

MA Defence: “Tweeting Tsunami: Early Warning Networks in British Columbia”

by Amanda Oldring

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Our dear colleague, Amanda Oldring, will defend her MA Thesis on Wednesday, December 16, 2015 at Harbour Centre, Room 1500 (1:00 pm - 3:00 pm). Here is the abstract of her thesis “Tweeting Tsunami”:

Abstract:

Influential Twitter users can enhance disaster warning by diffusing risk awareness through networks. While Twitter networks are frequently active during disaster warning, little work in social network analysis has been applied to the Pacific Northwest Coast, encapsulating British Columbia in Canada, and Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and California in the United States. This region is vulnerable to tsunamis, and Twitter’s speed, reach, and volume could enhance early warning. This thesis locates a 1,932 follower network for @NWS_NTWC, this region’s source tsunami warning account. Profile content analysis identifies stakeholders and network analysis describes their interconnections by country, community, influence, and embeddedness. Opinion leaders were identified and surveyed (n=125) on Twitter usage and opinions for tsunami early warning. This mixed methods approach assesses how stakeholders can optimize warnings in Twitter. Key outcomes include a longitudinal baseline, network driven decision-making techniques, and strategies for alerting at-risk areas.

Keywords: tsunami early warning; self-reported geolocation; social network analysis; stakeholder content analysis; opinion leader detection and survey; Twitter