States of Resilience and the Resilient State

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Abstract

This article addresses the rising policy and academic concern with resilience. We trace the etymology of resilience and go on to focus on three academic narratives that have emerged: the psychological, the sociological and the whole-life. Comparing academic views on various states of resilience with policy narratives, we home in on the mobilisation of resilience in the area of counter terrorism. Highlighting an uncomfortable fit between academic and policy narratives, we posit that contemporary forms of neo-liberal governance do not simply attest to a search for resilience, but are indicative of the quest to develop a resilient State that attempts to compel individuals, communities and voluntary agencies to perform security on its behalf.

Introduction

As Zedner (2009:1) observes, issues of security have moved from the margins toward the centre of criminological debate. Where security was previously seen as in the ambit of international relations and conflict studies, it has become a recognisable area of criminological inquiry. This focus is perhaps unsurprising given the close association between resilience and more mature concepts of risk and security. Questions of risk and security infuse the contemporary political landscape, from debates about the availability of food to the future of the 'nation state' (Valverde 2011). It is also evident that the demand that citizens 'think security' (de Lint and Virta 2004) has proceeded alongside the consolidation of what Hallsworth and Lea (2011) have referred to as the 'security state'. The articulation of these processes connects to the broader presence of 'risk' and 'fear' in contemporary political, policy and academic debates. Indeed, understandings of resilience cannot be readily separated out from these concepts, with capacity for resilience frequently being measured as a feature of either risk, vulnerability (Schoon 2006) or, more recently, 'well-being' (Mguni and Bacon 2010).

In our view, the rather unreflexive cementation of risk, vulnerability and resilience indicates a limited understanding of the nature of human agency and the capacity of organisations to respond to risk/vulnerability (Walklate and Mythen 2010). Furthermore, it presumes a deficit model of human and organisational capability in terms of the management of risk/vulnerability and resilience. According to Durodie (2004), attitudes toward risk,

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vulnerability, and resilience have shifted. 'Today,' he asserts, 'there is a widespread presumption of human vulnerability that influences both our discussions of disasters well before they have occurred, and that seek to influence them long after'; he contrasts this pessimism, with earlier assumptions that 'on the whole … people were resilient and would seek to cope in adverse circumstances' (Durodie 2004:19). Considered retrospectively, what is interesting here is the extent to which concepts such as risk, fear and now resilience emerge, gain credence, and become enshrined in policy, often without either accord about their meaning or prior examination of their utility. In the United Kingdom (UK), while there has been little definitional consistency in policy-making, the rather negative concepts of 'risk' and 'fear' — which became iconic under *New Labour* — appear to have been largely supplanted by the more active concepts of 'resilience' and 'well-being' in the present age of austerity championed by the Conservative-led Coalition. Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to claim that a sea change has occurred, more of a discernible shift in emphasis.

It should be remembered that the spectre of resilience began to take visible shape in political discourse well over a decade ago. In policy efforts by the State to 'build' resilience in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks ('9/11'), it is possible to identify a spike in activity around emergency advice, disaster planning, and preparedness (see Coaffee 2006; Kearon, Mythen and Walklate 2007). This kind of resilience planning embeds a range of assumptions about citizen involvement (Coaffee and Rogers 2008a), the reputational branding of safe places (Coaffee and Rogers 2008b), and glosses over what Siapno (2009) calls 'everyday resilience'. Siapno's (2009) analysis of responses to the tsunami in Aceh and East Timor suggests a view of resilience that foregrounds *assets* rather than deficits, and confounds academic presumptions regarding the ubiquity of the 'neurotic citizen', media representations of a fearful public, and governmental initiatives to build capacity at the individual and community level. In the context of security, the increasing ubiquity of resilience can be connected to the use of the 'precautionary principle' in various areas of security policy, including crime prevention, the management of sex offenders and counter terrorism (see Hebenton and Thomas 1996; Sunstein 2005; Mythen and Walklate 2008).

We should begin by noting that resilience is not new to criminology. Rather, there has been a longstanding — if muted — interest in it. Half a century ago Taylor (1960) highlighted the relationship between resilience and institutionalisation for prisoners and Day (1964) subsequently considered the resilience of young offenders. More recent work has indexed resilience to: disrupted families and criminal behaviour (Juby and Farrington 2001; Haas et al 2004; Stattin, Romelsjo and Stenbacka 2004); crime prevention (Hayden, Williamson and Webber 2007); vulnerability and repeat victimisation (Winkel et al 2003); female desistance from crime (Rumgay 2004); young people's resistance to criminal behaviour (Murray 2008); and the durability of illegal drug networks (Bouchard 2007). Perhaps quickened by a decade of terrorist attacks in Madrid, London, Mumbai, Stockholm and Utoya, the search for 'resilience' has continued apace. This search carries with it significant implications for the criminological agenda and raises some vital questions concerning who, for, and what this quest is actually about. In the same way that 'risk creep' has proved a problem in research and policy-making, criminologists might justly be concerned about resilience creep.

In this article, we suggest that it may be wise for criminology to take a few steps backwards with resilience before deciding whether or not to travel forwards with it. With this principle in mind, we seek here to bottom out the etymology of resilience and to track the nascent narratives that have developed around it. We surmise that establishing and understanding the historical (dis)connections between the utilisation of resilience in academic and policy narratives is a precursor to establishing an informed debate regarding the multiple

applications, potential uses, and pitfalls of deploying resilience in the context of security and criminal justice. The dangers presented by enthusiastically hooking on to resilience are as evident as they are sizeable. Passive acceptance and unthinking application may result in a process of catachresis, in which the term resilience is not only misapplied, but serves to mask degrees of exposure to harm and tangibly different experiences of suffering (see Tombs and Whyte 2006; Siapno 2009; Wilkinson 2009). Such caveats hasten the need for a discussion about what resilience means across different contexts and what it is being measured against. As Brand and Jax (2007) provocatively ask: resilience to what, for what, and from what? In this article, we broach these questions in four stages. First, we challenge the assumption that resilience has an axiomatic meaning, unpacking competing definitions. In section two, we analyse the academic literature sketching out the evolution of resilience within sociology, psychology and interdisciplinary studies. This paves the way in section three for a more grounded view of 'resilience in action' using security policy in Britain as our point of observation. In the fourth and concluding section, we consider some of the juxtapositions between the academic and policy narratives of resilience in this context and suggest what it is that they render (in)visible. Following Carlen (2008) and Rogers (2011), we shall ask whether the rising contemporary preoccupation with resilience serves merely as another metaphor of the imaginary. Is resilience a tool for putting people and communities to work on security? Is the governmental deployment of resilience a cynical strategy in the defence of indefensible State action and inaction? Or is there something of value to be retained in the agency of individuals and communities in terms of actually *being* resilient?

Defining resilience

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2012) the meaning of resilience is twofold. It describes the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape and the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties. Both of these definitions are used in common parlance and both link resilience to durability and flexibility.

Despite its growing policy popularity, a relatively small body of work has analysed the historical origins and conceptual dimensions of resilience. Within this literature, Brand and Jax (2007) offer a ten-fold typology of resilience drawing a distinction between its descriptive and normative use; while Pendall, Foster and Cowell (2010) explore its value as a metaphor. Walker and Cooper (2011) have purposively excavated the geniality of resilience; Coaffee, Wood and Rogers (2009) offer a critical analysis of its role in processes of governance; and Lentzos and Rose (2009) have noted its differential deployment in relation to bio-security. It is possible to identify both common and varied uses of resilience in this literature. Following its origins in ecology, Holling (1973) talks of resilience as an engineering concept and develops this through complex systems theory. In a different current, following its more political usage, resilience has been deployed as a metaphor. In order to understand contemporary applications, it may be productive to say a little about the distinct lineages of resilience.

Holling (1973) refers to the aforementioned 'bounce back' interpretation of resilience as the 'engineering' definition. This understanding of resilience captures its common sense, everyday use; the 'balance of nature' presumption, in which it is assumed that the time it takes to return to a stable state, equates with the ongoing persistence of the system. Holling (1973:17) argued that this definition of resilience made problematic assumptions when applied to ecological systems that did not resonate with empirical observations: 'resilience determines the persistence of relationships within a system and is a measure of

these systems to absorb changes of state variables, driving variables, and parameters, and still persist'. He goes on to suggest two distinct concepts of stability: one that foregrounds the speed at which systems return to type, and one that focuses on the magnitude of disturbance that can be absorbed before the system changes. This analysis informed a changed view on the nature of stability in ecosystems with more recent research supporting the assumption that ecosystems are inherently unpredictable and not defined by equilibrium (Berkes 2007:286). This second definitional take on resilience informs complex systems theory. In forming the *Resilience Alliance*, Holling and colleagues, 'were no longer concerned with resilience as a property of ecosystems as objects of conservation, but now advanced resilience as integral to the co-evolution of societies and ecosystems as a total complex system' (Walker and Cooper 2011:147). Gunderson and Holling (2002) dubbed this totality as a state of 'panarchy', denoting a complex, interrelationship between natural systems and human systems. This definition of resilience puts to the fore a cyclical process of adaptation to change involving growth, accumulation, restructuring, and renewal. Thus, Walker and Cooper (2011:147) aver that when situated within an appreciation of the political and economic aspects of ecosystems, 'Holling seeks to independently theorize an abstract dynamics of capital accumulation, one not predicted on the progressive temporality of classical political economy but rather on the inherent crisis tendencies of complex adaptive systems'. This itself reflects a subtle but important appreciation of the interconnections between ecological issues and the wider economic context in which they occur, a point to which we will return.

The third prominent deployment of resilience to be found is the metaphorical, defined by Pickett, Cadenasso and Grove (2004:381) as 'flexibility over the long term'. They go on to suggest that, notwithstanding the 'fuzziness' of this definition, 'it proves useful as metaphors are intended to offer novel ways of thinking about and understanding complex phenomena and, particularly to reveal new connections and insights across seemingly disparate conceptual paradigms'. This is a view endorsed by Brand and Jax (2007) who reason that this metaphorical use of resilience, as a 'boundary object' facilitates interdisciplinary discussion. Further, as Coaffee, Wood and Rogers (2009:111) suggest, the versatility of resilience as a metaphor, a 'floating signifier', has facilitated the transference of its use from complex systems theory through to policy and practice (see also Rogers 2011:54).

Each of these understandings of resilience finds a voice in the concerns of this article. For example, as the 2004 earthquake and tsunami in Aceh highlighted, there is an important interactive relationship between what human beings do (where they live, what they do to the environment) and the nature of the ecosystem itself and vice versa; a clear signifier of both the complex production of disaster and the capacity to respond. However, unlike ecosystems, human beings also have the capacity to anticipate and plan for the future. So not only does the complex systems approach remind us that ecological systems comprise a fluctuating dynamic, it also encourages us to appreciate what happens to this presumption of dynamism when resilience is translated into the realm of the metaphorical. In politics and policy this dynamism either appears to be difficult to tame or is elided. The United Nations, for example, define resilience as a social system 'capable of organizing itself to increase its capacity for learning from past disasters for better future protection and to improve risk reduction measures' (UN/ISDR 2004:17), while Walker et al (2006) insist that resilience is, 'the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and re-organise while undergoing change.' Thus, presumption of stability in the face of change (the engineering theme) infuses these definitions despite the more contemporary emphasis on dynamism for eco and/or social systems. This preference for one definition over another can also be discerned in definitions of resilience that are oriented toward individuals, rather than systems.

Much research on resilience has been focused on 'the dynamic process whereby individuals show adaptive functioning in the face of significant adversity' (Schoon 2006:6). Schoon (2006:8) goes on to suggest that the concept of resilience has been used as a positive outcome despite experiencing adversity, as a continued positive functioning in adverse circumstances, or as recovery after significant trauma. Moreover, she posits that:

> In order to identify resilience it has to be established whether the circumstances experienced by individuals do in fact affect their chances in life. If there is no association between the experience of adversity, access to resources and opportunities, and consequent adjustment, the phenomenon of resilience would be a mere chance event, a random occurrence. (Schoon 2006:8)

All of this presumes a measurable relationship between risk and resilience, vulnerability and resilience, or well-being and resilience for individuals: juxtapositions that typify the 'bounce-back factor' (see Schoon 2006; Green 2007; Mguni and Bacon 2010; Walklate 2011).

So, resilience is a diffuse and contested concept. Yet, there are some commonalities between these different definitions. They reflect a concern with overcoming and/or learning from adversity/disturbance in such a way that ensures the viability and/or integrity of the 'individual' or 'system'. They also veer away from viewing both as inherently unstable, irrational, or uncontrollable and, by implication, deal with resilience as an asset, rather than a deficit. Against this backdrop, we shall now begin to trace both academic and policy concerns with resilience, drawing these definitional areas more closely to criminology through a consideration of individual and structural approaches to resilience and the political and economic tensions that appear to exist between the two.

Academic narratives: States of resilience

Building on Schoon's (2006) observation that resilience is more than a chance response to an event, it is possible to identify a range of social scientific work that has concerned itself with understanding resilience. These academic narratives on resilience have tended to emphasise different aspects or 'states' of resilience. Collectively, whether they emanate from social psychology, sociology, or endorse an interdisciplinary approach, they point to the empirical and theoretical complexity that surrounds this concept. Taken together, this work is suggestive of resilience as a continuum, rather than something that either does or does not exist. Embedded here are three tendencies: first, the firm association of resilience with risk and vulnerability; second, the implicit presumption that resilience can be measured against risk, vulnerability and/or well-being; third, the desire to impact upon policy, whether that be in terms of education, public health or disaster planning. For analytical purposes, we group these 'states' of resilience into social psychological, sociological and whole-life approaches.

Social psychological approaches

Williams and Drury (2009) and Cacioppo, Reis and Zautra (2011) delineate two ways of thinking about the nature of resilience, the first concerned with the personal attributes of individuals, the second with how groups of individuals respond to emergency situations. Cacioppo, Reis and Zautra (2011:294) define resilience as, 'a person's capacity for adapting psychologically, emotionally, and physically reasonably well and without lasting detriment to self, relationships or personal development in the face of adversity, threat or challenge'. This is suggestive of a view that we each as individuals possess different capacities for resilience. Within this literature, specific attention has been directed to the interactive

relationship between the life-chances of the socially disadvantaged and educational achievement (Schoon 2006), but there is also a solid body of work that focuses on the way in which age and developments over an individual's life course may, or may not, contribute to their (individual) resilience (Layler 1999; Bouvier 2003; Ungar 2004). In the context of criminal behaviour, Murray (2008) notes the active resilience of young people in resisting offending behaviour (see also Rumgay 2004) and Kearon, Mythen and Walklate (2007) detail key differences between older and younger people in their responses to the threat of terrorism. Alongside class and age, Williams and Drury (2009) and Innes and Jones (2006) have observed gender differences in resilience, as do Haeri and Puechguirbal (2010) in their analysis of women's capacity for resilience in times of conflict. Taken together, this literature suggests that forms of cultural stratification are indicators of access to economic and cultural resources that can facilitate self-resourcefulness as an aspect of resilience. As we shall see, these factors may have an influence on an individual's capacity to develop resilience in the face of adversity, but they certainly do not determine it.

Continuing in a social psychological vein, Williams and Drury's (2009) second line of thinking about resilience is more mutual in orientation. They define collective resilience as 'the way people in crowds express and expect solidarity and cohesion and thereby co-ordinate and draw upon collective sources of practical and emotional support adaptively to deal with an emergency or disaster' (Williams and Drury 2009:294). This definition, rather than assuming that when faced with a disaster scenario people either panic or impulsively seek their own safety, intimates that 'pre-existing social bonds are not necessary for collective resilience. It is because of a sense of collective unity with others arises during emergencies that we are able to accept support, act together with a shared understanding of what is practically and morally necessary' (Williams and Drury 2009:295). In a similar groove, Cacioppo, Reis and Zautra (2011:44) developed the idea of social resilience, defined as 'the capacity to foster, engage in, and sustain positive relationships and to endure and recover from life stressors and social isolation'. This resilience has many layers and is a product of the interactive effects of individual resources and social groups. The limitations inherent in social psychological work aside, it draws our attention to resilience as both an individual and a social construct.

Sociological approaches

Running in tandem with the states of resilience identified in social psychology, developments in sociology have sought to draw attention more forcibly to the structural and collective aspects of resilience. Adger (2000:347), for instance, defines a sociological understanding of resilience as 'the ability of groups or communities to cope with external stresses and disturbances as a result of social political and environmental change'. Thus, sociological approaches to resilience are less concerned with what Schoon (2006) has called the 'disease model' of resilience and more inclined toward what Walklate (2011) has called 'structural resilience'. There are three dimensions to this structural state of resilience, each of which foreground slightly different — if interconnected — variables: (i) socio-economic context; (ii) culture; and (iii) social networks. Positing the existence of an 'axis of resilience', Walklate (2011) foregrounds socio-economic variables. She suggests that those with high resilience (those exposed to most risk and with a greater level of adversity to overcome) might be people from low socio-economic backgrounds who go on to high achievements, and those with low resilience (exposed to little risk and little adversity) might be those from a high socio-economic background who achieve what is expected of them. This is suggestive of the power of socio-economic resources in affording capacity for resilience operating both at the individual and the social level. Yet, the availability or

otherwise of such resources does not necessarily dictate capacity. For example, Hagan and McCarthy's (1997) study of young people living on the streets suggests a capacity for high resilience not dictated by economic resources, a view that is also endorsed by Wexler, DiFluvio and Burke's (2009) work with marginalised youth. They go on to suggest a role for shared cultural values in offering a protective cocoon for young people not normally taken into account by the risk/resilience equation. This chimes with the work of Ungar (2008), who also points to the culturally specific ways in which individuals, families, and communities may be connected and thereby afforded different opportunities for individual and collective well-being.

The importance of community relations, especially in economically deprived communities, in fostering the conditions for resilience is highlighted in different ways by Innes and Jones (2006) and Eggerman and Panter-Brick (2010). Innes and Jones (2006) use Sampson, Raudenbush and Felton (1997) concept of 'collective efficacy' as a way of capturing features of community resilience in deprived, high crime areas; whereas Eggerman and Panter-Brick (2010:78) point to the way in which cultural norms and values in highly deprived areas of Afghanistan 'function as both an anchor for resilience and an anvil of pain'. In a context of severe material poverty, they suggest that 'strong religious faith [iman] and individual effort [koshesh] are values that structure a *discourse of resilience* in the face of adversity' (Eggerman and Panter-Brick 2010:81). Studies such as these indicate that deprivation does not necessarily imply deficit in resilience. This is an important observation, since the concept of community has been a significant feature of policy and political responses to resilience. Other sociological work points to the significance of social networks for: women's routes into crime (Rumgay 2004); protecting corrupt practices in the police (Lauchs, Keast and Chamberlain 2012); and 'dark' networks of terrorist groups (Bakker, Raab and Milward 2012). Savage, Grieve and Poyser (2007) point to the importance of family resilience in sustaining criminal justice campaigns and Brownlie (2001) for children who have suffered sexual abuse.

Taken together these three variables (socio-economic context, culture, and social networks) affirm that resilience is a socially constructed state, rather than something that is intrinsic to the individual. As such, those who might be perceived as resilient are perhaps different from those who actually are, with the capacity for resilience being a process, rather than something that is a given outcome of exposure to risk or a consequence of resource allocation (see Murray 2008; Wexler, DiFluvio and Burke 2009). Moreover, all of these studies see resilience as an asset, not something that groups or communities lack. In this respect, it is important to note that under exposure to incidents and disasters pre-existing social bonds are not necessarily a pre-requisite for a collective resilient response. This carries significant implications for the preparedness planning discussed below.

The 'whole-life' approach

A third identifiable state of resilience is what we refer to as the 'whole-life approach'. This echoes some of the observations made by Eggerman and Panter-Brick (2010) regarding intergenerational transmission of resilient values in areas marked by military conflict. The whole-life approach to considering how people respond to adversity runs alongside Walklate's (2011) discussion of experiential resilience. Here, she draws on feminist work that strives to understand women's experiences of patriarchy in the form of male violence as 'just part of life' (Genn 1988). A part of life that underpins women's and men's everyday responses to the vicissitudes of life, as in Siapno's (2009) account of responses to the tsunami in Aceh, or the long-lasting cultural responses to violence found in the work of Das (2006). Experiential resilience relies neither on personal attributes nor structural conditions,

but is a product of both. The personal testimonies of survivors of the 7 July 2005 London bombings ('7/7') vividly reinforce this point (see Tulloch 2006). This state of resilience needs also to be situated within an appreciation of the role of adversity across the life course of an individual or group. Eggerman and Panter-Brick (2010:80) suggest that their data speaks to 'the poignant testimonies of everyday adversity and cross-generational suffering' in which 'cultural values, however, are sources of *entrapment* as well as resilience'. Schmotkin et al (2011:18) also give voice to the value of an intergenerational approach that 'may provide essential insights into the intricate balance between resilience and vulnerability in the long-term after effects of massive trauma'. Taking the whole-life approach in a different direction, Bonanno (2004) avers that because those who have suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and/or problems of chronic or acute grief have dominated the literature on how adults cope, the presumption of a poor reaction to adversity has become the norm. In his view, this presumption has downplayed the potential positive effects that experiencing adversity might have over a lifetime. This echoes the findings of Seery, Holman and Silver (2010), who report that people who experience some lifetime adversity fare better, in terms of mental health and well-being, than those with no experiences or a high level of experiences.

   To summarise, these states of resilience — whether psychological, sociological or rooted in individual and community histories — infer that resilience is not unitary, uniform or unifying. In short, there are *resiliences*. Whether viewed as an individual or collective attribute, resilience is certainly 'real' insofar as it is recognised and recognisable by both individuals and collectives, but it is simultaneously socially constructed: a shared, commonly understood experience. The 'whole-life' approach offers us a taste of its 'real' and socially constructed nature. In this sense, these states of resilience echo the complex systems theory of Holling and his colleagues. Yet, human beings also endeavour to deliberately impact upon and change their lives and the lives of others, and it is within these processes of deliberation that we find slippage between these states and resilience and the work that politicians and policymakers want this concept to do. O'Malley and Bougen (2009:44) remind us that 'imagination is *always* a critical element in the formation of governance then we make clear that things could be otherwise than they are now'. In this sense, policies can and do develop a momentum of their own that can become increasingly divorced from the social reality they are intended to effect. With this in mind, it is to the more specific imaginings of resilience (within security policies in the UK in particular) that we now turn.

Policy and political narratives: The resilient state?

In recent years, 'resilience' has become something of a political and policy trope, surfacing in a range of areas of government policy in Britain and elsewhere. In noting the use of 'risk thinking' in academic and policy commentary post-9/11 in response to the threat of terrorism, Coaffee (2006) suggests that a similar narrative has also been associated with the protection of national security and infrastructure from disasters. However, the express desire to build resilience has more recently been commonly used as a 'modus operandi of governance underpinning domestic emergency' (Coaffee, Wood and Rogers 2009:110). Cole (2010) suggests that the 4F's (the fuel protests of September 2000, the floods in the autumn of 2000, the foot and mouth outbreak of February 2001, followed by the fire fighters strike in November 2002) provided the mood music against which the country began to be defined in the media and politics as fragile. Overlaid by 9/11, these events put to the fore the necessity to rethink questions of civil security. In the years that followed, the emphasis on

protecting the UK from the risks of 'domestic emergencies' have since shifted to capacity to be 'resilient' in the face of such threats (Coaffee 2006) as enshrined in the *Civil Contingencies Act 2004* (UK) and other emergency planning policies.

Risk and resilience: 'Keeping the country running'?

In conjunction with the *Civil Contingencies Act*, the National Risk Register of Civil Emergencies (see Cabinet Office 2012) emerged to provide 'emergency preparedness' guidance at a local level on the most severe potential threats to the UK including 'malicious attacks' (eg terrorism) and 'natural disasters'. Under this guidance emergency services (category 1 responders) are coordinated with public services and administration offices (category 2 responders) to assess the risk of, and prepare for, such emergencies. Following this, the *Emergency Response and Recovery: Non Statutory Guidance Accompanying the Civil Contingencies Act 2004* formally addressed opportunities for national and local responses to emergencies, within which resilience came to be defined as the 'ability of the community, services, area or infrastructure to detect, prevent, and, if necessary to withstand, handle and recover from disruptive challenges' (Cabinet Office 2010:330). Here, local and national resilience is to be maintained in 'local resilience areas', under the guidance of 'local resilience forums' made up of both category 1 and 2 responders coordinating to carry out their duties under the *Civil Contingencies Act*. This macro-holistic policy development brought together all aspects of the disaster cycle (Coaffee, Wood and Rogers 2009). However, it is not unique to the UK, with other countries such as Australia (Rogers 2011) and the United States (Walker and Cooper 2011), having adopted similar strategies. In Britain, a recent review of national service provision identified the requirement to provide more efficient responses to building resilience in relation to national critical infrastructure (Cabinet Office 2011a:12). The Government responded with the establishment of the Critical Infrastructure Resilience Program,[1] which offers an assessment of Britain's resilience capabilities and guidance for how resilience can be fostered by industry, emergency services and government departments working together to maintain and improve essential services in the event of a 'natural hazard' (Cabinet Office 2011a:12). Herein we are reminded that resilience is also dependent upon a well-designed infrastructure, organised emergency services and contingency planning from businesses (Cabinet Office 2011b). Hand-in-hand with this legislation and policy, the UK has also set in train a Community Resilience Programme as a part of its Strategic National Framework on Community Resilience (SNFCR). This 'invites individuals and communities to prepare themselves in the event of an emergency and provides examples of how to do so' (Cabinet Office 2011c:3). Of course, in the foreground of such policies is the assumption that communities lack the ability to be resilient without the involvement of the State and therefore remain vulnerable from impending risk, or 'disruptive challenges' (Furedi 2008).

Citing Edwards (2009), UK disaster management policy frames resilience in terms of the capacity of an individual or community to withstand or recover from adversity. This 'bouncebackability' (Coaffee, Wood and Rogers 2009) take on resilience is tempered in these policies by the recognition that, for individuals, resilience is not constant: 'they need to be able to assess their proximity or vulnerability to these risks and use this as a motivation to act and be prepared' (Cabinet Office 2011c:11). As Furedi (2008) has noted of other UK disaster management policies, the marriage between resilience, risk and vulnerability is self-evident. Resilience is defined in SNFCR as 'communities and individuals harnessing local resources and expertise to help themselves in an emergency, in a way that

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[1]   Including the Sector Resilience Plans for Critical Infrastructure 2010/2011 and the aptly named *Keeping the Country Running: Natural Hazards and Infrastructure*.

complements the response of the emergency services' (Cabinet Office 2011c:11). Within this document, four different types of community are identified: (i) geographical; (ii) interest; (iii) circumstance; and (iv) supporters. All of these are exhorted to enable, remove barriers, facilitate dialogue, raise awareness, and work towards a shared framework to increase resilience against threats. As we see, an emergent presumption of a deficit model of resilience presents itself, one that flies in the face of what it is that is actually known about how individuals and communities work and respond in times of emergency.

CONTESTable connections: Risk, resilience and counter terrorism policy

In contrast to the post-9/11 language of risk that characterised responses to terrorism, the tenor of the policy message in Britain has shifted from differentiating between State and self-governance against terrorism, to collective resilience that becomes the responsibility of us all. The message embedded in the shift from risk to resilience is that bad things can and do happen and what is required is an understanding of how the public can assist the State in securing resilient economies and infrastructures though vigilance and endeavour. In so far as there is nothing novel in the invitation of the State to citizens to be alert and active against threats, the volume and pitch of the call to collective arms has arguably become louder in the current period of austerity and scant resources. Contextualised within the UK Government's 'Big Society' agenda, it is easy to see the links between an ostensibly political agenda, largely driven by economic cost cutting, and panoply of resilience policy. The more the State is able to responsibilise citizens, community groups and third-sector agencies to develop contingency plans and to develop strategies to manage threats, the less of this work has to be done centrally. However, juxtaposed against the academic narratives discussed earlier, State policy also seems to reflect an engineering definition that effectively flies in the face of those understandings of resilience that point to its complexity at both an individual and community level. To extend the questions asked earlier (resilience to what, of what, and for what?) we should add: what is it that is being prioritised in this policy response to build resilience and why?

Despite the 'all-hazards' rubric of the *Civil Contingencies Act* and the Strategic National Framework, it is effectively the terrorist threat (latterly reconceptualised in resilience policy as 'malicious attacks') that has been foregrounded within these processes especially in terms of people and resources (Coaffee, Wood and Rogers 2009; Cole 2010). This, despite the fact that the Government's own register of risks, puts pandemic influenza and coastal flooding as higher and as more severe threats than terrorism (Cole 2010; Cabinet Office 2012). Such prioritisation has resulted in significant costs. As the Cabinet Office (2011a) noted, not only are natural hazards now a priority risk for the UK, they are expensive: The summer floods of 2007, for instance, cost the economy and critical infrastructure £4 billion and £674 billion respectively, not to mention the reputational organisational damages suffered in its aftermath. This echoes the larger scale economic consequences suffered in the US after Hurricane Katrina. Yet, still, an emphasis on the threat from terrorism prevails in both countries despite the UK and US repeatedly suffering the direct impacts of 'natural hazards', threats that have frequently become a reality over the past 10 years. The question remains then: is this simply a further example of the use of resilience as a metaphor or is there a deeper process at play here? In the light of the prioritisation of the terrorist threat, the presence of a deeper concern has some viability if we consider who, and which communities have been targeted as a priority in this contingency planning process.

In the UK, the Government's CONTEST strategy for combating terrorism, presently in its third iteration, pre-dates the SNFCR. CONTEST has four strands: Pursue, Prevent,

Protect and Prepare. In its most recent form, the joining of lines with the SNFCR and the National Risk Register can be easily discerned. The document states that:

> The purpose of our *Prepare* work is to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack where that attack cannot be stopped. This includes work to bring a terrorist attack to an end and to increase our resilience so we can recover from its aftermath. An effective and efficient response will save lives, reduce harm and aid recovery. (CONTEST 2011:[1.40])

Further, the priorities set for 2011–15 are to:

- Continue to build generic capabilities to respond to and recover from a wide range of terrorist and other civil emergencies;
- Improve preparedness for the highest impact risks in the National Risk Assessment;
- Improve the ability of the emergency services to work together during a terrorist attack;
- Enhance communications and information sharing for terrorist attacks. (CONTEST 2011:[9.6])

Both links and contradictions with the SNFCR resonate here — especially in relation to the Government's own assessment of potential threats in the National Risk Register. Since 9/11 — and more pointedly since 7/7 in case of the UK — Muslim minority groups have been consistently constructed in policy as 'risky' others and represented as a threat to national stability (see Abbas 2011; Mythen, Walklate and Khan 2012). Much like the co-dependence on communities to be resilient in the face of natural hazards, these are the individuals and groups against whom the public must be *collectively* resilient, as both external and internal threats to security.

In a speech given at the Munich Security Conference, UK Prime Minister David Cameron (2011) claimed 'the biggest threat that we face comes from terrorist attacks, some of which, sadly, are carried out by our own citizens'. Statements such as these do nothing to detract from a 'culture of suspicion' (Ericson 2007) that many Muslims feel subjected to as they go about their day-to-day business. Further, such remarks endorse an unceasing security and intelligence focus and implicitly justify intensified use of risk profiling against ethnic minorities, channelled through measures such as the section 44 police stop and search powers introduced in the *Terrorism Act 2000* (UK). This legislation permitted stop and search powers to be used without cause for suspicion and has proven to be not only ineffectual in terms of apprehending potential terrorists, but also highly detrimental to community relations (Sharp and Atherton 2007; Thiel 2009). Somewhat paradoxically, the strategic targeting of young Muslims for section 44 searches has led to the development of a range of personal and collective 'resilient' techniques and strategies to avoid harassment, defuse tension and resist risk labelling (see Mythen, Walklate and Khan 2009). Insofar as the 'safe' population are exhorted by the State to be vigilant and resilient against Islamic extremists, moderate Muslims find themselves constructed as 'risky' and are forced to develop resilience to and against surveillance, intrusion, questioning and the casual racism of other members of the public. Regrettably, institutional fears about worst-case scenarios, reflected in the statements from the CONTEST strategy above, have been used as an ideational prop for the loss of liberty for (some) individuals. This may, ironically, provoke the 'law of inverse consequences', where the risk that is apparently being managed actually becomes heightened by the repressive activities of the State (see Mythen 2012). So, if we consider the underbelly effects of these political and policy narratives of resilience, another layer of resilience comes into view: one which is not preoccupied with engineering a state of resilience, but is concerned to support and maintain the resilience of the State.

Searching for states of resilience or reproducing the resilient state?

Edwards (2009) tells us that while all three major political parties in the UK are 'resolute' on the need for a prepared emergency response, there are dangers lurking here. It is dangerous because:

> doing so would mean wresting power and responsibility *away* from citizens at the very moment we need individuals to become *more* responsible over their own lives and society generally. (Edwards 2009:47)

Notwithstanding one's view of the legitimacy of the responsibilisation of citizens around security, we can detect here the changing context between the publication of the first CONTEST strategy document, the SNFCR, and the third CONTEST strategy. That changing context is, at its core, economic. Counter terrorism remains a strategic priority, but it does so in a context in which public sector services alongside military services, face severe budgetary constraints as the UK grapples with the fallout of the 2008 banking crisis. The freezing of funding geared toward countering radicalisation in the Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) programme stands as a case in point. The economic drivers for this are palpable. Against this backcloth, it is easier to see how and why resilience has risen up the policy agenda in the shape and form that it has. To frame things crudely, while risk requires the allocation of significant State resources, resilience — as it is currently being fabricated in government policy — is rather more cost-effective. This kind of resilience incites individuals, families and communities to 'do-it-yourself', albeit with steers from the State. Within this resilience 'imaginary' (Carlen 2008), the resilience with which such policies are actually concerned is the resilience of the State. Thus, the policies discussed above speak to 'an imagined political community' (imagined in this case by politicians) in which the State engages in:

> Hegemonic projects that seek to reconcile the particular and the universal by linking the nature and purposes of the State into a broader — but always selective — political, intellectual, and moral vision of the public interest, the good society, the commonweal or some analogous principle of societalization. (Jessop 2002:42)

At this particular juncture, this functions in support of the "neo-liberal imaginary of each subject being the "entrepreneur of oneself"' (O'Malley 2011:13): on the one hand responsibilised as individual citizens, while at the same time having their efforts harnessed as part of a resilient community response to the 'disruptive events' of terrorism and natural hazards. Thus, in the shadows of the policy take on resilience lurks the silhouette of the State, not an ideologically or economically deterministic or determined State, but one that works expediently in such a way as to ensure that institutions and organisations selectively engage in activities that populations subsequently become bound by. This search for resilience, and the exhortations for citizens and communities to *be* resilient, in Althusserian terms, makes appeals to individuals who are 'always-already' exposed to dominant ideas and impacted by ideological forces (Althusser 1970).

Aradau (2010) reminds us that however disruptive a catastrophic event might prove to be, the capitalist system ultimately preserves its identity. It does not, as the disparaging phrase goes, 'waste a good crisis'. She acerbically remarks 'while the CIA conjure images of a spiritual caliphate, we will still have Amazon.com' (Aradau 2010:7). Echoing Walker and Cooper's (2011) analysis of the economic parallels in Holling's complex systems theory of resilience, we are reminded that the public good of resilience is preserved in the interests of not just the State, but the Capitalist State. This is not intended to imply that there may, or

may not be, other beneficiaries in the process of 'building' resilience. Such benefits may range from communities receiving investments, to both public and private sector organisations making gains from their involvement in such initiatives. All of these interest groups may benefit from this resilience moment. This means that resilience is much more than simply a metaphor. It is an organising principle and a mode of harnessing and maintaining social order and control. Politicians and policymakers may invoke the concept of resilience metaphorically to ensure public support for policy. However — especially under times of economic constraint — this metaphorical use belies the underlying economic and ideological interests it is serving at this particular moment in time. This appreciation of resilience(s) renders Omand's (2008) assertion of resilience as a 'public good' distinctly problematic.

Conclusion

In this article, we have unpacked and problematised the concept of resilience. We began with three definitions of resilience: as an engineering concept, a derivative of complex systems theory and a metaphor. From here, we cast a view over states of resilience prioritised in academic narratives: the social psychological, sociological and whole-life approaches. We set these approaches to resilience against policy steers that the building of resilience requires the active engagement of not just individuals, but communities, charities, businesses and the emergency services. In order to tease out some of the structural problems in translating the concept of resilience into policy, we have focused on the ambiguities that arise in terms of the uses of resilience in counter terrorism measures. These measures suggest that much more is at stake here than building individual, community or national capacity to deal with adverse incidents. As Brassett and Vaughan-Williams (2012:34) observe of shifting economic policies amidst the global financial crisis:

> We might reflect suggestively upon the way that, despite all the traumatic imagery that circulated and the doubtless genuine reflections that ensued regarding the future viability of financial capitalism, the policy compromise that emerged ultimately supported the housing market, protected the banks and then subjected welfare systems across the world to austerity measures.

We need to recognise that the concept of resilience is socially constructed and that the survival of the State takes different forms in different contexts. In terms of our discussion, this is made possible by State sketching of threats that are 'out there', invoking ways in which citizens should respond and inviting business and third sector organisations to be involved in resilience building initiatives. In this way, resilience can be mobilised to activate citizens in being resilient from threats that range from managing 'suspect communities' to responding to natural hazards; but it also serves to drive forward underlying economic and political agendas, perhaps not on the cheap, but certainly with a lighter touch from the State and a larger input from the community. In developing a critical view of resilience, we have been concerned to pinpoint what it is that is missing. Williams and Drury (2009:296) postulate:

> There are many myths about disasters. The first and most enduring is that crowds panic. A second is that people are inevitably immobilized by fear. A third is that chaos occurs within responding agencies. Research shows that panic is rare. Many people who are directly involved are the first to take action. Often, disasters create unity and improve inter-agency cooperation.

What is of interest to us is the extent to which the capacity of individuals and communities to 'keep calm and carry on' has been sidelined. Indeed, government policymakers have largely ignored academic narratives that show resilience to be a variable and highly contested concept. We have made it clear that resilience is not an objective condition, nor an immutable state that individuals or communities can arrive at through working together. Rather, there are multiple resiliences that manifest themselves in different contexts and conditions. Searching for an explanation as to why resilience has been characterised by deficit, rather than potential, has led us to think about what has been made visible and invisible in both the academic and the political/policy narratives on resilience. The invisibility of the question of the search for the 'resilient state' offers part of the answer to the evident disjunction between evidence and policy. But, as Williams and Drury (2009) imply, what actually happens in practice may relate to neither.

Siapno (2009:58) — drawing on Castillo's (2003) 'repertoire of traditional resources of resilience' on the nature of 'everyday resilience' that includes family, friends and other social networks — discusses the impact of forcible displacement experienced in East Timor after the tsunami, and in so doing draws attention to:

> Unintended consequences that are not soul destroying and crippling, but enable slow recovery, resiliency, and having the capacity to make whole again — healing — that which has been destroyed, albeit, with tiny, small steps. (Siapno 2009:60)

Through incidents emblematic of what Furedi (2005:140) would call the 'terrorism of everyday life', and findings evocative of Eggerman and Panter-Brick (2010), an appreciation of such 'repertoires of resilience', meaningfully engaged in and meaningfully understood, would be of value whether we are talking about surviving a large-scale hurricane, managing the aftermath of a bomb attack, circumnavigating over-zealous counter terrorism, or trying to measure well-being and resilience in local communities. Such a spectrum of unexpected and everyday resiliences, constructed in circumstances beyond individuals' own choosing, are also where the search for the resilient State may take its greatest toll. As Gaillard (2010:227) notes in reflecting on the relationship between policy development and climate change: 'the gap is wide. Closing it will require huge efforts from all those involved, and will definitely require much more than the metaphorical use of concepts such as vulnerability, capacity and resilience'. Focusing on counter terrorism and security policy, we have observed a similar gap and, as with climate change, those who are least able to deflect or resist the policy logic may well be those that pay the greatest price for it.

Legislation

Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (UK)

Terrorism Act 2000 (UK)

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