

SOCIOLOGY OF DISASTERS CONTENT ANALYSIS ESSAY

This semester, you will research a natural, technological, or conflict based disaster, as well as a specific population or social issue in the context of that event. Based upon your research, you will complete 4 content analysis essay assignments and write an final essay paper (not to exceed 10 pages) in which you will summarize the consequences of the disaster, analyze 20 newspaper articles covering the event, and review some of the literature related to the population or social issue you are examining.

Below is a list of disaster that you may choose to study for this project. This is not an exhaustive list, but does contain a number of recent disasters that caused substantial loss of life, community disruption, and major economic losses. If there is a disaster event that you are interested in and it is not on this list, you are encouraged to study the disaster with consent of the instructor. However, make sure that the event received sufficient media coverage to complete this project.

1. Bangladesh Cyclone Sidr (2007)
2. California Wildfires (2007)
3. Hurricane Felix (2007)
4. Hurricane Dean (2007)
5. UK Floods (2007)
6. Greensburg Kansas Tornado (2007)
7. Solomon Islands Earthquake (2007)
8. Peru Earthquakes (2007)
9. Southeast Asia Flooding (2007)
10. Java, Indonesia Earthquakes (2006)
11. North Korea Floods (2006)
12. Philippines Typhoon/Mudslide (2006)
13. Kashmir Earthquake (2005)
14. Hurricane Katrina (2005)
15. Hurricane Rita (2005)
16. London Bombings (2005)
17. Indian Ocean Tsunami (2004)
18. Madrid Train Bombings (2004)
19. Bam, Iran Earthquake (2003)
20. Southern California Wildfires (2003)
21. Western Wildfires (2002)
22. Bali Bombings (2002)
23. Gujarat, India Earthquake (2001)
24. September 11 Terrorist Attacks (2001)
25. Hurricane Floyd (1999)
26. Southern Drought & Heat Wave (1998)
27. Red River Flood (1997)
28. Chicago Heat Wave (1994)
29. Northridge Earthquake (1994)
30. Midwest Floods (1993)
31. Hurricane Andrew (1992)
32. Oakland Firestorm (1990)
33. Hurricane Hugo (1989)
34. Loma Prieta Earthquake (1989)
35. Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (1989)
36. Chernobyl Nuclear Explosion (1986)
37. Mexico City Earthquake (1985)
38. Bhopal Chemical Release (1984)
39. Three Mile Island (1979)

Below is a list of groups and issues that we will be discussing in this class, and that you may consider focusing on for your project. You will want to make sure that there are media reports available on the particular issue that you want to examine in the disaster you have chosen.

1. Gender
2. Children and Youth
3. Elderly
4. Low-income populations
5. Mentally or physically disabled
6. Immigrants
7. Non-native speaking populations
8. Racial/Ethnic minorities
9. Religious minorities
10. Tourists & other transient populations
11. Emergency Relief Workers
12. Volunteers
13. Pets/Companion animals
14. Warning & risk communication
15. Evacuation issues
16. Shelter & Housing issues
17. Long-term recovery
18. Memorials
19. Popular Culture Representations
20. Blame
21. Looting
22. Domestic Violence
23. Mental health issues

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Essay Assignments: To help develop an understanding of the social consequences of disasters that you have chosen to study, and to keep you moving forward, you will complete a series of essay assignments throughout the semester.

January 28-Essay Assignment 1 (1 page): You must select the disaster you will be researching, as well as a particular population or social issue that you will be examining. You are to hand in a one page, typed summary indicating the disaster you have chosen and the social issue you will examine. You should also briefly explain why you are interested in studying this particular event and topic. Read all of the assignments before determining the focus of your essay.

February 18-Essay Assignment 2 (1-2 pages): For this assignment, you must collect information that describes the scale, scope, and magnitude of the disaster event that you are examining. You are to submit a typed summary of your findings. You must include information on: 1) when the disaster happened; 2) where it happened; 3) how it affected people and how many; 4) how many casualties there were; 5) an estimate of the economic consequences; and 6) a reference list (ASA style; websites and newspaper accounts are acceptable, just make sure to verify the information for accuracy).

March 3-Essay Assignment 3 (2-3 pages): As part of your content analysis essay, you will review literature and integrate at least 5 scholarly research articles that deal with the disaster and social issue that you are examining. This summary should be written as a literature review (arranged around key issues) and not an annotated bibliography (arranged as article summaries). You must also include a typed references page of sources that you will be using in your final essay. These must be outside sources (i.e., not from the required reading list), and they should be peer-reviewed journal articles, books, or government reports – not websites. Finally, make sure to gather sources early, as many of the journals, books and reports may not be available at Booth Library. If this is the case, you will need to interlibrary loan the materials (which can take up to two weeks).

March 24-Essay Assignment 4 (2-3 pages): As part of your content analysis essay, you are to gather and analyze 20 newspaper articles that deal with the specific disaster and social issue that you are studying. You must bring to class hard copy printouts of the 20 newspaper articles that you have collected as well as your analysis.

April 14-Content Analysis Essay Paper: You are to submit a final essay paper that summarizes the consequences of the disaster, reviews some of the literature related to the population or social issue you are examining, systematically analyzes 20 newspaper articles covering the event, and discuss key findings that integrate relevant information from the course.