

Hello Jago,

You have prompted me to do some thinking. Here are some early thoughts. We might consider broadening the topic a bit, with disasters, impacts, effects on different kinds of societies, varying resilience to sudden massive stress, and natures of recoveries (or no recovery). And societal impacts are not uniform within societies, as the poor or politically disenfranchised often are stuck into more hazardous localities.

Maybe some consideration of the popular press and popular views of disasters, emphasizing death, destruction, panic, looting, and other factors that can be dramatized to sell newspapers....

And overemphasis on the natural aspects of disasters, with serious social science aspects being considered only fairly recently. Fully 95% of NSF funding in hazard/disaster studies are in engineering and natural science.

Perhaps we can look into some 'creative aspects' of disasters. People are not just passive recipients, but active participants, and sometimes encode hazard and disaster knowledge into religion and oral history, and thus know what to do when another one begins. I have some examples.

A problem for social science disaster studies, in archaeology, is dating.

C14 is fine for geologists but for us we need much greater precision, such as ice cores, dendrochronology, or varves.

Disasters could be considered as unusually intense natural selective mechanisms, wiping out some groups, while facilitating others to thrive.

Anyway, just some early thoughts.

Payson