

**Blaikie et al., Disaster Pressure and Release:** Risk is a “compound function of [the] complex (but knowable) natural hazard and the number of people characterized by their varying degrees of vulnerability who occupy the space and time of exposure to extreme events.” Blaikie et al. use two models of disaster: the ‘pressure and release (PAR) model’ and the ‘access model.’ In the PAR model, a disaster occurs at the meeting point between the processes creating vulnerability and a physical hazard. In order to release pressure, vulnerability must be reduced. The access model is similar but more detailed. “An explanation of a disaster requires us to trace a progression that connects the impact of a hazard on people through a series of levels of social factors that generate vulnerability.” **Reaction:** In order to “release pressure,” could physical hazards also be reduced? Not all could, but some potentially could be. Chemical or nuclear (manmade) threats, for example could be reduced, and by changing our treatment of the environment we could, in theory, reduce hazards created by global warming, acid rain and more. Additionally, war and conflict are hazards that lead to physical hazards, which we certainly have control over. In the PAR model, root causes are defined as being well-established and widespread processes. But underlying vulnerability may not be so well-known or obvious, and it does not have to be widespread. **Blaikie et al., Access to Resources and Coping in Adversity:** One of the critiques of the PAR model is that the “generation of vulnerability is not adequately integrated with the way in which hazards themselves affect people; it is a static model...in reality, nature forms a part of the social framework of society...hazards are also intertwined with human systems in affecting the pattern of assets and livelihoods among people....” These limitations are addressed in the “access” model, which “focuses on the way unsafe conditions arise in relation to the economic and political processes that allocate assets, income and other resources in a society.” The access model describes access to resources necessary to build or rebuild livelihoods. **Reaction:** In this model, I would have placed livelihoods more centrally. Livelihoods are not only affected by assets and resources and choices of household, but livelihoods also affect those factors, which the model does not make very clear. **Morrow, Stretching the Bonds:** This article is on how family networks help victims of disasters such as Hurricane Andrew, and looks at how families cope with these stressful events. Stress and trauma after a disaster are exacerbated by a lack of a support system. Families are important for warnings and preparedness, providing refuge, providing resources post-disaster, providing support and provisioning institutional support, as moderated by the context. After Hurricane Andrew, 24% of people with relatives in the area reported receiving help from them (although 75% had relatives nearby), and about 30% reported helping their relatives. There are some differences due to ethnicity and income. Rates of parents relinquishing their children and divorce were 20 and 30 percent higher, respectively, following Hurricane Andrew. **Tierney et al., Factors Influencing Disaster Preparedness and Response:** This article, as the title implies, examines the different and complex factors that influence patterns of disaster preparedness and response. These include risk perceptions, perceptions of hazard adjustments, disaster experience, socioeconomic and socio-demographic factors (e.g. race and ethnicity, language, social bonds, income and economic status, gender, social inequality and more). These factors influence everything from purchase of insurance to the types of shelter that is preferred post-disaster. The characteristics of disasters also influence preparedness and response.