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Cartographies of Danger: Mapping Hazards in America

By Mark Monmonier

University Of Chicago Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 378 pages. No place is perfectly safe, but some places are more dangerous than others. Whether we live on a floodplain or in Tornado Alley, near a nuclear facility or in a neighborhood poorly lit at night, we all co-exist uneasily with natural and man-made hazards. As Mark Monmonier shows in this entertaining and immensely informative book, maps can tell us a lot about where we can anticipate certain hazards, but they can also be dangerously misleading. California, for example, takes earthquakes seriously, with a comprehensive program of seismic mapping, whereas Washington has been comparatively lax about earthquakes in Puget Sound. But as the Northridge earthquake in January 1994 demonstrated all too clearly to Californians, even reliable seismic-hazard maps can deceive anyone who misinterprets known fault-lines as the only places vulnerable to earthquakes. Important as it is to predict and prepare for catastrophic natural hazards, more subtle and persistent phenomena such as pollution and crime also pose serious dangers that we have to cope with on a daily basis. Hazard-zone maps highlight these more insidious hazards and raise awareness about them among planners, local officials, and the public. With the help...



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