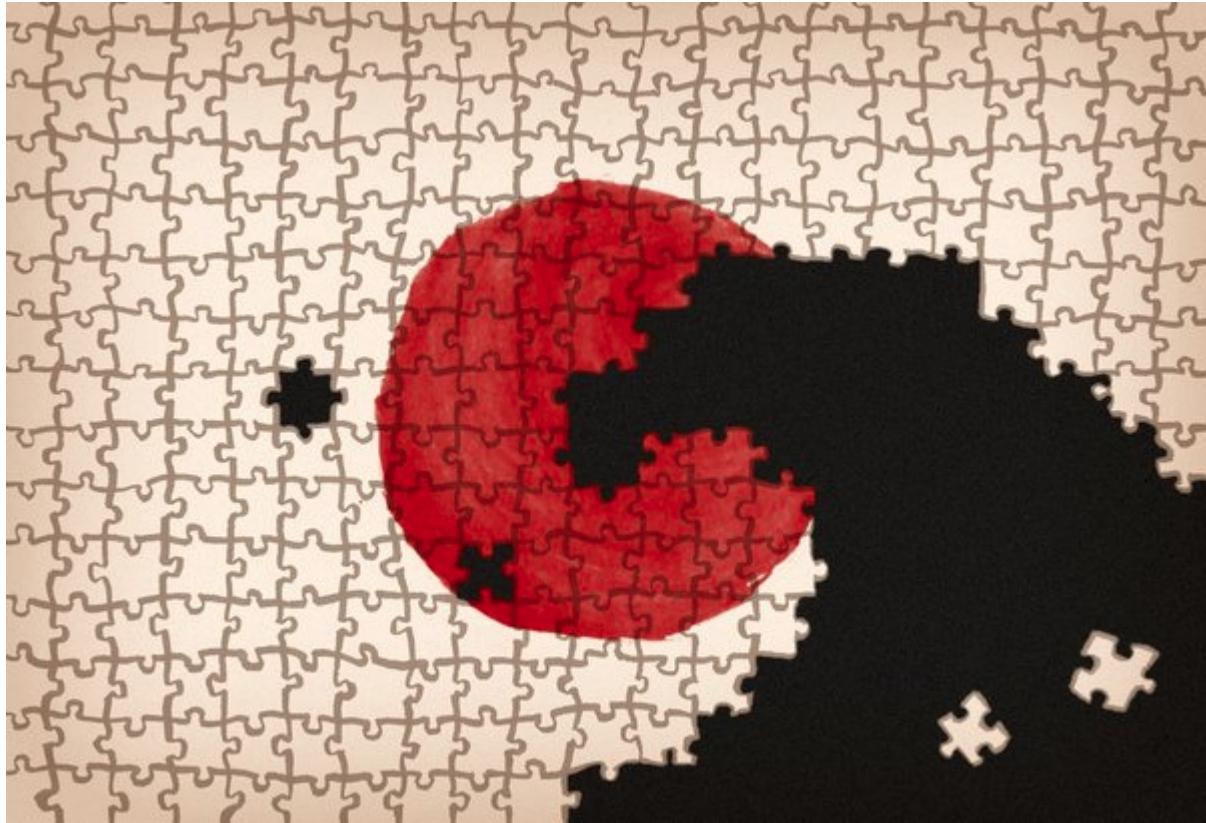


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**Anthropology 1923 / History 1923**

**Japan's 2011 Disasters and Their Aftermath: A workshop on digital research**

Fall 2016 | Wed 2-5 | Room Sever 112



Professor Theodore Bestor  
[bestor@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:bestor@fas.harvard.edu)

Tozzer 314

Office Hours: Mon 2-4 and by  
appt from [here](#) or via email

Professor Andrew Gordon  
[agordon@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:agordon@fas.harvard.edu)

CGIS 236

Office Hours: Mon 2-5 and by  
appt via email

Dr. Ryo Morimoto

[rmorimoto@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:rmorimoto@fas.harvard.edu)

Fung Library K009

Office Hours: Thursday 2-4 and  
by appt via email

**Overview**

On March 11, 2011, northeastern Japan was struck by a cascading series of disasters that rank among the worst catastrophes ever to strike Japan or any other nation. Among the disasters' many unprecedented aspects was the integral role of digital technologies, which ranged from tweets that helped survivors find shelter, to social media offering second-by-second recording of the unfolding of the disasters, to visualizations and communications about their impact, which spread almost immediately across the globe.

This course invites undergraduate and graduate students from across the university to explore the challenge of developing critical perspectives on the enduring consequences of these events as well as the complex role played by digital records. The course is multi-disciplinary; it will offer particular but not exclusive attention to anthropological and historical perspectives. Hands-on and experimental, the seminar asks students to develop research questions, compile collections of digital material, and create multimedia, web-based essays using the [Japan Disaster Archive](http://www.jdarchive.org) ([www.jdarchive.org](http://www.jdarchive.org)), a networked,

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participatory digital archive developed at Harvard in collaboration with numerous organizations in Japan, as well as other digital and more traditional sources. Throughout the course students will complement their research with study of responses to similar global events as well as critical reflection on digital scholarship, contemporary visual and social media, and the emerging practice of “crisis archiving.”

Enrollment will be limited to 15 students. **There are no prerequisites. The workshop is open both to students interested specifically in the Japanese disasters and to students interested in working with cutting edge digital humanities and social science research strategies. There are sufficient English language materials and visual materials to allow any students without Japanese skills to participate fully in the course.**

### **Course Assignments and Grade Weightings**

- Weekly participation and short assignments 30%
- Multimedia essay using the archive’s presentation editor (due Dec. 9) 40%
- Reflective essay (6-8 pages) on course assignments + digital scholarship (*Dec 16*) 30%

### **Policies on Collaboration, Academic Honesty, Course Etiquette**

**Collaboration:** We encourage and indeed for some assignments require students to consult and collaborate throughout the semester. We expect that students will discuss readings and raise questions with one another, and the course will have one or more group assignments. For your multimedia and reflective essay, we encourage you to discuss your ideas and the sources you’ve discovered with fellow students. But, of course, all written work submitted under your name, whether short postings, the multimedia essay, or the reflective essay, must be the product of your own writing, and must have appropriate citations for all quotations, paraphrases, and sources consulted. You should acknowledge the assistance you receive in these projects through consultations with your fellow students, faculty, or others, in footnotes.

**Academic Honesty and Honor Code:** The Honor Code at Harvard College: This was newly implemented by the College last fall of 2015. You should read and familiarize yourself with it. <http://honor.fas.harvard.edu/honor-code>

**Cell phones:** Off once class begins! No texting.

**Laptop:** You may use your laptop in class, but we expect that you are taking notes, consulting the course website, reviewing readings, or looking up things related to the class. Repeated use of your laptop for other reasons is disrespectful to the other students engaged in discussions, and will affect your course participation grade.

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## **Course schedule, readings, class assignments**

### **Sept. 7 / Introduction to the course and the Japan Disasters Archive**

### **Sept. 14 / Japan's 2011 Disasters: Written Scholarship and Multimedia Representation**

#### **Readings:**

Gregory Smits. "Danger in the Lowground: Historical Context for the March 11, 2011 Tōhoku Earthquake and Tsunami."

Peter Duus, "Dealing with Disaster" in Jeff Kingston, ed., *Natural Disaster and Nuclear Crisis in Japan: Response and Recovery after Japan's 3/11* (2012) pp. 175-87

Richard Samuels. Preface, "The Status Quo Ante and 3.11" in *3.11: Disaster and Change in Japan*. pp. ix-xv and 1-23.

David Slater, Nishimura Keiko, and Love Kindstrand. "Social Media, Information and Political Activism in Japan's 3.11 Crisis." *Asia/Pacific Journal* (2012).

**Websites:** explore two of the websites below and be ready to comment on the effectiveness or impact of them.

Japan Earthquake Before and After; East Japan Earthquake Archive; 3/11 Memories; Social Media: The New Face of Disaster Response; NHK Media Technology "3D The Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami; FNN "Remembering 3/11

### **Sept. 21 / Joint seminar with students and faculty from Tohoku University**

**Class project assignment:** Gather a collection of materials from the archive using the "collection" function and briefly present it to the class (5 minutes). *The goal here is not to settle on your research question but to practice collecting and spur questions and conversation.* The collection should be considered very provisional and will not be graded. Students and faculty visiting from Tohoku University's disaster sciences center will join us for this class to present their own research projects using our archive.

**After class we will have an informal reception to welcome our visitors. Let us know about your dietary restrictions.**

#### **Readings:**

Miura Shinya, "Archives of the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake and the Future of Japan", pp. 54-56, in Naito, et al., eds, *To See Once More the Stars-Living in a Post-Fukushima World* (2014)

Shun-ichiro Karato, "Natural Disaster: An Essay on Scientists and Society- from the point of view of an earth scientist" pp. 161-65 in *To See Once More the Stars*

### **Sept. 28 / Digital Scholarship and Japanese Disasters in Historical and Theoretical Context**

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Assignment: Write a short blog post critiquing one of the digital archives or pieces of digital scholarship, with reference to one of the short essays in the Burdick collection below. We will discuss these in class. Due by 12pm Tues, Sept. 27.

Guest Speaker: Professor Hidenori Watanave. [Hiroshima Archive](#); [Wasurenai \(We Shall Never Forget\)](#). (Please view these archive projects before class).

**Readings:**

Oliver-Smith, Anthony 1999. "What is a Disaster?' Anthropological Perspectives on a Persistent Question." In *The Angry Earth*. pp. 18-34.

Tom Gill, Brigitte Steger, David Slater, "The 3.11 Disasters" in Gill, Steger, Slater eds., *Japan Copes with Calamity* (2013) pp. 3-24.

Burdick et al., "Emerging Methods and Genres. In *Digital\_Humanities* (2012). pp.29-71 (each student will read and report on a **brief** portion of this work, discussing how it relates to **one** of the online resources below:

- Digital Scholarship: [DNA: Plotting the Database](#) [read this essay but feel free to critique others [in the DNA series](#); ["The Differences Slavery Made"](#)
- Digital Archives: [Hurricane \[Katrina and Rita\] Digital Memory Bank](#); [September 11 Digital Archive](#); [CEISMIC \[New Zealand\]](#); [Haiti Quake Archive](#), [Our Marathon](#), [HyperCities Egypt-Voices from Cairo through Social Media](#)

**Oct. 5 / Perspectives on the Coastal Disasters**

**Readings:**

- Tossani, Riccardo "Thousand-Year Event: Towards Reconstructing Communities" pp. 255-276. In Kingston, ed., *Natural Disaster and Nuclear Crisis*
- Brigitte Steger. "Solidarity and Distinction through Practices of Cleanliness in Tsunami Evacuation Shelters in Yamada, Iwate Prefecture" in Gill, et.al. eds., *Japan Copes with Calamity* pp. 53-76.
- Johannes Wilhelm and Alyne Delaney. "No Homes, No Boats, No Rafts: Miyagi Coastal People in the Aftermath of Disaster." in Gill, et al. eds., *Japan Copes with Calamity* pp. 99-124.

Assignment: Initial presentation of final project topics. If you are sticking with the topic that you explored with your collection prepared for the 9/21 class, you can update and expand that. Or, create a new collection and present that to the class.

**Oct. 7 4pm/ Japan Forum Presentation (Optional but highly recommended)**

Professor Makoto Iokibe, "Reconstruction after Natural Disasters: Lessons from Kobe, Tohoku, and Kumamoto." Porte Seminar Room (S250), CGIS Building, 1730 Cambridge St.

**Oct. 12 / Perspectives on the Fukushima Disaster**

Special Guest: Professor Makoto Iokibe

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**Readings:**

Gill, Tom "This Spoiled Soil: Place, People and Community in an Irradiated Village in Fukushima Prefecture." in Gill, et al. *Japan Copes with Calamity*, pp. 201-234

Sternsdorff-Cisterna, Nicolas. 2015. "Food after Fukushima: Risk and Scientific Citizenship in Japan." *American Anthropologist* 117 (3): 455-467.

Arkadiusz Podniesinski, "Fukushima: The View from Ground Zero" *Asia Pacific Journal* (2015)

Yoshimi Shun'ya. "Radioactive Rain and the American Umbrella" in *The Journal of Asian Studies* / Volume 71 / Issue 02 / May 2012. pp. 319-31

**Websites: Assess one of these websites. What are its goals? How well are they achieved?**

[Extension Site of the Distribution Map for Radiation Dose;](#)

[How Radioactive is Our Ocean?](#)

[Safecast](#) (Jilly Traganou. "Citizens' Radiation Mapping after the Tsunami." pp.230-233 In Wigen, ed., *Cartographic Japan*)

Interactive Things and *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, "No Time for Rage" (*Keine Zeit für Wut*)

- o (text in German — devote attention to the images/design) [web publication on Fukushima](#)
- o (in English) ["How We Visualized Life After Fukushima"](#)

**Oct. 19 / Research Questions and Image + Narrative**

Assignment: Write a one page (single-spaced) proposal for your project and present the project to the class with the Waku presentation editor. For your written proposal describe (a) the issue your project addresses, (b) the orientation of your research (e.g., scholarly perspective(s), 1-2 sample references), and (c) some words on how you might structure your presentation. Submit this proposal to the course blog by October 17. For your presentation share these same three areas with the class. To help illustrate your ideas, include in your presentation three items (text, image, sound, etc.). Limit your presentation to 5 minutes. The presentations will be included in your participation grade.

Link to Waku editor: <http://adk-waku.herokuapp.com/#en/dashboard>

Link to Public Waku: <http://adk-waku.herokuapp.com/#en/public>

- Scott McCloud. "Show and Tell" from *Understanding Comics*

**Oct. 26 / Documentary films and 3.11**

View Peter Galison and Robb Moss's film, *Containment* in class (and documentary to be determined, before class). Discuss films with Profs Galison and Moss plus Alex Zalten and Ryusuke Hamaguchi.

Please review Ryusuke Hamaguchi's film "The Sound of Waves" (the link provided on the course page) prior to the class.

**Nov. 2 / Media Coverage**

**Readings:**

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Gerald Curtis, "Tohoku diary: Reportage on the Tohoku disaster" pp.15-32. from Kingston, ed. Natural Disaster and Nuclear Crisis in Japan

David McNeill, "Them vs Us: Japanese and International Reporting of the Fukushima Nuclear Crisis" pp. 127-149. from Gill, Steger, Slater, eds. Japan Copes with Calamity.

Columbia Journalism Review: Curtis Brainard, "Crisis Juggling in Japan" (3/16/11);

Cristine Russell "Pessimism Reigns a Year After Fukushima" (3/12/12)

**Media reports:** View and be ready to comment on one, informed by above readings

- [Breaking news on the disasters](#) (3/11/11, 13:30) [*Harvard Key required*] from Anderson Cooper 360, CNN [If the link does not work, use this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJ1jwlhrstY>]
- [Report on Fukushima Daiichi](#) (3/14/11, 14:10) [*Harvard Key required*] from Special "Disaster in Japan" edition of NBC Nightly News
- ["House Found Floating Off Japanese Coast: stunning photograph released by US Navy"](#) (3/15/11, 2:54) from Studio B with Shepard Smith, Fox News
- Representing Fukushima Five years later by [Keow Wee Loong \(Interview\)](#) and [Arkadiusz Podniesinski](#)

Assignment: Each student will select three examples of media coverage of 3.11 found in JDA (or found outside of it), and add it to a shared class collection. In class students will discuss their examples and explain what it tells us about the media coverage of the disaster or its aftermath.

### **Nov 9 and 16: Project Work**

Presentations by students of drafts of their projects for peer critique

### **Nov. 30/ Final Presentations**

If possible will include the Tohoku University Students who joined our class in September, via teleconference.

*Final project due Dec. 9*

*Reflective essay due Dec. 16*