

What Causes Natural Disasters?

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One possible explanation:

Iranian cleric: Promiscuous women cause quakes

AP Associated Press

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By SCHEHEREZADE FARAMARZI, Associated Press Writer – Mon Apr 19, 1:35 pm ET

BEIRUT – A senior Iranian cleric says women who wear immodest clothing and behave promiscuously are to blame for earthquakes.

Iran is one of the world's most earthquake-prone countries, and the cleric's unusual explanation for why the earth shakes follows a prediction by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad that a quake is certain to hit Tehran and that many of its 12 million inhabitants should relocate.

"Many women who do not dress modestly ... lead young men astray, corrupt their chastity and spread adultery in society, which (consequently) increases earthquakes," Hojatolislam Kazem Sedighi was quoted as saying by Iranian media. Sedighi is Tehran's acting Friday prayer leader.

Women in the Islamic Republic are required by law to cover from head to toe, but many, especially the young, ignore some of the more strict codes and wear tight coats and scarves pulled back that show much of the hair.

"What can we do to avoid being buried under the rubble?" Sedighi asked during a prayer sermon Friday. "There is no other solution but to take refuge in religion and to adapt our lives to Islam's moral codes."



AP – FILE - In this Saturday, Dec. 1, 2007 file photo, two conservatively-dressed Iranian women walk past ...

 Earthquakes Video: **6.5 magnitude earthquake hit southwest of Taiwan**

Are Iranian women so much worse than L.A. women?

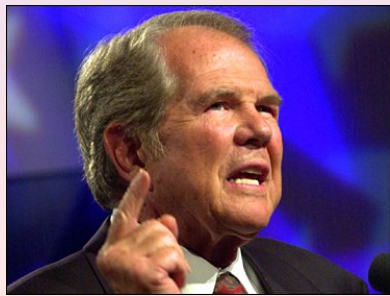
Location	Magnitude	Deaths
Los Angeles	6.7	61
Bam, Iran <small>(pop 97,000)</small>	6.6	26,271



After the Haitian Earthquake, Pat Robertson said:

"[S]omething happened a long time ago in Haiti and people might not want to talk about it. They were under the heel of the French. Napoleon the Third and whatever. And they got together and swore a pact to the devil. They said, 'We will serve you if you get us free from the prince.' True story. And so the devil said, 'OK, it's a deal.'

They kicked the French out, the Haitians revolted and got themselves free. But ever since, they have been cursed by one thing after the other, desperately poor. "

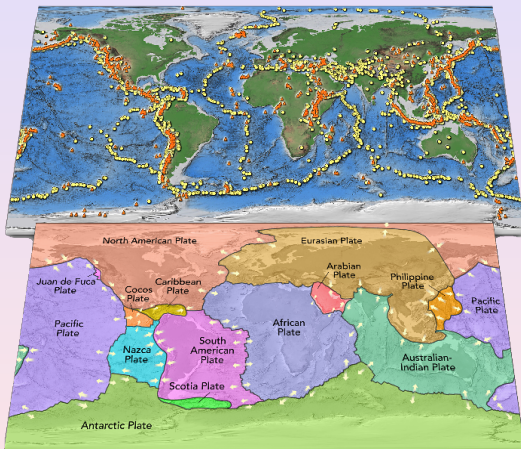


Statistics on Earthquakes:

Magnitude	Average Annually
8 and higher	1 ¹
7 - 7.9	15 ¹
6 - 6.9	134 ²
5 - 5.9	1319 ²
4 - 4.9	13,000
(estimated)	
3 - 3.9	130,000
(estimated)	
2 - 2.9	1,300,000
(estimated)	

¹ Based on observations since 1900.

² Based on observations since 1990.



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(Haitian Earthquake, 2010: Magnitude 7)

Uniformitarianism

The processes that happened in the past are the same ones that happen today.

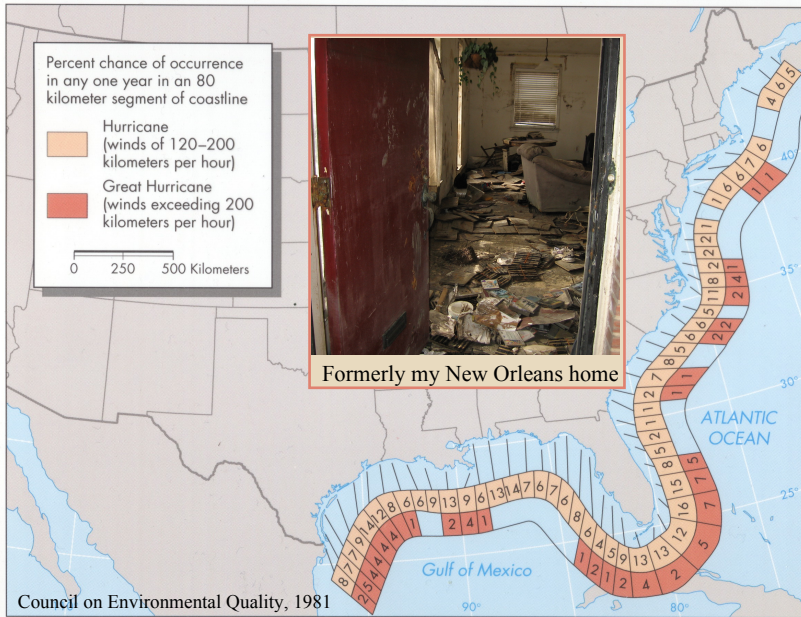
42% of all unintentional childhood deaths are due to crashes.

NHTSA 2002 Child Passenger Safety Technician Program Participant Manual pg. C-4

Compared with seat belts, child restraints, when not seriously misused were associated with a 28% reduction in risk for death in children aged 2 through 6 years.

Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, Vol. 160 No. 6, June 2006

Examples: Hurricane Probability in a Given Year



A catastrophism explanation:

“Hurricane Katrina was, in fact, the judgment of God against the city of New Orleans.” “New Orleans had a level of sin that was offensive to God,” [Pastor John] Hagee said, because “there was to be a homosexual parade there on the Monday that the Katrina came.”

Facts:

- Both seminaries in New Orleans were destroyed
- Approximately 900 churches, synagogues or mosques were destroyed
- Nearly 85 percent of those killed were older than 51, 60 percent older than 65 and almost half were older than 75.

During a September 13, 2001, appearance on The 700 Club,
Rev. Jerry Falwell reportedly said of the 9-11 attacks:

"I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the A.C.L.U., People for the American Way, all of them who have tried to secularize America, I point the finger in their face and say,

'You helped this happen.' "



In summary, what do scientists do?

- Make observations
- Look for patterns
- Guess why the patterns occur
- Make predictions based on their guess
- Test the quality of those predictions
- Revise and try again