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Issues in Disaster Research

• The lack of contextual knowledge of the newcomer institutions
• The saturation of “charismatic communities”
• Expectations of reciprocity and collaboration from colleagues that are survivors themselves
• Academic work and research based on competition and extraction
• Perceiving impacted communities as “laboratories” or “blank canvases”
• The assumption that “resilience” is always a good thing and
• The irrelevancy of IRB protocols for doing research with human subjects in extreme operating environments
Conclusion

• There are serious differences in the way in which government first responders and voluntary organizations perceive the disaster.
  • Government view disasters as discrete events
  • Voluntary organizations view disasters as occurrences in a continuum

• Universities an enormous untapped potential to contribute to disaster management as monitors of local vulnerabilities and conveners and facilitators of the multi sectorial collaborations that are necessary to deal with wicked problems.

• Universities have the panoramic view necessary to bridge the gap between the immediate response and the need to use response and recovery efforts as tools in a transition management process.

• Adopting that role, requires to rethink the competitive and extractive nature of academic and scientific research towards a more collaborative approach based on trust and relationship building.