



DUPONT SUMMIT 2013

..... Pressing Issues, Economic Realities

December 6, 2013 * Historic Whittemore House, Washington, DC

The Policy Studies Organization

Speaker

Paula Gordon – *Lifeboat Foundation*

“The March 2011 Earthquake & Tsunami in Japan: Some Implications for the Safety of U.S. Nuclear Power Plants in Seismically Active Areas”

There are differences in the views of experts making assessments concerning the extent of damage and the consequences of the damage, the potential for continuing damage and the consequences and implications of the damage following from the Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of March 2011. Indeed, there are differing views concerning the implications of the Japan Earthquake for the safety of nuclear power plants around the world, particularly those nuclear power plants built in seismically active areas, such as the faults near and along the West Coast of the U.S., in New York near New York City, and the New Madrid fault in the center of the U.S. No nuclear power plant anywhere in the world appears to have been built to withstand an 8.3 or higher magnitude earthquake. According to Japanese power plant officials, some nuclear power plants in Japan, surprisingly enough, were only built to withstand an 8.2 earthquake at most. Others have quoted lower figures. Questions that follow include: What implications for the U.S. follow from the March 2011 disasters in Japan? How safe are U.S. nuclear power plants in seismically sensitive locations and is there a need to greatly expand emergency preparedness measures? Are new emergency management and hazard reduction practices, policies and initiatives needed as a result of the events that occurred in Japan in March of 2011? Some possible answers to these questions will be presented and discussed.



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Biography

Dr. Paula Gordon is a writer, analyst, consultant, and adjunct professor. She has served in staff officer, analyst, and consultant roles in the Federal government and elsewhere in the public and private sectors. Beginning in the early 1980s when she worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, she has researched and written a variety of reports on emergency management. In 1997, she was a contributing author to a guide that addressed substance abuse prevention concerns in the aftermath of a Federally declared disaster. From 1998 through 2000, she focused attention on addressing Y2K technology challenges and worst-case societal impacts, including impacts on public health. Since September 11, 2001, her efforts have been directed in large measure to infrastructure concerns relating to homeland security. She is particularly concerned with enhancing and building the capability of those in roles of public responsibility so that they will be in the best possible position to organize effectively and advance local, state, regional, and national homeland security and emergency management efforts. Dr. Gordon is also a member of the Advisory Board of Lifeboat Foundation and several of the Foundation's other boards. In addition she is a reviewer and contributor for The Millennium Project's Global Futures Intelligence System website and an analyst for Wikistrat.

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