

Current Issues

in North American Studies and Cultural Studies

Lecture Series | Summer Term 2015

**NORTH
AMERICAN
STUDIES
PROGRAM**

Dr. Joyce Goggin

Department of Languages and Letters
University of Amsterdam



“Flirting with Disaster: Hollywood Film and the Shock Doctrine”

Tuesday, May 5, 2015 | 6:00–8:00 pm
Room A, IAAK, Regina-Pacis-Weg 5

In her talk, Dr. Goggin will discuss a genre of disaster film from the 1970s that began with *The Poseidon Adventure* (1972), *The Towering Inferno*, and *Earthquake* (both 1974). These films distinguished themselves from the horror and disaster movies of the 50s and 60s through technological advances such as ‘Sensurround’, as well as their urban realism and the seeming plausibility of their scenarios. In this new subgenre, cruise ships were capsized by storms; fires broke out in buildings; or the real threat of a major earthquake in L.A. materialized, without the involvement of monsters or other fantastic plot devices. Borrowing from Naomi Klein’s *Shock Doctrine* (2007), Dr. Goggin will also read the disaster film of the 70s as part of a program of catastrophe normalization that culminated in many viewers’ initial misreading of 9/11 footage as a scene from a disaster movie. While not suggesting a conspiracy theory about Hollywood film and capitalist politics, she will argue that capitalism has enjoyed a long and profitable relationship with catastrophe since its beginnings, and that this recent turn expresses itself in new kinds of cultural products like disaster movies that premeditate catastrophe.

Joyce Goggin (Ph.D., Montréal) is a senior associate professor of literature, film, and new media at the University of Amsterdam. She has published widely on different aspects of American popular culture. Her current research capitalizes on adaptation; gaming, gambling, and the culture of finance; the joint rise of the cities of Los Angeles and Las Vegas; as well as the aesthetics and affects of cuteness.



Foto: Daniël Rommens