

Mount Royal University Centre for  
Community Disaster Research Presents:

# Were the Women Washed Away? The Gender of Vulnerability and Resiliency in Disaster

September 25, 2015  
12:30-2:00 PM  
Leacock Theater



The days following Hurricane Katrina revealed to the public a stark divide in terms of vulnerability and risk to disaster. Photos of the most desperate people seeking refuge at New Orleans' Superdome, a shelter of last resort, highlighted poor African Americans as least able to escape the floodwaters and all that followed.

Gender is also an important variable shaping experiences of disaster; yet scholars often overlook the ways gender impacts both personal and group risks. Women face unique challenges in disaster preparedness, evacuation, and recovery. Poor women of color, especially single-mothers, have special needs that are not considered by emergency response organizations, leaving women and their kin to face higher rates of domestic and sexual violence, reproductive and prenatal health complications, and loss of social networks important for everyday survival.

Kristen Barber will talk about these and other issues women faced during Hurricane Katrina, advocating for disaster scholarship that both is gender sensitive and takes an intersectional approach to examining risk and resiliency.



**Kristen Barber, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor of Sociology and  
Faculty Affiliate in Women, Gender, and  
Sexuality Studies at Southern Illinois  
University, Carbondale