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## Chapter 5

### **Organising community resilience: an examination of the forms of sociality promoted in community resilience programmes**

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#### **Introduction**

*‘Have cities missed the point? What if, for all their focus on crime stats and traffic patterns, on zoning laws and building codes, they've missed the chance to thrive—and to help their residents thrive, too? What if there's a better way to govern?’ (Irving, 2016)*

So begins a blog on the RAND website entitled *A Chance to Thrive: What We Can Learn from One City's Effort to Transform Communities*. All across America, community resilience programs are being introduced that promise to enhance happiness, wellness and resilience by restoring the social fabric underpinning American democracy. Originating within literatures on disaster preparedness and recovery (Norris 2008), the idea of community resilience has quickly spread as a solution to heterogeneous array of ‘community-based’ problems including climate change (Tompkins & Adger, 2004), gang violence (Shirk, Wood, & Olson, 2014), violent crime (Ahmed, Seedat, Van Niekerk, & Bulbulia, 2004), childhood bullying (Twemlow & Sacco, 2012), poverty (Cutter et al., 2008), and terrorist radicalization (Weine, Henderson, Shanfield, Legha, & Post, 2013). By targeting community relations as both the cause of, and solution to, a wide array of highly complex social and political problems, community resilience programs undoubtedly tap

into palpable currents of nostalgia prominent in American public discourse in order to enhance their appeal. And yet, it is also clear, in both their ambitions and the manner in which they reconceive the role of governance that community resilience programs aim not simply to restore bygone forms of community, but to realise a new idea of what community can, and perhaps should, be.

This article critically investigates the forms of community that are valued and organised through community resilience programs. In particular, we examine how the social relations comprising the community are understood, problematised and acted upon by the assemblage of governmental practices comprising community resilience initiatives. To assist us in our investigations, we draw on two bodies of academic literature that, to our knowledge, have not yet been placed in conversation: Resilience Studies and Organizational Studies. Critical studies of resilience have demonstrated a historical affinity between resilience and neoliberalism which continues to shape the rationalities and practices governing resilience programs (J. Joseph, 2013; Zebrowski, 2013). However, in understanding neoliberalism in terms of ‘autonomisation’ and focusing critical studies on the ‘subject’ of resilience (O’Malley, 2010; Reid, 2012), critical studies of resilience have tended to overlook the ways in which resilience is being deployed with the aim of restoring and reinvigorating social relations. To help us to analyse these relations we turn to Organizational Studies. This multidisciplinary field of research is variously concerned with how processes of organising enact distinct social relations, often institutionalised in formal organizations (Parker, Cheney, Fournier, & Land, 2013; Tsoukas & Knudsen, 2011). Our engagement with OS research enables us to consider how the ways of organising through which community resilience programs are enacted, whether hierarchical bureaucracy or empowered self-management, shape the socialites they propagate, not least those often

considered neoliberal. Our approach echoes Parker, Cheney, Fournier, Land, & Lightfoot in viewing organising as ‘politics made durable ... a way of working through the complex ways of being human with other humans and hence a responsibility and possibility for us all’ (2013, p. 39). However, crucially, the durability of politics through organising cannot be assumed in advance but must be worked upon, even by TINA (‘There Is No Alternative’) neoliberals. By drawing attention to the ways in which community resilience programmes are organised, not simply legitimised through policy discourse, we thus also open a space to question and test the durability of the confluence of neoliberalism and resilience. And then ask - how might (community) resilience be organised, rendered durable, differently?

We begin this essay by critically questioning how and why ‘communities’ became the referent of resilience strategies. This is followed by an examination of the specific social relations promoted and organised through community resilience programs through a focused study of post-Katrina recovery efforts in New Orleans. We argue throughout that community resilience programs are driven by a neoliberal idea of a community as a competitive market where human life is to be valued and secured on the basis of its economic productivity (Davies, 2014). Yet despite the predominance of neoliberal governmentalities, in orienting community resilience programmes in New Orleans and elsewhere, we are reluctant to reduce resilience to neoliberalism and vice-versa. That is why we turn, in our final section, to an examination of how some alternative organizations, specifically worker cooperatives, have reworked and supplemented market managerialist organizational practices to enact different notions of community, solidarity and resilience. Significantly, analyses of these alternative work organizations are suggestive of how resilience might be organized differently. In the conclusion to this paper, we draw out the

implications of these alternative ways of organizing for rethinking contestation outside of the binary of having to be either` for or against resilience.

## **Social organization**

Community resilience has been defined as ‘the sustained ability of communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from adversity’.<sup>1</sup> Originating in the field of disaster response and recovery, the idea of ‘community resilience’ signalled a shift from the traditional focus on the individual and household preparedness to the role of social networks in assisting response and recovery efforts. This shift in focus, from the self-sufficiency of the individual household to the social capital underpinning community self-organization, enabled the migration of discourses of community resilience from the field of emergency response to their wider application as a solution to a variety of ‘community-based’ problems including health and wellness, public safety, youth development, environmental sustainability. The idea of community resilience draws attention to the psychological, material, physical, and socio-cultural resources which allow particular communities to survive, and even thrive, within an environment marked by constant change and uncertainty (Magis, 2010, p. 401). Resilience in this respect is understood to be a function of the richness of connections within and across communities. It is both a natural property of communities and a quality which can be improved and extended through good governance.

Within academic research, community resilience operates as a meeting point for two influential, yet distinct, traditions of resilience research: ecological and psychological

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<sup>1</sup> US Department of Health and Human Services, ‘Community Resilience’ as found on the Public Health Emergency website: <http://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Pages/community-resilience.aspx> accessed 9 June 2016.

resilience literatures (see [Introduction](#)). Operating as the point of convergence for these two distinct twin trajectories of resilience research, studies of community resilience promise to provide insight into how communities can actively develop the capacity to adapt to and thrive within environments characterised by perpetual change and turbulence. Here, community resilience is understood as a function of interrelated factors including social capital; the prevalence of social networks; social inclusion; leadership; equality, and an array of psychological factors, including preparedness, ability to cope with change, and learning (Buikstra et al., 2010). ‘Community’ is thus posited as a natural object, endowed with certain inherent capacities of self-organization, which must be identified, enabled and encouraged through the exercise of good governance. Governing community resilience in this respect is less a top-down process and more one that requires combining, on the one hand, a sense of agency often articulated in terms of individual and/or community ‘empowerment’, with community action through self-organization (Magis, 2010).

By appealing to the self-governing capacities of the community, community resilience resonates with certain conservative currents in American political discourse. From the 1990s, a number of influential books have sought to link a raft of contemporary social and political problems to an erosion in the values and forms of organization which had formerly underpinned American communities (see Etzioni, 1993; Putnam, 2000). Of course, the idea of an authentic community lost in time which requires restoration is an enduring narrative. According to Joseph, the modern discourse of community ‘has been dominated by a theme of loss from its inception’ (2002, p. 6). One could argue that the temporal sequencing of community and society is foundational, both to ideas of modernity and the advent of certain academic disciplines, including sociology and anthropology (Delanty, 2010, pp. 6–7). Inherited from medieval Christian millenarian traditions, wherein salvation was understood

as the recovery of an original immanence with the Lord in the establishment of his Kingdom on Earth (Turner, 1969, pp. 153–154), Modernity was conceptualised in terms of a rupture with an authentic past. Whether it be Durkheim's opposition of mechanical and organic solidarity, Weber's narrative of rationalization or countless others, community is posited as a lost form of sociability, rooted in authenticity, solidarity, trust and shared values, which has been superseded by 'social' modes organised by capitalist values of individualism and economic profit (M. Joseph, 2002, p. 6).

The community/society dichotomy has also been subject to critical scrutiny. Nancy, for one, argues:

*'Society was not built on the ruins of a community. It emerged from the disappearance or the conservation of something--tribes or empires--perhaps just as unrelated to what we call "community" as to what we call "society." So that community, far from being what society has crushed or lost, is what happens to us--question, waiting, event, imperative--in the wake of society'* (Nancy, 1991, p. 11).

For Nancy, the original community never existed. It is mythic thought. Community instead arises as an experience of absence; something which can be desired but never fulfilled. Yet this affect is productive. The experience of loss associated with community, together with the impossibility of its realisation, acts as a constant impetus for the realisation of community as a political project. *'What this community has "lost"--the immanence and the intimacy of a communion--is lost only in the sense that such a "loss" is constitutive of "community" itself'* (Nancy, 1991, p. 12).

While recognising that the opposition of community against society has been a recurring theme throughout history, Williams (1973) cautions that we must be sensitive to the particular ways in which this opposition is articulated and deployed in specific political and social settings. For Joseph, what is peculiar about 20<sup>th</sup> Century invocations of community are the marked absence of anti-capitalist sentiment (M. Joseph, 2002, p. 8). Whereas 19<sup>th</sup> Century appeals to community yearned for a time prior to the commodification of human relations. 20<sup>th</sup> Century invocations of community seem not just to downplay the influence of capitalism in engendering the forms of sociality they lament, but champion capitalist values as the means by which community can be realised again. This inflection is clearly discernible in Robert Putnam's 'Bowling Alone' (2000). According to Putnam, the steady decline in civic engagement from the 1950s has eroded the social capital of American communities with consequences for the vibrancy of American democracy. In his book, Putnam mobilises a variety of data to empirically prove the decline of American social capital defined as "social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (2000, p. 16). For Putnam, investments in the social capital underpinning communities is not just an important end in itself, but has positive knock-on effects boosting economic and democratic productivity (M. Joseph, 2002, pp. 12–13). The task for government is clear: to identify and invest in the forms of social capital comprising and enriching community.

Nicholas Rose (1996b) has suggested that such developments must be understood in the context of important shifts in the rationalities of governance operating in advanced liberal societies. While acknowledging the historical salience of the community/social divide (Rose, 1996b, p. 332), Rose traces the re-emergence of community as an important political term of art to the 1980s, when a number of varied 'community-based' programmes,

including community policing, community care, community education and community development, were first introduced. By identifying communities as the principle target of governmental interventions, these programmes signalled a subtle shift away from the social which had acted as the primary referent of social liberal programmes of governance. Like ‘communities’ in the 1980s, ‘the social’ emerged as an important governmental term of art in the late 19th Century. Assisted by the birth of modern sociology, ‘the social’, rather than a timeless form or sociality or even a particular mode of organization, emerged as ‘a particular sector in which quite diverse problems and special cases can be grouped together, a sector comprising specific institutions and an entire body of qualified personnel’ (Deleuze, 1979, p. ix). ‘The social’ thus acted as a condition of possibility for the development of a suite of ‘social’ practices, technologies and programmes. Francois Ewald, has shown how social insurance emerged as the private technology of insurance was extended to resolve the social problems of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. By spreading risks across the body of the nation, not only did social insurance operate as a technology of risk management but also acted as a technology of solidarity (Ewald, 1991, pp. 209–10). Rose explains:

It incarnates social solidarity in collectivising the management of the individual and collective dangers posed by the economic riskiness of a capricious system of wage labour, and the corporeal riskiness of a body subject to sickness and injury, under the stewardship of a ‘social’ State. And it enjoins solidarity in that the security of the individual across the vicissitudes of a life history is guaranteed by a mechanism that operates on the basis of what individuals and their families are thought to share by virtue of their common sociality. Social insurance thus establishes new connections and

association between ‘public’ norms and procedures and the fate of individuals in their ‘private’ economic and personal conduct (Rose, 1996a, p. 48).

Social insurance, in this context, is more than a technique for managing social risks. It is a means of consolidating and reinforcing the social bonds binding the citizens of the nation (Defert, 1991).

Communities represent a novel plane of problematisation and operation for liberal governance. In contrast to the solidarising technologies of social liberalism, Rose argues that programmes of governance aimed at the community effect a ‘new spatialization of government’ (Rose, 1996b, p. 327). Whereas social government was oriented towards fostering the relations of obligation between citizen and state towards the realisation of the monolithic nation, neoliberal policies instead target the multiple, overlapping networks of allegiance and responsibility which constitute different ‘communities’: ‘heterogeneous, plural linking individuals, families and others into contesting cultural assemblies of identities and allegiances’ (Rose, 1996b, p. 327). But community, according to Rose, ‘is not simply the territory of government, but a means of governance: its ties, bonds, forces and affiliations are to be celebrated, nurtured, shaped and instrumentalised in the hope of producing consequences that are desirable for all and for each.’ (Rose, 1996b, p. 335). Breaking from the language of ‘social risks’ which were the target of social liberal policies and technologies of the welfare state, the emergence of ‘community-based’ policies from the 1980s reflected the idea that governmental practices had to be more specifically tailored to the particular dynamics and risk profiles of individual communities. ‘Government through community’ requires a variety of strategies for fostering and instrumentalising the multi-layered planes of allegiance any individual may hold to different communities, be

they ethnic, religious, sexual, recreational or otherwise (Rose, 1996b, p. 334). Government here is conducted 'through the activation of individual commitments, energies and choices, through personal morality within a community setting' in contrast to what is viewed as 'centralizing, patronizing and disabling social government' (Rose, 1996b, p. 335). The use of 'empowerment technologies', which both Rose (1996b) and Donzelot (1991) trace to leftist critiques of the paternalism and overreliance on expert authority in the Welfare state, in turn provides a more efficient and economical form of government wherein 'the beings who were to be governed...were now conceived as individuals who are to be active in their own government' (Rose, 1996b, p. 330). Rather than diminishing power and enhancing freedom, neoliberalism reorients governance towards the production of active citizens, requiring new modes of expertise and governance whilst producing new patterns of inclusion and exclusion.

Within resilience research, neoliberalism has become an important paradigm for theorising the 'resilient subject' (O'Malley, 2010; Reid, 2012). Here, the resilient subject is understood as enterprising and entrepreneurial, responsabilised to act in on the individual risks they face. Yet, the focus on the individual subject of resilience has deflected attention from the important ways in which programs of community resilience are increasingly invested in the relations within and between members of distinct communities. This raises important questions concerning the ways in which community, sociality and solidarity are understood, evaluated and organised within academic and practitioner discourses of community resilience. To address these issues, in this next section we therefore turn to examine how discourses of community resilience were enacted in the context of post-Katrina recovery efforts in New Orleans. While our analysis starts from a consideration of how community resilience has been framed in policy discourse, it then focuses upon the

specific ways of organising through which community resilience has been enacted. In doing so we consider the extent to which specific organizational practices and ideologies, notably management and managerialism (Klikauer, 2013; Parker, 2002), have supported and subverted the policy discourses surrounding community resilience. Considering community resilience as bound up with ways of organising, not simply as a neoliberal ideology, thus opens up a space to consider possibilities for how it might be organised differently, which we discuss in the final section.

### **Organising community resilience**

At an estimated cost in excess of \$200 billion, Hurricane Katrina was one of the costliest ‘natural’ disasters in American history (Congleton, 2006, p. 6). At least 1464 people were confirmed dead and over a million people were displaced from the Gulf Coast region--the largest mass displacement in American history (Grier, 2005). Yet some were able to see the silver lining. David Brooks wrote in the *New York Times* that Hurricane Katrina ‘created as close to a blank slate as we get in human affairs, and given us a chance to rebuild a city that wasn’t working’ (Brooks, 2005). James Glassman, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, described New Orleans as ‘the most exciting urban opportunity since San Francisco in 1906’ (Glassman, 2006, p. A13). Prior to Katrina, New Orleans had already been singled out as an exemplar of everything wrong with government social welfare policies (Boyer, 2015, p. 224). Conservatives argued that generous spending on welfare, education and healthcare had produced high levels of dependency amongst the primarily African-American population; an argument which resurfaced in the weeks after Katrina to explain why so many African Americans had failed to evacuate the city (Boyer, 2015, p. 224). The conditions left by Hurricane Katrina (including the permanent evacuation of

110,000 mostly African American inhabitants) was heralded as a historic opportunity to effect a wholesale redesign of the city. New Orleans was quickly designated the principal experimental site for a range of urban redevelopment and renewal schemes promising to enhance its economic viability and resilience (Grier, 2005).

Steeped in a discourse of empowerment and self-sufficiency, discourses of resilience provided a much needed boost to morale in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. In contrast to the demeaning media depictions, which focused on destitute individuals amassing at the Superdome or warning of violent criminals looting in the streets (Whitehall & Johnson, 2011), resilience provided a counter-narrative around which the citizens of New Orleans could collectively self-identity. The hopeful and redemptive potential of resilience (cf. Konings, 2015), rather than being ideologically imposed, thus found fertile ground within the hopeless affective atmospheres of post-Katrina New Orleans (Cave, 2005). But resilience also operated as a new paradigm for understanding a diverse array of persistent problems which had been revealed and exacerbated by the floods. *Resilient New Orleans* describes the city as afflicted by a series of chronic ‘stresses’, including land subsidence and poor economic, educational, and health outcomes among vulnerable populations, which act to compound periodic ‘shocks’ like that wrought by hurricane Katrina (City of New Orleans, 2015, pp. 10–11). Building resilience, it suggests, is a matter of investing in ‘equity’: a term which deliberately blurs the distinction between pursuing social equality and positioning communities as an investment opportunity (City of New Orleans, 2013, 2015). *Resilience Builder: Tools for Strengthening Disaster Resilience in Your Community* provides further insight into how equity and social capital can be enhanced.<sup>2</sup> Freely

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<sup>2</sup> See ‘Community Resilience Toolkits’ *RAND Corporation* Retrieved July 2, 2016, from <http://www.rand.org/multi/resilience-in-action/community-resilience-toolkits.html>

available on the RAND corporation website, this community resilience toolkits promises to assist communities to ‘identify community needs to guide resilience work plans, evaluate progress, and support the development of resilience over the long-term’ (LACCCR, n.d., p. 3). Injunctions to perform self-assessments, reflect on potential risks and build on existing skill sets and resource bases clearly casts the ideal community member in entrepreneurial terms. However, the solution to the majority of these problems can only be found at the interstice between established communities. Investing in social capital means forging the connections within and between communities which facilitate the circulations of information, skills and resources and enhance the ability of these networks to engage in forms of bottom-up self-organization in the event of a crisis. On the one hand, complex social divisions with deep historical roots are reduced to technical problems of engagement which can be easily overcome through careful attention to your ‘outreach strategy’ (‘Many organizational leaders may require in-person meetings, while social media may be a better way to connect with youth groups’ (LACCCR, n.d., p. 45)). On the other hand, the emphasis on building equity and investing in social capital reframes the community as an investment opportunity wherein market relations are naturalised as the authentic social bond organising communities, thus opening it to a particular rationality of economic governance.

This economic rationality of governance is also discernible in the recovery strategy outlined in The Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP) (City of New Orleans, 2007). The UNOP was presented in the wake of the failure of *The Action Plan to Rebuild New Orleans* (Bring New Orleans Back Commission: Urban Planning Committee, 2006) which drew intense criticism for suggesting that large sections of New Orleans--identified by large green dots on an accompanying map--were unsuitable for redevelopment. Campanella

(2015, pp. 102–104) describes how resistance to the ‘green dot plan’ gave rise to scores of grassroots neighbourhood associations and civic groups self-organised by citizens to protest the demolition of their communities. The failure of the green-dot plan in the face of public protest put considerable pressure on the Mayor’s Office who had been instructed by FEMA that a recovery plan was required before federal reconstruction aid would be made available. The Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP) was completed in June 2007. In contrast to previous plans, UNOP was rooted in a discourse of participatory planning understood as ‘a mechanism of shared governance, where all residents can participate as collective authors of the city’s reconstruction directive’ (Barrios, 2011, p. 118). Yet contrary to the official representations of local government as a process of ‘shared governance’, Barrios (2011) found that recovery planning was often characterised by ‘significant tensions’ between expert planners and community members over the trajectory of the reconstruction efforts. Professional planners and architects viewed communities as sites of capital investment where public money was to be directed to projects that promised to attract follow-on private investment. Plans re-envisioned the city as a function of circulations of capital and people with commercial corridors connecting important landmarks. These landmarks included funding for sites, such as the Katrina Memorial and new green spaces, formally designed to target and channel diffusive affects such as community ‘hope’ and ‘strength’ around this specific vision for urban renewal (City of New Orleans, 2007, pp. 279, 305). However, this vision of urban development clashed with neighbourhood and community members’ preference for the restoration of a familiar urban design, and the need for social and affordable housing, in order to facilitate the return of residents. Barrios (2011) discusses how tensions were compounded by a distinct lack of meaningful public participation in the planning process behind UNOP: significant planning decisions (e.g. to build green spaces to replace affordable housing) were taken with minimal public

involvement, highly developed and aesthetically polished plans were then presented at public forums and the ensuing concerns of public actors were, when they conflicted with the views of planners, often disregarded in finally approved plans including UNOP.

Barrios frames the ethos of UNOP around the ‘neoliberal injunction to subject all aspects of social life to capitalist logics of investment and cost-benefit’ (2011, p. 124). However, while a neoliberal refrain of recovering urban competitiveness (Davies, 2014) undoubtedly infuses UNOP (2007), the expert-led, top-down, organising process by which that refrain was naturalised appears distinctly managerial (Klikauer, 2013). UNOP is articulated through a catalogue of management control: ‘leadership’, Key Performance Indicators, implementation projects, visions, strategic frameworks, and boards of directors. UNOP’s foreclosing of ‘community’ and ‘resilience’ around economic productivity, entrepreneurship and competition (Barrios, 2011) is as much managerially enabled as it is driven by a neoliberal injunction. As Land stresses: ‘as soon as they are subject to management and functional control...communities are no longer primarily concerned with the maintenance of community itself or with the ‘common’ interests of the community members’ (2010, p. 128). That is, it is not neoliberalism *per se* that instrumentalises notions of ‘community resilience’ to serve and protect external economic logics, but rather neoliberalism works through already present mechanisms for externally defining, managing and controlling ‘community’. In the case of New Orleans, urban managerialism was long-established: in the 1960s new highways were built that divided families, just as in the 1970s urban development displaced families (Barrios, 2011). What is distinct about the confluence of neoliberalism and managerialism after Katrina is that it is the capitalist corporation (Bakan, 2005) that serves as the external yardstick to value human communities (Davies, 2014). Thus the loss of a section of the population from New

Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward after Katrina (Barrios, 2011) is only regarded as problematic if its loss negatively impacts on measures of urban competitiveness or productivity, not because of any shared notion of community collapse or fragmentation. Communities are to be managed from elsewhere into competitive products to sell to investors in global marketplaces for urban living or else treated, like the Lower Ninth Ward, as places to 'externalise' costs such as urban crime, environmental degradation and social inequality (Bakan, 2005) and be (dis)organised into terminal decline (Barrios, 2011).

Despite the emphasis on inclusion within discourses of community, the managerialist practices through which community resilience was fostered appeared to engender and inflame the very divisions between communities that discourses of community resilience appear so ignorant of in the first place. Explicit forms of exclusion, such as those evident within the 'green-dot plan', demonstrate a prioritization on attracting the entrepreneurial classes by transforming New Orleans into a 'New American City' (Bring New Orleans Back Commission: Urban Planning Committee, 2006; [see also Introduction](#)). Yet, despite the prevalence of neoliberal enframings of community resilience, it is important to recognise that these interpretations are not hegemonic. The work of the Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies (IWES, 2016) in seeking to 'reframe resiliency' is instructive in this regard. This campaign aims to shed a light on the inequitable and unjust recovery support provided to communities battling racism and poverty for decades prior to Hurricane Katrina. Unlike the RAND toolkits, this work recognises the deep historical roots of political divisions between the communities of New Orleans, including histories of slavery, segregation and racism. Moreover, instead of blaming oppressed groups for their lack of 'social capital', they draw upon the cultural practices which permitted these groups to both survive and resist through long periods of abject oppression. In this way, the work of IWES

is interesting insofar as it refuses to ‘resist resilience’ (Neocleous, 2013; Reid, 2012) and instead insists upon recognising and redeploying the cultural practices and modes of organization that already underpin the resilience of these communities *as a form of resistance*. The work of IWES in attempting to ‘reframe resilience’ raises questions about the place of resilience discourses within progressive political programmes. It is to this question that we now turn in our final section.

### **Alternative organizations of resilience**

While acknowledging the influence of neoliberal governmentalities in shaping the genealogy of resilience, critical resilience scholars have begun to question the subordination of resilience to neoliberal ideology (Anderson, 2015; Sage, Fussey, & Dainty, 2015; Zebrowski, 2016). In this final section, we would like to explore some of the ways in which notions of ‘community’ and ‘resilience’ are being organised in ways that challenge, or explicitly oppose neoliberal ideologies. In order to pursue this line of questioning we will now turn towards work within organization studies that has examined alternative organization. This small, but growing, body of work has developed over the last decade as a response to the recognition that critiques of the market managerialist version of organization, concomitant with neoliberalism, are shorn of their radical potential if they do not move beyond handwringing criticism (Spicer, Alvesson, & Karreman, 2009; Voronov, 2008). For our purposes in this paper, this research opens up possibilities that market managerialism, the professed organizational counterpart to neoliberal ideology, is not the only response to how to (re)organise communities after events such as Hurricane Katrina.

A recent Special Issue of *Organization* on worker cooperatives as an organizational alternative was framed by the Editors not only as a response to the financial crisis but as a way of organising with, not against, community:

The narrowing of the vision of strategic planning in many industries, along with increasing pressures within international financial markets, has further distanced the most common forms of capitalism from the concerns of community, including attention to employee welfare, attachment to place, and overall social and environmental progress (Cheney, Santa Cruz, Peredo, & Nazareno, 2014, p. 592).

Here long-standing nostrums of ‘community’, including solidarity, shared values, trust, and a stronger attachment to place, are framed as the effect of worker cooperatives. Thus while a distinction is made between communities and worker cooperatives, this distinction is traversed by a shared form of social solidarity that binds together community sites of reproduction, and other non-work activities (e.g. recreation, religion), and those of economic production. The diffusion of social solidarity is claimed to provide resilience, or durability, across worker cooperatives and geographical communities (Cheney et al. 2014). These ideas contrast to how market managerialism has co-opted a discourse of corporations as communities to bind individuals to economic strategies (Land, 2010). Significantly these corporate treatments of community are premised upon precarity, not resilience or sustainability: By contrast, in worker cooperatives, during times of shock, practices such as hierarchical pay, may themselves be abandoned in the pursuit of community resilience. Cheney et al (2014) cite a large number of studies, and cases, linking worker cooperatives to increases in employee motivation and wellbeing and geographical community responsibility. While these celebrations are not explicitly framed in terms of a discourse of

‘community resilience’, an explicit, if under-theorised, parlance of ‘resilience’ and ‘community’ is used to describe how worker cooperatives can foster solidarity as a protective response to help communities endure through a range of natural and human shocks (see Cheney et al., 2014, p. 595).

And yet, despite the evidence deployed by Cheney et al. (2014) that worker cooperatives can aid communities to withstand certain shocks, such alternative organizations are continually challenged with the degeneration of their principles of solidarity. For example, Cheney et al. (2014) provide the example of how the Mondragon Cooperative Corporation (MCC) when faced with declining sales, and a lack of profitability, in an electronics subsidiary in Spain opted to close this division rather than continue to cross-subsidise it. Nevertheless, two thirds of workers employed at that subsidiary were provided with equivalent employment elsewhere within the group (Cheney et al., 2014, p. 594). Moreover, the same cooperative has also on occasion introduced, and then removed, stealth management techniques such as Just-in-Time and TQM (Total Quality Management) associated with work intensification and employee reduction.

The MCC originated in 1956 in the Basque Country of Spain, and remains committed to developing the interests of that geographical community and others through its principles of Social Transformation especially in areas such as education (Heras-Saizarbitoria, 2014; see also Cheney, 1999). However, since the early 1990s MCC has expanded internationally to have a presence in 41 countries, exporting to over 150 and now employing 10,000 people outside Spain in areas as diverse as industry, retail, distribution, and finance; thus it serves as much as a model for Corporate Social Responsibility and ethical management as radical alternative organising (Cheney et al., 2014; Flecha & Ngai, 2014). MCC’s managers

framed this strategy as ‘social expansion’, wherein the cooperatives values of solidarity and economic democracy were to be exported to their global subsidiaries (Flecha & Ngai, 2014). MCC sought to promote a culture of solidarity by developing practices of employee participation and self-management across many of its global subsidiaries. However, MCC’s global expansion has largely occurred through the acquisition, or part-acquisition, of capitalist enterprises. This strategy equips MCC employee-investors from Spain with greater freedom to adapt to particular economic shocks causing losses in a host country (e.g. use of insecure employment contracts, reducing wages, selling assets, selling the company). In other words, despite some attempts to disseminate collectivization, here a model of solidarity as resilience in the Basque Country was rendered durable by promoting a model of economic self-responsibility as resilience in another part of the world. Furthermore, both Storey et al. (2014) and Heras-Saizarbitoria (2014) conclude that in recent years the culture of MCC in Spain itself has shifted from communitarian values of solidarity and sacrifice to an individualist culture bounded together by the organizational offer of secure employment in the wake of global financial crises. The extent to which this valorisation of employment security is read as either an individualistic debasement of traditional Basque community values (as with Heras-Saizarbitoria, 2014) or a necessary reworking of ideals of community resilience and solidarity in response to a volatile global economy and work precarity is debateable.

These complex, and nuanced, dynamics between neoliberalism, alternative organising and community are examined more explicitly in Meira’s (2014) empirical study of worker-led factory take overs in Brazil. Acknowledging the degeneration of alternative organizations into market managerial enterprises, Meira (2014) suggests in detail how alternative organising can promote a solidarity oriented vision of community under neoliberalism.

Central to Meira's (2014) thesis is the notion of 'communitas' as a liminality, 'a realm of pure possibility and opening' (p. 717) between different social structures developed by the anthropologist Victor Turner. Meira (2014) elaborates how factory workers, turned owner-managers, are haunted by their precarious encounter with market managerialism, and neoliberalism, during the proposed factory closure. Their past status, and the ensuing collapse of social structures (e.g. division of labour, pay differences, occupations) required to bring factories back from the brink, prevents them from fully subscribing to the social structure of market managerialism even as they collectively adopt many practices associated with it (e.g. decision hierarchies, limited company status, outsourcing, consultant hiring, TQM). For example, the organization remains committed to collective decision-making amongst the 27 factory owners (though not the wider employee group), and so frequently struggles to pursue profitability over solidarity. Liminality is, for Meira (2014), a useful basis for thinking how community, for solidarity and sacrifice, can be organised in a neoliberal age. Community solidarity and sacrifice are not engendered here through alternative organising that works with a revolutionary, utopian zeal to produce a better social structure (Meira, 2014: 717). Rather, alternative organising fosters solidarity through organizational liminality, an anti-structure (communitas) that arises in the gap between different social structures (in this case a liminal region between a shareholder owned factory and a full worker cooperative). Viewed as such, alternative organization incubates community within the market managerialist structures of neoliberalism: 'Communitas is in charge of the company' (Meira, 2014, p. 725).

In this section we have considered how a trajectory of work on alternative organization might help wrestle treatments of community resilience away from their neoliberal designation. Our decision to focus here upon alternative work organizations, specifically

worker cooperatives, including those closing resembling capitalist enterprises such as MCC, draws attention to how such sites and practices of alternative organising offer an important means to understand, and render durable, different articulations of solidarity, sacrifice, economic democracy and above all perhaps community resilience. These socialities contrast with how community resilience has, as in the case of Hurricane Katrina, often been prefigured in terms of individual empowerment, entrepreneurialism and competition. However, significantly, these socialities are shown to be organised within, not outside or even in direct opposition to, sites often celebrated as neoliberal exemplars, such as retail enterprises. But unlike with corporations, ‘community’ is not purely figured as the place to externalize costs (Bakan, 2005: 60-84) or speciously instrumentalised as a synonym for corporate culture (Land, 2010, pp. 114–129) but rather ‘community’ is defined, enacted, and rendered resilient, through processes of organising (Parker, Cheney, Fournier, Land, et al., 2013).

## **Conclusion**

In the conclusion of *The Death of the Social*, Rose (1996b, p. 328) warns progressives against holding too sentimental an attachment to ‘the social’. ‘The social’, he reminds us, ‘is invented by history and cathected by political passions: we should be wary of embracing it as an inevitable horizon for our thought or standard for our evaluations’ (Rose, 1996b, p. 329). Whilst recognising the investment of socialism into the numerous social instruments comprising the welfare state--social insurance, social protection, social services, etc.--Rose nevertheless questions the political expediency of reacting to the shift towards community by insisting on a vision of the social that was not itself without problems. ‘We need not simply to condemn the injustices and disadvantages entailed in the de-socialization of

government, but also to engage inventively with the possibilities opened up by the imperatives of activity and the images of plural affinities' (1996b, p. 358).

It is clear that neoliberal governmentalities predominantly enframe the ways in which community resilience is enacted through programmes being introduced across the United States. Circumscribed within a neoliberal rationality of governance, community resilience programmes aim to bolster the adaptive, self-organizational capacities of communities by enriching social capital and promoting entrepreneurial forms of behaviour. The understanding of community is thus reinterpreted through market managerial and economic discourses. Community relations are, in turn, understood as a form of capital requiring sustained investment while market relations are naturalised as the authentic basis of human sociality. Yet, we have been reluctant to conflate resilience with neoliberalism. By turning to the experience of alternative work organizations, we have sought to open a line of questioning on how community, solidarity and resilience might be enacted in a manner resistant to the logics and practices of contemporary neoliberalism. What is clear from our investigation is the difficulty of establishing modes of organization entirely separate from the neoliberal governmental logics they seek to oppose. It is for this reason that Meira describes the positionality of workers in terms of their liminality: seeking out opportunities for resistance by resorting to "a sort of creativity by necessity that shadows the system more than confronts it" (2014, p. 714). Interestingly, Meira frames resistance in terms of ethical uncertainty. In seeking to contest the demands of transnational capital, one must always be wary of, on the one hand, reproducing and/or reaffirming the logics one is seeking to contest, and on the other, of slipping back into a form of isolationism. However, rather than weakening their resolve, Meira sees this ongoing liminal organising as constitutive of community itself.

In line with Rose's plea for a form of critique that moves beyond dismissal in order to explore the creative opportunities presented by the rise of communities as a post-social object of governance we feel compelled, as critical scholars, to explore the progressive opportunities afforded by resilience. Rather than simply 'resist resilience' we are curious as to how critical resilience studies might attend to the ways in which resilience ideas are being creatively reworked in ways that contest market managerialism and wider programs of neoliberal governance. This may be less a matter of defining what resilience 'is' than exploring the possibilities harboured within resilience discourses to foster experimentation on what it could signify, and how it could be made durable in different ways. Clearly this is both difficult and dangerous: running the risk of reaffirming practices and logics we ultimately seek to problematise. However, we feel that critical resilience studies should not shy away from asking difficult questions concerning the potential of resilience discourses to reinvigorate a progressive alternative to neoliberal governmentalities. How can resilience be enacted in ways resistant to the rationalities and practices of neoliberalism? How might resilience be reinterpreted and differentially to organise and render durable novel forms of community? What could a resilient community look like? Enjoining such a line of questioning to alternative organizational practices may provide important insights on how to move resilience beyond its restrictive neoliberal enframing.

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