HIS1200
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A history of disasters? Natural catastrophes and early modern societies.

Disasters offer unique insights into past societies. The rupture they cause can suddenly reveal hidden societal conflicts and arrangements. This seminar will study cases such as the Great Fire of London or the Lisbon Earthquake to discover the links between history and disaster. It will introduce students to handling historical source material and highlight major shifts in the early modern era. Through a variety of readings, discussions and presentations the seminar will explore how catastrophes can become catalysts of change.

Syllabus:


Session 1: Cultures of catastrophe?

Session 2: The Great Famine (1315-22)
https://www.jstor.org/stable/650378?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

Session 3: Finding scapegoats
https://academic.oup.com/gh/article-abstract/13/1/1/661644?redirectedFrom=fulltext

Session 4: Great Fire of London (1666)
https://www.jstor.org/stable/20762227?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

Session 5: The Christmas Flood (1717)
https://academic.oup.com/envhis/article/20/2/238/528908

Session 6: Everything is good? The Lisbon Earthquake (1755)

Session 7: Learning from Disaster?
Pensum:


