

Disasters as Socionatural Displacements: time, materiality and affect.

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This paper seeks to (re)conceptualise the spatio-temporalities of disasters by conceptualising the aleatory, cyclical and embodied aspects of them. Disasters are most often thought of as ruptures that are contained in time and space and that effect particular territories and inhabitants whose losses are recorded through numbers of fatalities, lost hectares and US dollars. But by taking a material spatio-temporal and affective lens, we show how disasters are better understood as socionatural displacements that are embedded within wider histories and geographies of inequality and change. Using decolonial conceptions of space-time, we reject Enlightenment linear understandings of events and rather seek to understand how the event/disaster attaches itself into everyday life and affects different spatio-temporalities. Using examples from Zambia, Nepal and Nicaragua, we work through specific disasters showing how socionatural affective relations are displaced and reconfigured meaning that new spatio-temporal material relations emerge. We thus decentre attention from the immediacy of the extraordinary and focus instead on the long-lasting reconfigurations of daily practices, knowledges, relations between humans and more-than-humans, and the emotions they engender.

De-colonizing disasters: Affect, race, and queer theory