

Examining **Emergencies:** Challenges Facing Humanitarian Responses

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Reflecting on a world hastening towards war, the critic Walter Benjamin wrote in 1940: "The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'state of emergency' in which we live is not the exception but the rule." War, natural disaster, civil unrest, disease, famine: today increasing global awareness of and response to humanitarian emergencies call out for careful analysis and reflection. This cross-disciplinary seminar brings together observers of crisis response critically to discuss contemporary humanitarian emergencies and the challenges facing organisations that seek to alleviate the human suffering that accompanies them.

The Combat Diseases of Poverty Consortium at NUI Maynooth sponsors a series of events in 2009-2010 featuring hybrid social/scientific discussions on the nature of disease and ill health.