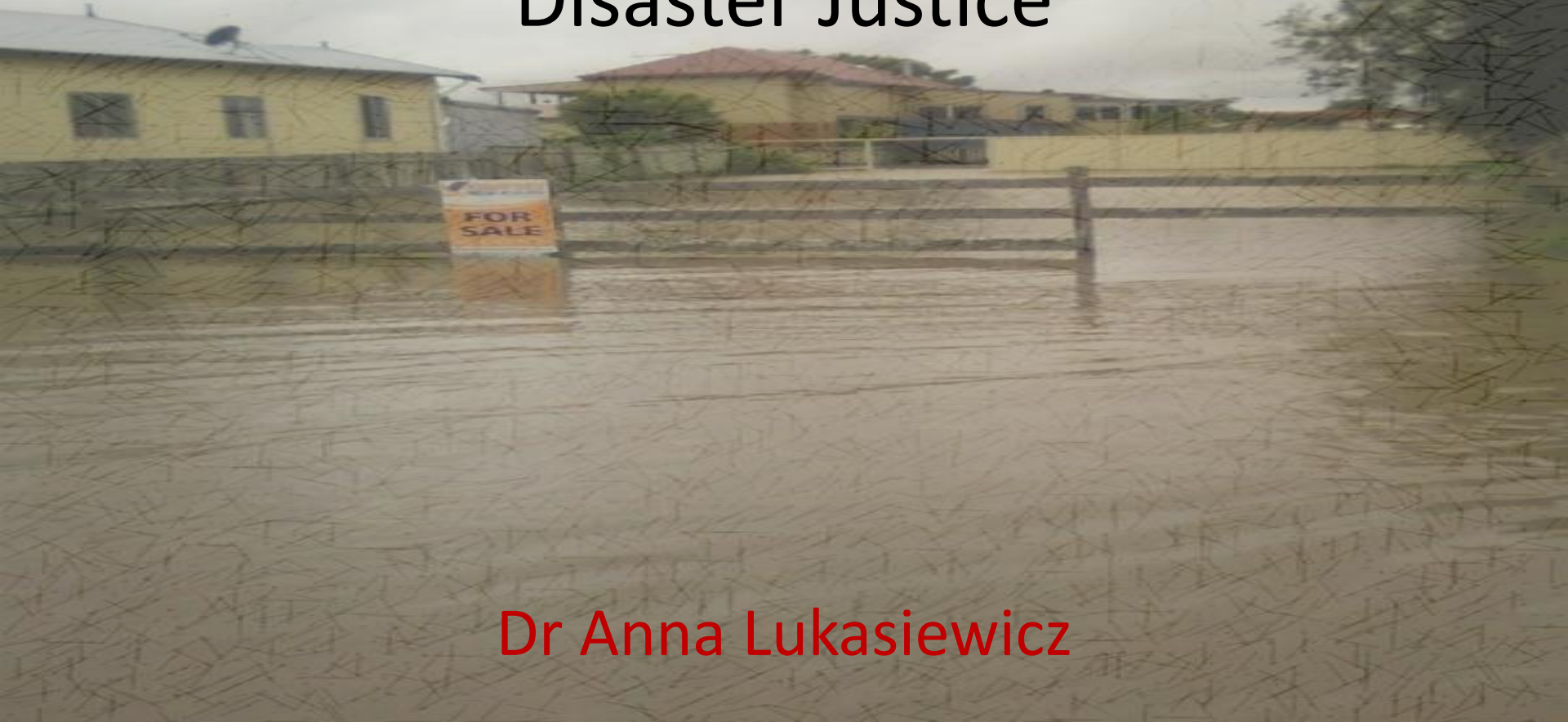


The Emerging Imperative of Disaster Justice



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Objectives

- What is disaster justice?
 - How do we view disasters?
 - What is justice?
 - Where does Disaster Justice sit in the wider scheme of things?
- Why is it important?
 - For disaster management?
- What does it mean for Australia?

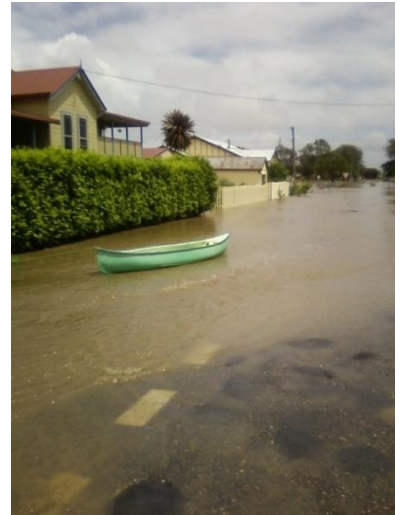


What is disaster justice?

- How we think about disasters evolved:

Act of God → Act of Nature → Consequence of human decisions

- No such thing as ‘natural disasters’
 - Hazards become disasters when humans get in the way
 - Disaster Impact = Natural Hazard + Vulnerability + Exposure
- Vulnerability:
 - At all levels – individual, community, system
 - Natural hazards expose existing inequalities & disadvantages
 - Impact depends on condition of those experiencing disasters as well as (if not more) than the magnitude of disasters themselves



What is disaster justice?

- Emerging theme in literature in US coming out of environmental justice research
- Connected to climate justice & social justice
- Revelation of *injustices magnifying impact* prompts big focus on disaster justice in US
 - Hurricane Katrina: poor & marginalised communities were less prepared, suffered more during, had longer recovery after and some never fully recovered
 - Hurricane Katrina: Breakdown of criminal justice system in New Orleans
 - Hurricane Sandy: the elderly & people with disabilities disproportionately affected
- Merges US tradition of environmental justice with disaster research

~ Natural hazards expose, magnify and deepen existing injustices and can create future inequalities that then lead to further injustice ~

What is disaster justice?

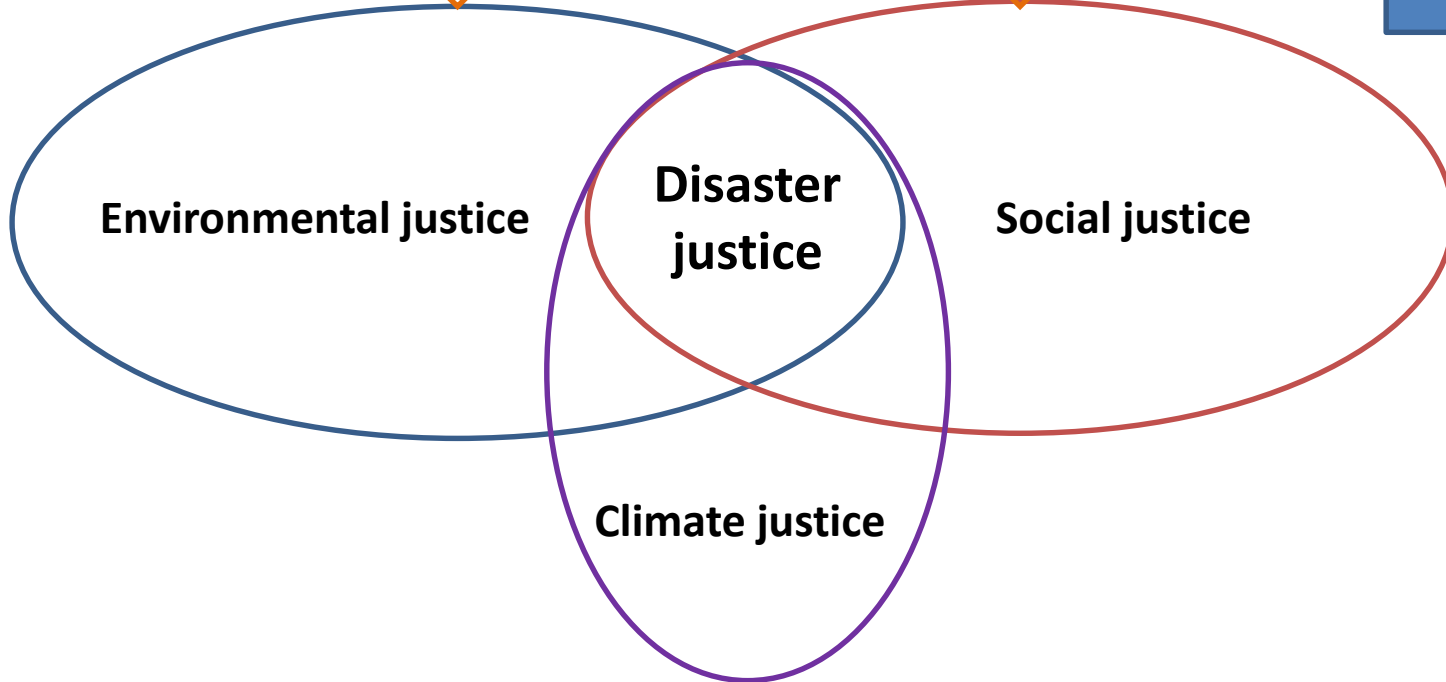
- Social Justice: allocation of benefits, like *bargaining power, resources or fundamental rights and duties*, in a society
- Environmental Justice: the marginalized and vulnerable suffer *discrimination* in the allocation of environmental *risks and burdens*
- Climate Justice: how *climate burdens* are *shared* and how they can be avoided

Justice is complicated due to:

- Inclusion Who is owed justice?
- Accountability Who is responsible for ensuring justice?
- Values Competing values exist simultaneously and change through time

Environmental Hazard

Distributive &
Procedural
dimensions of
Justice



Prevention

Preparedness

Response

Recovery

Why is it important?

- Governments have primary responsibility in disaster risk reduction
 - Oversee the processes by which individuals assert their fundamental rights
 - Coordinate the political processes that create, contribute to and alleviate vulnerabilities (including planning processes)
 - Oversee negotiations over individual rights and duties
- Australia's National Strategy for Disaster Resilience aims to 'empower' stakeholders but unclear on how to do this
- Democratisation of disaster management
 - Emphasises procedural dimension of justice
 - Inclusion of marginalised groups in PPRR

Why is it important?

- Resilience = dominant concept DRR
 - implementation of resilience tends to entrench disadvantage
 - neutral or detrimental to poverty alleviation
 - obscures power relations
 - disguises trade-offs in the distribution of costs and benefits before, during and after disasters
- Emphasizes individual responsibility (neoliberal notion); an attempt to roll back government funding and resources?
- Australia's National Strategy for Disaster Resilience
 - Placing responsibilities on vulnerable groups that they have no capacity to fulfil?
 - Which societal groups face structural / systemic disadvantages in DRR?

What does it mean for Australia?

NSDR responsibility placed on individuals	Potential justice issues
Understanding risks and adequately preparing for them – Insurance	Systemic problems with insurance industry – Is the NSDR inadvertently directing individuals to unaffordable or inadequate insurance schemes?
Preparing for disasters - Property modifications	Power imbalance between landlords & renters – are renters systematically disadvantaged in disaster preparedness?
Assuming responsibility for vulnerable household members – carers of people with disabilities	Carers already placed under stress in everyday life – if everyday services / support is inadequate, does that create additional barriers during disasters?

What does it mean for Australia?

- Who are the vulnerable societal groups in Australia?
 - Renters?? → Regulation / Enforcement??
 - People without (or with inadequate) insurance?? → Regulation / Enforcement??
 - People with disabilities & their carers?? → Support??
 - Apartment owners?? → Regulation / Enforcement??
- Examination of the conditions that create these vulnerabilities
- Recovery phase = removing inequality rather than maintaining status quo?
- Emergency services ↔ Social services?

Conclusions

A natural disaster is in fact a social disaster waiting to happen, triggered by a particular natural force

Natural hazards expose, magnify and deepen existing injustices

PPRR can create new inequalities that then lead to further injustice

Focus on the conditions of societal groups that are being impacted on, not just the hazard that is doing the impacting

Disaster management

who is vulnerable in the disaster management context

Justice perspective

why are these groups vulnerable & who has a duty to respond to it outside of the disaster management context