention.” *International Peacekeeping* 21 (5): 569–603.
- Lister, Charles. 2016. “A Plan for Winding Down the Syrian Civil War.” *War on the Rocks* (blog). September 30, 2016. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/09/a-plan-for-winding-down-the-syrian-civil-war/>
- Cambanis, Thanassis. 2016. “The Case for a More Robust U.S. Intervention in Syria.” The Century Foundation. June 19, 2016. <https://tcf.org/content/report/the-case-for-a-more->

[robust-intervention-in-syria/](#).

- Lynch. 2016. “What’s Really At Stake in the Syria Debate.” *War on the Rocks* (blog). October 10, 2016. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/10/whats-really-at-stake-in-the-syria-debate/>.

Session 3: February 12

Forced migration: Experiences of leaving, living, and returning (Libya, Iraq)

Skills lab: The ethics of refugee and migration research

- Nita, Sonja. 2013. “Regional Responses to Forced Migration: The Case of Libya.” <http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/29461>.
- Williams, Rhodri C. 2012. “Dispossession and Displacement in Libya.” *Forced Migration Review* 39 (June): 15.
- “The Long Road Home: Achieving Durable Solutions to Displacement in Iraq.” 2018. International Rescue Committee. <https://www.rescue.org/report/long-road-home-achieving-durable-solutions-displacement-iraq>.
- Social Inquiry. 2018. “Population Return Trends, Protection, and Social Dynamics in Northern Ninewa, Iraq.” Erbil: Social Inquiry. <https://social-inquiry.org/policy-brief-april-2018-1f87ac9d346>.
- Revkin, Mara Redlich. (2019). *Relative Legitimacy and Displacement Decisions During Rebel Governance*. SSRN. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3365503
- Foster, Johanna E., and Sherizaan Minwalla. 2018. “Voices of Yazidi Women: Perceptions of Journalistic Practices in the Reporting on ISIS Sexual Violence.” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 67 (March): 53–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2018.01.007>.
- Nayel, Moe Ali. 2013. “Palestinian Refugees Are Not at Your Service.” *The Electronic Intifada*. May 19, 2013. <http://electronicintifada.net/content/palestinian-refugees-are-not-your-service/12464>.
- Recommended: Pittaway, Eileen, Linda Bartolomei, and Richard Hugman. 2010. “‘Stop Stealing Our Stories’: The Ethics of Research with Vulnerable Groups.” *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 2 (2): 229–51. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huq004>.

Session 4: February 19**Failed States and Famine (Somalia)****Skills lab: Discourse, Narrative, and Content Analysis**

- Maxwell, Daniel G., and Nisar Majid. *Famine In Somalia: Competing Imperatives, Collective Failures, 2011-12*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. Chapters 3-6 & Chapter 8.
- *ASSESSING THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE FAILED STATE OF SOMALIA*. 2011. US House of Representatives. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-112hrg67305/html/CHRG-112hrg67305.htm>.
- *RESPONDING TO DROUGHT AND FAMINE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA*. 2011. COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-112shrg72393/html/CHRG-112shrg72393.htm>.
- *USAID'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING EAST AFRICAN EMERGENCIES*. 2011. US House of Representatives. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-112hrg68243/html/CHRG-112hrg68243.htm>.
- Cynthia Hardy, Bill Harley, and Nelson Phillips; Neta Crawford; Mark Laffey and Jutta Weldes; Ted Hopf; and Kimberly A. Neuendorf. 2004. "[Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis](#)" *Qualitative Methods: QMMR Newsletter*. 2(1): 19-24, 28-35.

Optional:

- Margesson, Rhoda, Ted Dagne, Charles E Hanrahan, Lauren Ploch, Dianne E Rennack, Marjorie Ann Browne, and Susan G Chesser. n.d. "Horn of Africa Region: The Humanitarian Crisis and International Response." R42046. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service.
- Shortland, Anja, et al. "War and Famine, Peace and Light? The Economic Dynamics of Conflict in Somalia 1993 to 2009." *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 50, no. 5, 2013, pp. 545–561., doi:10.1177/0022343313492991.

Session 5: February 26**Drought and Civil War in Syria****Skills discussion: Causality and Research Design**

- Werrell, Caitlin E., Francesco Femia, and Troy Sternberg. 2015. "Did We See It Coming?: State Fragility, Climate Vulnerability, and the Uprisings in Syria and Egypt." *SAIS Review of International Affairs* 35 (1): 29–46. <https://doi.org/10.1353/sais.2015.0002>.

- Kelley, Colin P., Shahrzad Mohtadi, Mark A. Cane, Richard Seager, and Yochanan Kushnir. 2015. "Climate Change in the Fertile Crescent and Implications of the Recent Syrian Drought." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, February, 201421533. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1421533112>.
- "Did Drought Trigger The Crisis In Syria?" 2013. *Footnote* (blog). September 12, 2013. <http://footnote.co/did-drought-trigger-the-crisis-in-syria/>.
- Châtel, Francesca De. 2014. "The Role of Drought and Climate Change in the Syrian Uprising: Untangling the Triggers of the Revolution." *Middle Eastern Studies* 50 (4): 521–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2013.850076>.
- Selby, Jan, Omar S. Dahi, Christiane Fröhlich, and Mike Hulme. 2017. "Climate Change and the Syrian Civil War Revisited." *Political Geography* 60 (September): 232–44. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2017.05.007>.
- Fröhlich, Christiane J. 2016. "Climate Migrants as Protestors? Dispelling Misconceptions about Global Environmental Change in Pre-Revolutionary Syria." *Contemporary Levant* 1 (1): 38–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20581831.2016.1149355>.

Session 6: March 5

Healthcare systems and emergencies (Lebanon, Iraq, Iran)

How does health interact with war? How is war connected to future health and healthcare?

Skills lab: Basic interviewing

- Dewachi, Omar, Mac Skelton, Vinh Kim Nguyen, Fouad M Fouad, Ghassan Abu Sitta, Zeina Maasri, and Rita Giacaman. 2014. "Changing Therapeutic Geographies of the Iraqi and Syrian Wars." *The Lancet* 383 (9915): 449–57. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(13\)62299-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(13)62299-0).
- Parkinson, Sarah E., and Orkideh Behrouzan. 2015. "Negotiating Health and Life: Syrian Refugees and the Politics of Access in Lebanon." *Social Science & Medicine* 146 (December): 324–31. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2015.10.008>.
- Lyles, Emily, Baptiste Hanquart, Lara Chlela, Michael Woodman, Fouad M. Fouad, Abla Sibai, and Shannon Doocy. 2018. "Health Service Access and Utilization among Syrian Refugees and Affected Host Communities in Lebanon." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 31 (1): 104–30. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fex014>.
- Dewachi, Omar. 2017. *Ungovernable Life: Mandatory Medicine and Statecraft in Iraq*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. <http://www.sup.org/books/title/?id=22595>. Chapter 6: Infants and Infantry.
- Behrouzan, Orkideh. 2016. *Prozak Diaries: Psychiatry and Generational Memory in Iran*. 1 edition. Stanford University Press. Chapter 4: *Dephreshen* Talk

NO CLASS MARCH 12 OR 19**Session 7: March 26****Urban politics, public trust, public opinion, and conflict following earthquakes (Pakistan, Turkey, Iraq, Iran)**

- Qureshi, Jawad Hussain, and Thomas Bamforth. 2007. "Political Complexities of Humanitarian Intervention in the Pakistan Earthquake | The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance." *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*. <https://sites.tufts.edu/jha/archives/12>.
- Badri, S. A., Asgary, A., Eftekhari, A.R. and Levy, J.. 2006. "Post-disaster resettlement, development and change: a case study of the 1990 Manjil earthquake in Iran." *Disasters*, 30: 451–468. doi:10.1111/j.0361-3666.2006.00332.x
- Angell, Elizabeth. 2014. "Assembling Disaster: Earthquakes and Urban Politics in Istanbul." *City* 18 (6): 667–78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2014.962881>.
- Khezri, Haidar. 2018. "Kurdistan Earthquake: Politics Creates Roadblocks to Relief." *The Conversation*, 9 Feb.. theconversation.com/kurdistan-earthquake-politics-creates-roadblocks-to-relief-87928.
- Carlin, Ryan E., et al.. 2014. "Trust Shaken: Earthquake Damage, State Capacity, and Interpersonal Trust in Comparative Perspective." *Comparative Politics*, vol. 46, no. 4: 419–453., doi:10.5129/001041514812522761.
- Brancati, Dawn. "Political Aftershocks: The Impact of Earthquakes on Intrastate Conflict." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 51, no. 5, 2007, pp. 715–743., doi:10.1177/0022002707305234.

Strongly Recommended:

- Andrabi, Tahir, and Jishnu Das. 2010. *In Aid We Trust: Hearts and Minds and the Pakistan Earthquake of 2005*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2010.

Session 8: April 2**The ethnic and gender politics of tsunami response (Sri Lanka and Indonesia)****Guest speaker: Former State Department/NSC official**

- McGilvray, Dennis B, and Michele R Gamburd. *Tsunami Recovery In Sri Lanka : Ethnic and Regional Dimensions*. London: Taylor and Francis, 2013. Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6.
- Jauhola, Marjaana. *Post-tsunami Reconstruction In Indonesia: Negotiating Normativity Through Gender Mainstreaming Initiatives In Aceh*. London: Routledge, 2013. Chapters 3 and 4.

Recommended:

- Doyle, Timothy, and Melissa Risely. *Crucible for Survival : Environmental Security and Justice In the Indian Ocean Region*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2008. Chapter 3 - Post-Tsunami Indian Ocean Region: Emerging Perspectives on Environmental Security
- Beardsley, Kyle, and Brian Mcquinn. “Rebel Groups as Predatory Organizations: *The Political Effects of the 2004 Tsunami in Indonesia and Sri Lanka*.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 53, no. 4, 2009, pp. 624–645., doi:10.1177/0022002709336460

Session 9: April 9**Race, economic inequality, and storms (The Phillippines, the United States)**

- Salazar, L. C. "Typhoon Yolanda: The Politics of Disaster Response and Management." *Southeast Asian Affairs*, vol. 2015 no. 1, 2015, pp. 277-301.
- Uson, Maria Angelina M. “Natural Disasters and Land Grabs: the Politics of Their Intersection in the Philippines Following Super Typhoon Haiyan.” *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* vol. 38, no. 3, 3 May 2017, pp. 414–430. doi:10.1080/02255189.2017.1308316.
- Stivers, Camilla. 2007. “‘So Poor and so Black’: Hurricane Katrina, Public Administration, and the Issue of Race.” *Public Administration Review* 67: 48–56.
- Elliott, James R., and Jeremy Pais. “Race, Class, and Hurricane Katrina: Social Differences in Human Responses to Disaster.” *Social Science Research*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2006, pp. 295–321., doi:10.1016/j.ssresearch.2006.02.003.
- Marable, Manning, and Kristen Clarke. *Seeking Higher Ground : the Hurricane Katrina Crisis, Race, and Public Policy Reader*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. Introduction, Chapters 1, 3, 17, and 18.
- Rivlin, Gary. 2015. “Why the Lower Ninth Ward Looks Like the Hurricane Just Hit,” August 13, 2015. <https://www.thenation.com/article/why-the-lower-ninth-ward-looks-like-the-hurricane-just-hit/>.
- Zadrozny, Brandy, Kit Ramgopal, and Farnoush Amiri. 2018. “‘Broken Promises’: Brad Pitt’s New Orleans Charity Accused of Selling Homes That Fell Apart.” NBC News. September 12, 2018. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/brad-pitt-built-dozens-homes-new-orleans-after-katrina-now-n908651>.
- Williams, Jessica. 2018. “‘Like Home Again’ in Lower 9th Ward as Vacant Lots Begin Transformation into New Housing.” *The Advocate*, July 25, 2018.

https://www.theadvocate.com/new_orleans/news/article_4183f00a-9048-11e8-beee-f3d168635049.html.

Session 10: April 16 (Potential guest)

Managing Information and Emotion in Epidemics (West Africa and Ebola)

- Hofman, Michiel, and Sokhieng Au. *The Politics of Fear : Médecins Sans Frontières and the West African Ebola Epidemic*. New York, NY, United States of America: Oxford University Press, 2017. Chapters 1-5 (pp. 3-119)
- Bindenagel Sehovic, Annamarie. *Coordinating Global Health Policy Responses: From Hiv/aids to Ebola and Beyond*. Cham: Springer International Publishing , 2017. Chapter “Introducing Ebola (EVD): An Unnecessary Surprise”
- Sams, Kelley, Alice Desclaux, Julienne Anoko, Francis Akindès, Marc Egrot, Khoudia Sow, Bernard Taverne, et al. 2017. “From Ebola to Plague and Beyond: How Can Anthropologists Best Engage Past Experience to Prepare for New Epidemics? — Cultural Anthropology.” *Cultural Anthropology* (blog). December 7, 2017. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/1256-from-ebola-to-plague-and-beyond-how-can-anthropologists-best-engage-past-experience-to-prepare-for-new-epidemics>.
- Manguvo, Angellar, and Benford Mafuvadze. 2015. “The Impact of Traditional and Religious Practices on the Spread of Ebola in West Africa: Time for a Strategic Shift.” *The Pan African Medical Journal* 22. <https://doi.org/10.11694/pamj.suppl.2015.22.1.6190>.

Session 11: April 23

Gendering Victimhood: Who counts as a victim? What do we expect and demand from victims?

- Fassin, Didier, and Richard Rechtman. *The Empire of Trauma: an Inquiry Into the Condition of Victimhood*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009. Chapter 8.
- Carpenter, R. Charli. “‘Women and Children First’: Gender, Norms, and Humanitarian Evacuation in the Balkans 1991-95.” *International Organization* 57, no. 4 (October 1, 2003): 661–94.
- Mikdashi, Maya. 2014. “Can Palestinian Men Be Victims? Gendering Israel’s War on Gaza.” *Jadaliyya* - جَداليَّة (blog). July 23, 2014. <http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/30991/Can-Palestinian-Men-be-Victims-Gendering-Israel%60s-War-on-Gaza>.
- Koikari, Mire. 2013. “Training Women for Disasters: Gender, Crisis Management (Kiki Kanri) and Post-3.11 Nationalism in Japan.” *The Asia Pacific Journal* 11 (12): 1–19.

- Jensen, Steffen, and Henrik Ronsbo. *Histories of Victimhood*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc., 2014. Chapter 9
- Berry, Marie E. 2017. “Barriers to Women’s Progress After Atrocity: Evidence from Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina.” *Gender & Society* 31 (6): 830–53. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243217737060>.

Session 12: April 30

Working in disaster zones: Mental Health, War, and Disaster

- Jones, Lynne. 2017. *Outside the Asylum: a Memoir of War, Disaster and Humanitarian Psychiatry*. Weidenfeld & Nicolson. All.

Session 13: May 14 (“Final” session)

Where do we go from here? Draft policy recommendations and research proposals to be discussed and critiqued in class; final submission May 17 by 5pm.