Terrorism as disaster: Selected commonalities and long-term recovery for 9/11 survivors

TERRORISM AS DISASTER: SELECTED COMMONALITIES AND LONG-TERM RECOVERY FOR 9/11 SURVIVORS

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Abstract
The purpose of this article is to apply what social scientists have learned from decades of research on natural and technological disasters to better understand the short-term and potential long-term human impacts of the 9/11 attacks. The short-term response to the 9/11 attacks was similar to how people and communities typically respond to natural disasters. One year after the attacks, news reports suggest that factors identified in technological disaster research as causing collective trauma, rather than recovery, are beginning to surface. We identify three patterns typically present in (but not restricted to) the aftermath of technological disasters that contribute to slow recovery and ongoing collective trauma and evaluate the likelihood that these factors will impact the recovery process for those impacted by the 9/11 attacks. We conclude that due to perceptions of governmental failure, the likelihood of protracted litigation, and uncertainty regarding the mental and physical health of victims, the social and psychological impacts of the 9/11 attacks will likely be severe and long-term. As such, the concluding section recommends the implementation of a long-term clinical intervention program for mitigating these potential chronic impacts and facilitating the timely recovery of survivors.

Citation

Terrorism is most common in political regimes that lie somewhere between democracies and autocracies. What political science calls anocratic regimes are less able than autocracies to crack down on terrorism, and unable to offer the same level of political participation as democracies. Since 9/11, as a share of domestic terrorism in the world, the regional number of domestic terrorist incidents increased in the Middle East and North Africa and decreased in Europe and North America, making the Middle East and North Africa the most terrorism-prone region in the world — hosting half of all casualties from domestic terrorism worldwide since 9/11. Terrorism as disaster: Selected commonalities and long-term recovery for 9/11 survivors. Research in Social Problems and Public Policy, 11, 73-96. CrossRefGoogle Scholar. Michaels, S. (2003). Perishable information, enduring insights? Undertaking quick response research. In Beyond September 11th: An account of post-disaster research (Special Publication No. 39). (2007).

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Disasters can be natural or caused by humans. This page includes a link to find resources for survivors and the public on types of disasters, how mental health can be affected and how to get help. There are strategies you can use to cope in the short- and long-term, and effective treatments that can help. What to Expect in the Wake of Mass Violence | En Español Mass violence events can cause a range of reactions in direct victims, emergency personnel, as well as in the public at large. There are strategies you can use to cope in the short and long-term, and effective treatments that can help. What to Expect in the Wake of Wildfires | En Español Wildfires have caused millions of acres to burn, leaving death, injury, loss of homes and community destruction in their wake.