In "Natural hazards, people's vulnerability, and disasters," Blaikie et. al define vulnerability as related to root causes, and is a measure of exposure to and ability to recover from a hazard. In turn, hazards are the events which trigger disasters and vary widely in magnitude and severity. Disasters, in turn, are described as events from which people's livelihoods will not recover without assistance (p.21), and they result from the interplay between vulnerability and hazard. The authors propose two models for examining disasters. The first is the *Pressure and Release* (PAR) model. This model explains how the root factors explaining vulnerability (such as limited access to power and resources) combine with dynamic pressures (various deprivations as well as micro and macro forces) and conditions (such as a fragile physical environment and economy) to produce disasters. The authors use an example of landless squatters in Bangladesh to illustrate how social, economic, and political micro and macro factors (the squatters, who were landless and living on a flood-prone plane, had little to no access to savings and children weakened by malnutrition, and economically and politically marginalized) created a particular kind of vulnerability to flooding: famine and diarrhea from waterborne contamination. The second model proposed by the authors is the *Access model,* developed to provide a more detailed model that examines how vulnerability and exposure are affected by economic and political processes. The authors argue that coping is essentially a form of resource management, but that it is more about how choices are limited under conditions of scarce resources and stress.

In "Factors Influencing Disaster Preparedness and Response," Tierney shows how vulnerability both increases hazard risk and weakens disaster preparedness and response. Like Blaikie et al, Tierney conceptualizes vulnerability as the product of a host of micro and macro social, cultural, and political forces (examples include ethnicity, gender, age, wealth or access to resources, experience with prior disasters, and marginalization). Tierney argues that disasters cannot be examined apart from their root causes that produce vulnerability.

Morrow examines Hurricane Andrew in Florida and finds that family bonds are a crucial factor in mitigating the effects of disaster. Social networks and support (which can be more broadly defined as social capital or strong community ties) reduce stress and trauma and improve the recovery process. This aspect of disaster is frequently ignored, the author argues.

Each of the articles reinforced what Mark Pelling said was one of the biggest problems in disaster study: how policy makers and planners can move from disaster relief to development (development defined as improving pre-disaster livelihoods).