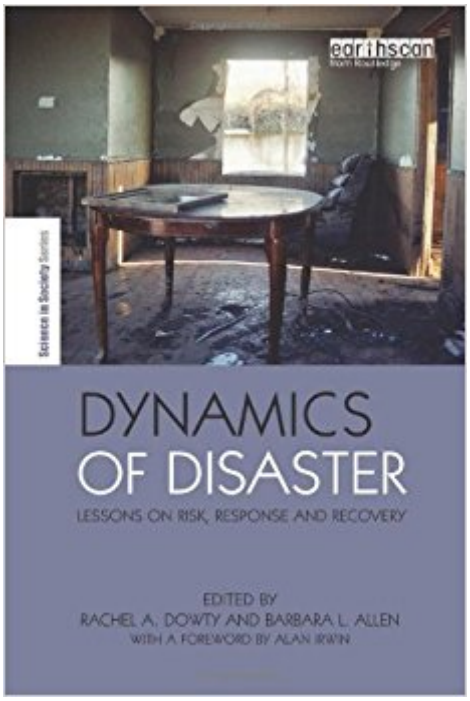
Dynamics Of Disaster: Lessons On Risk, Response And Recovery (The Earthscan Science In Society Series)



Synopsis

Disasters are the result of complex interactions between social and natural forces, acting at multiple scales from the individual and community to the organisational, national and international level. Effective disaster planning, response and recovery require an understanding of these interacting forces, and the role of power, knowledge and organizations. This book sheds new light on these dynamics, and gives disaster scholars and practitioners new and valuable lessons for management and planning in practice. The authors draw on methods across the social sciences to examine disaster response and recovery as viewed by those in positions of authorityÂ and the 'recipients' of operations. These first two sections examine cases from Hurricane Katrina, while the third part compares this to other international disasters to draw out general lessons and practical applications for disaster planning in any context. The authors also offer guidance for shaping institutional structures to better meet the needs of communities and residents.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'As the first book to bring a Science and Technology Studies perspective to disaster studies, The Dynamics of Disaster shows how disaster planning and remediation can benefit from attention to issues such as local knowledge, uncertainty, undone science, and knowledge gaps. In addition to the book's importance to the social sciences, it also brings valuable and practical policy insights into the problem of how to design sociotechnical systems that are both more resilient and more just.'

Professor David J. Hess, Science and Technology Studies Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute 'Hurricane Katrina raised far more questions than answers about natural disasters. How are disasters 'political'? How are disasters shaped by the natural environment as they shape it? What does culture mean for disaster vulnerability and resilience? Dynamics of Disaster is an outstanding collection of essays by senior researchers and bright and energetic young scholars, who come together here to answer these questions, and more. This book places Katrina, and the idea of disaster, in a global context, and draws on a wide range of disciplines and approaches. It is a must-read book for those interested in cutting-edge research on disasters.' Thomas A. Birkland, William T. Kretzer Professor of Public Policy, North Carolina State University 'Disasters are often blamed on the whims of nature, but we rest in such simplistic explanations at our peril. As the essays in this volume make clear, even disasters widely perceived as 'natural' typically implicate human artifacts, organizations, technologies, and choices. Building on research in Science and Technology Studies and other social science fields, the authors show how disasters are embedded in, and shaped by, the societies in which they unfold. Dynamics of Disaster should be required reading not only for disaster managers but also for urban planners, engineers, and others engaged in designing the built environment and managing technological systems.' Stephen Hilgartner, Department of Science & Technology Studies, Cornell University

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