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This paper seeks to explore how we can understand contingencies through ontological security theory. Departing from an understanding of contingencies as events outside the control of agency, and defining agency in relation to the stability of biographical identities, ontological security theory enables an analysis of contingencies as ruptures to our identities. In other words, as one's identity and beliefs about how the world is ordered is disrupted, one's agency comes under threat. Applying this theory to case of the 2014 floods in the Indian administrated state of Jammu and Kashmir, this paper illustrates how the concept of contingency simultaneously aids ontological security studies in assessing how certain events produce identity-disruptions by drawing attention to how anxiety is a persistent condition. The concept of contingency builds on the knowledge the world is beyond our complete comprehension and illuminates how uncertainty is an unavoidable facet of daily life. By treating uncertainty and the accompanying anxiety as a persistent human condition, it aids ontological security studies in exploring how people's (un)certainities inform their meaning-making of the world and what events plays into their anxieties.

Contingency: exploring an age-old concept for a new reality