
Preface

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Biographical notes: Robert J. Bookmiller (PhD, University of Virginia) is the Director of International Studies and a Professor of Government and Political Affairs at Millersville University, where he teaches a variety of courses in the area of comparative political systems (with special emphasis on the Middle East, Canada, Australia and New Zealand). He has published works in the areas of comparative foreign policy as well as human security issues. As a contributing faculty member to Millersville University's Masters of Science in Emergency Management (MSEM), he teaches a course on Comparative Emergency Management Systems.

Kirsten Nakjavani Bookmiller (PhD, University of Virginia) is a Professor of Government, a contributing faculty member to the MSEM Program and Director of the Center for Disaster Research and Education's Global Partnerships Initiative at Millersville University. Her research focuses upon the contributions of local emergency responders (search and rescue, medical personnel) to the development of International Disaster Response Law. Recent publications appear in *The International Law of Disaster Relief* (Cambridge, 2014), *Proceedings of the American Society of International Law*, *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* and *The Research Handbook on Disasters and International Law* (forthcoming, Edward Elgar). She is also co-founder of the American Society of International Law's Disaster Law Interest Group.

In October 2014, an international and interdisciplinary research symposium titled *The Global Katrina Effect, 2005–2015: Hurricane Katrina's Impact on Disaster Management Systems Worldwide*, was held at Millersville University in the USA. Sponsored by Millersville's Center for Disaster Research and Education, the conference's

intellectual scope emerged out of a Masters' level seminar on comparative emergency management. Seminar members had discussed a recently enacted New Zealand policy addressing post-disaster companion animal protections, a response to what officials had observed regarding the desperate plight of such animals following Hurricane Katrina in August 2005. The New Zealand case study prompted the class participants to consider a much broader question: while it was widely known that Katrina had forever transformed the American emergency management landscape, had the event also altered disaster-related operating environments in other countries?

With an eye toward Katrina's impending 10th anniversary, Millersville organised the *Global Katrina Effect* conference to generate research interest on that very question. The 2014 meeting drew scholars, policymakers, practitioners and students from across the country – including the impacted Gulf Coast region – and from around the world. Symposium participants shared their findings concerning Katrina's international influence upon fields as diverse as storm surge forecasting to social work case management. Several of the *Global Katrina Effect* symposium studies were subsequently submitted for consideration for this special issue of *IJEM*. These submissions were joined by other works following an international call for papers. In all cases, manuscripts underwent a double blind refereed process before being accepted for publication.

As guest editors, we wish to especially thank *IJEM*'s now honorary editor, Professor Jean-Luc Wybo, for his immediately forthcoming enthusiasm for the project and his vision in recommending that the entire issue be available as open source. We also want to recognise the many reviewers who dedicated their valuable time behind the scenes during the vetting process as well as the *IJEM* editorial staff for making the issue a reality.

Katrina's recent 10th anniversary in August 2015 provided a vital opportunity to appraise how the disaster reshaped the American emergency management terrain. The studies included in this special issue revisit that fateful event from a vastly different perspective. The contributions contained here demonstrate that the world responded in ways far beyond that of expressions of solidarity and relief offers in the direct aftermath of the catastrophe. Many countries internalised the US government's Katrina response as a cautionary tale for their own domestic emergency management processes and heeded the lessons accordingly. From this perspective, perhaps the US Gulf Coast's tremendous suffering not only galvanised action within the US disaster management sector, but also advanced the policy conversation for disaster vulnerable communities around the globe.