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Discourses of post-Katrina reconstruction: a frame analysis

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Abstract This article uses a framing perspective, an approach to social movement studies concerned with the social construction of values and beliefs that support the actions of social movement actors, to assess the narratives of community practitioners working in post-Katrina New Orleans on a variety of disaster recovery issues. The 25 practitioners worked for 25 different organizations that were focused on neighbourhood revitalization, community development, health/environment, housing, and civil rights. Based on a critical discourse analysis of the interviews, three main types of frames were identified: Restoration, Reform, and Radical Social Change. These discourses are analysed in relationship to the perceptions of success by practitioners of their post-Katrina community re-building work.

Introduction

The Reconstruction Movement in the Gulf Coast following Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent levee failures in New Orleans has generated heightened levels of civic engagement, including community building, advocacy, urban planning, and community organizing (Axel-Lute, 2006; Benham, 2007; Hildebrand *et al.*, 2007; Pyles and Cross, 2008). Groups of committed community development practitioners, both volunteers and professionals, have sought to rebuild local communities and neighbourhoods, focusing on issues such as public health, housing, the environment, education, and civil rights. These efforts have occurred amidst a public debate over the various meanings of Katrina and post-Katrina social issues, representing a wide spectrum of beliefs and values. For example, African Americans displaced by Katrina have been depicted as 'looters,'

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ignorant for not evacuating New Orleans, or overly dependent on the government to provide recovery support (Harris and Carbado, 2006; Lubiano, 2008). Others believe that Katrina revealed a hidden racism and classism in the United States and claim that the government, as evidenced in their failed response, has been complicit in the oppression of disenfranchised groups (Klein, 2005; Macomber, Rusche and Wright, 2006). Such frames, created by those who are more or less outsiders to the disaster and its ongoing recovery, are noteworthy.

But what exactly are the frames of insiders, in particular, practitioners on the ground working to rebuild devastated communities and effect change? Because the disaster impacted people from all segments of society and has attracted an assortment of community practitioners to New Orleans, the beliefs and value orientations of these community leaders are also quite diverse. Yet despite the significant literature to emerge in the wake of Hurricane Katrina—both popular media and scholarly research—little attention has focused on narratives. Understanding the issue frames—beliefs that may motivate and legitimate social action—employed by these practitioners is relevant to a broader analysis of the impact of these efforts.

In this study, we identify the frames of individuals who worked for 25 community organizations engaged in community re-building in New Orleans. We assess the links between their issue frames and the ways that they evaluate the success of their efforts. Emphasizing themes of community, the nature of economic and social arrangements before Katrina, and the role of government, everyone in our study identified some policy and organizational success. However, our research also demonstrates little connection between frames and actual perceptions of success in community building and reconstruction. Indeed, despite varied levels of 'success' by these organizations, these outcomes were rarely measured against the meaning of, and often did not correspond to, these different ideological frames. We suggest that the framing used by different organizational actors in these efforts can play a key role in either perpetuating or challenging the systemic poverty and racial segregation that characterized New Orleans prior to Hurricane Katrina.

Theoretical orientation

The theoretical orientation guiding this research is based on a sociological frame analysis employed in social movement research whereby frames are understood as socially constructed conceptual structures (Hedley and Clark, 2007) that influence behaviour and lead to collective action (Noakes and Johnston, 2005). According to social movement theorists, '*collective action frames* are ways of presenting issues that identify injustices, attribute

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blame, suggest solutions, and inspire collective action' (Staggenborg, 2005, p. 755). Thus, the use of language and ideology is seen as a powerful tool in mobilizing activists and ordinary citizens for social change, but also in presenting a specific viewpoint on social problems and solutions into the public domain.

Issue frames are therefore seen as a common aspect of modern politics. For example, Winter (2008) found that framing by political elites (and mass media) on issues of race and gender taps into deeply held emotional responses, and has been used to promote social welfare policies with specific racial and gender biases. Lakoff (2004) argues that a political movement built on coherent and targeted issue frames emphasizing core conservative values has effectively mobilized for political, social, and cultural power in the United States since the 1960s. Examples of issue frames used successfully by conservatives highlight the alleged negative impact of welfare, immigration, and affirmative action, while denigrating the value of government policies and institutions to address key social problems.

Framing is viewed by community development practitioners as critical to effective social change efforts. Building on Bobo, Kendall and Max's (2001) criteria for choosing issues by community organizations, Sen (2003) suggests that viable issue frames must speak to the shared values of a constituency and be flexible enough to be used in multiple organizing efforts. A key challenge for promoting progressive values is overcoming the dominant issue frames of individualism and free market economics promoted by conservative activists, and instead utilizing frames that emphasize *community* and shared values.

Although the literature remains undeveloped, issue framing is viewed by some as a central component of community development and community organizing practice (Rubin and Rubin, 2001; Scott and Gough, 2003; Pyles, 2009). Recent literature on development and disaster has critiqued neoliberal practices toward post-disaster development that have tended to further marginalize and displace vulnerable community members. In response, some scholars have emphasized the importance of re-framing development discourse in a way that privileges the voices of those most affected (Gunewardena and Schuller, 2008).

While the importance of issue frames is increasingly recognized by those pursuing progressive political and economic change, few case studies exist that assess the uses and effectiveness of framing in such efforts. We suggest that the instrumental value of issue frames is central to effective community development practice. Furthermore, given that disasters put people at additional risk of further marginalization through the top-down economic development policies of elites, research on community development issue

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frames in disaster contexts is especially salient (Klein, 2007; Gunewardena and Schuller, 2008). Employing frames will thus help ensure that the work of community-based organizations adheres to the purpose articulated in these frames.

Literature review

Disasters

Research has shown that low-income and marginalized communities are likely to suffer a downward spiral of deterioration after a disaster (Sundet and Mermelstein, 1996; Morrow and Peacock, 1997). Klein (2007) argues that disasters have been used by nation states and other powerful actors to implement neoliberal economic strategies and/or to reinforce disproportionate economic and political relations. However, as the experience of New Orleans demonstrates, post-disaster situations also present an opportunity for community development practitioners to challenge inequality and promote more just social, political, and economic outcomes. For example, Ozerdem (2003, p. 201) has argued that 'sustainable development can reduce vulnerability by addressing the root causes of disasters and the lack of access to economic and political tools'. Importantly, scholarly inquiries into disasters have revealed the crucial function of informal and mutual aid organizations to disaster recovery (Harrell and Zakour, 2000), yet few case studies exist of community development practice in response to disasters.

Post-Katrina community development

Although little empirical research on community revitalization in post-Katrina New Orleans has been conducted, the existing scholarship has revealed important findings. A study by Pyles and Cross (2008) of an African American neighbourhood in New Orleans showed high levels of post-disaster civic engagement. Thirty-six (36) percent of the sample reported participating in a political meeting or rally in the last six months when compared with the national average of 17 percent participation rates for African Americans. Forty-five (45) percent of the sample had participated in a neighbourhood association versus only 25 percent of a national sample of African Americans. Also noteworthy in this study was that 84 percent of this primarily African American sample reported that they do not trust people of other races. This finding can be contrasted to the national trends which report that 23–32 percent of African American respondents do not trust people of other races, suggesting that practitioners in New Orleans were operating in a context of racial distrust.

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Rathke and Laboistrie (2006) studied the efforts of ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) in post-Katrina New Orleans, highlighting the innovative organizing they engaged in, given that their usual networks had been dismantled by the diaspora. Arguing from a global human rights frame of a 'right to return' to their homes, ACORN sought to re-connect with their evacuated members through text messaging and web-based mechanisms. Besides organizing survivors, the researchers noted that they were working on mortgage and credit issues, advocating for immediate needs with FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), planning for community rebuilding, assisting neighbourhoods with the revitalization of homes, and making demands of public officials (Rathke and Laboistrie, 2006).

Community development and evaluation

Research on community development has focused on a variety of methods for measuring the outcomes of interventions. In the community practice literature, this has included inquiries into empowerment measures, organizational variables, and outcome indicators such as monthly housing costs, wealth creation, and environmentally sustainable construction (Mondros and Wilson, 1994; Murphy and Cunningham, 2003; Ohmer and Korr, 2006). However, community development efficacy is difficult to assess in a linear fashion particularly because there are many confounding, external variables that influence interventions (Murphy and Cunningham, 2003). Scerri and James (2010) have critiqued indicator-based projects with a techno-scientific emphasis, noting such approaches may obscure structures of power and other cultural and political assumptions. One thing that is clear is that little research exists that examines the framing practices utilized by community development practitioners and the relationships of such frames to specific outcomes. Variables such as 'organizational development' or 'instrumental changes in the environment', which are commonly used in community development practice, taken out of the context of practitioner frames, can have unintended consequences that may actually preserve the status quo. In short, we argue, practitioners that utilize explicit issue frames are more likely to be guided by an ethical framework in their community practice that ultimately supports their values and ideology.

Research questions

Given the lack of literature on practitioner framing, especially in a post-disaster context, and its relationship to practice outcomes, this research sought to answer several questions. Through a discourse analysis of

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interviews that focused on the mission, activities, and barriers of community organizations, we sought to answer the following questions:

- How do practitioners frame community recovery issues?
- What do practitioners identify as success?
- Are there relationships between the types of organizations/demographics, issue frames, and perceptions of success?

Research methods

We received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Tulane University to conduct this research, employing a convenience sample of 25 individuals, each working at a different community organization that focused on community recovery immediately after Hurricane Katrina. The organizational participants were identified through a list provided by an umbrella organization of community organizations and neighbourhood associations. Snowball sampling techniques were also employed. Our goal was to maximize the diversity of organizations, including geographic areas of the city, the types of issues addressed by their groups, and the demographic characteristics of the organizations' constituencies. The sample included directors, coordinators, community development workers, and community organizers representing varied levels of experience and knowledge of community development in post-Katrina New Orleans. To be sure, these individuals do not represent the organizations and thus a limitation of this study is the lack of multiple perspectives from each organization.

Volunteer research assistants (VRAs) from across the United States responded to a call on various academic and community change list-serves to assist with data collection. The nine VRAs participated in one day of training before engaging in recruitment, interviewing of organizational representatives, and transcribing interviews. All interviews were conducted by pairs of two VRAs to help ensure a uniform data collection process. Data were collected over the course of two weeks in August 2006 and interview questioning covered the period from late August 2005 (immediately after Hurricane Katrina) through summer 2006.

The qualitative inquiry utilized a semi-structured interview guide. Research participants received $25 in cash for their participation. The interviews lasted approximately 50 minutes on average. Interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed.

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Data analysis methods

The transcripts were coded inductively, developing nodes and definitions of each theme as the analysis unfolded. There were 48 major themes that facilitated the management of a large set of transcripts. Once the basic themes were analysed, we drew from 11 of the 48 themes to answer the research questions in this study. These themes were: (i) Issues—post-Katrina; (ii) Issues—macro level—community/local; (iii) Issues—macro level—national; (iv) Organization—mission/goal; (v) Barriers to goal achievement; (vi) Community organizing method—Action campaign; (vii) Community organizing method—collaboration; (viii) Community organizing method—advocacy; (ix) Empowerment; (x) Organization—strengths; and (xii) Organization—weaknesses.

A critical discourse analysis resulted in the development of three frames (Noakes and Johnston, 2005; Hedley and Clark, 2007; Jager and Maier, 2009). Rather than a prescribed, linear method of analysis, discourse analysis is an interpretive technique that allows a researcher to unlock socially constructed and situated meanings that may lie behind everyday discourses. Jager and Maier (2009) explain that critical discourse analysis requires the analyst to go beyond the surface of the text and ask questions about the assumptions, allusions, and underlying concepts that the discourse conveys. Thus, each of the 11 categories was analysed with these considerations in mind in relation to the research questions. The researchers cross-checked the three discourse frames with the perceptions of success and organizational demographics to look for relationships and patterns.

Sample

The practitioners that participated in this research study were engaged in a wide range of community practice methods, including community development, community building, advocacy, social action, and urban planning. Table 1 reveals the demographic variables of the participants. Organizational membership included the types of organizations that the individuals were involved with including neighbourhood revitalization (primarily neighbourhood associations), community development, health/environment, housing, and civil rights issues. Research participants were 52 percent male and 48 percent female. Most of the sample was white (72 percent) while 24 percent identified as African American and 4 percent identified as Asian.

Findings

In this section, we discuss the major findings: (i) the type of *Issue Frames* community development actors use in their post-Katrina community

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Table 1. Frequency and percentages of demographic variables

Variable	Category	Freq.	Per cent
Organizational membership ($N = 25$)	Neighbourhood revitalization	7	28
	Community development	6	24
	Health/environment	5	20
	Housing	4	16
	Civil rights	3	12
Gender ($N = 25$)	Male	13	52
	Female	12	48
Race/ethnicity ($N = 25$)	White	18	72
	African American	6	24
	Asian	1	4
Age ($N = 25$)	Under 25	1	4
	25–39	11	44
	40–64	10	40
	65 or older	3	12

development work; (ii) their *Perceptions of Success* identified by community practitioners; and (iii) the *Barriers* to success in community revitalization efforts.

Frames

Three frames were identified and relate to how the practitioners presented their issues and organizations to themselves, the local community, the media, and public officials in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. These frames appear to reflect the value orientation and belief system of the practitioners (and possibly the organizations) with regard to the social meaning of the disaster and recovery, as well as the role of the government and local citizens in responding to the crisis. We describe each of the three frames—Restoration, Reform and Radical Social Change—below.

Restoration

The first group, Restoration, included nine individuals. The Restoration group was one whose basic message was that the social arrangements, i.e. the accessibility of political and economic institutions, in New Orleans were not problematic before or after Katrina. Thus, the main purpose of their work was to restore life in neighbourhoods and communities to their pre-Katrina status. Many of the individuals in this category worked in locality-based neighbourhood associations whose membership consisted of individuals living in the community either before or after Katrina.

The Restoration framers understood the role of community organizations as one of mutual aid of its own members and restoration of pre-Katrina affairs by helping people return to their homes, restoring power, fixing

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streetlights, and repairing damaged sewage lines. One neighbourhood organizer stated: 'We want our community to come back and be similar to what we had before, you know, have all of the houses back, and streets fixed.' Another said: 'We're trying to look out for each other. That's the premise.' Aligning with conservative issue frames about the importance of minimizing (public) social welfare interventions in society, one participant noted: 'We tend to have a light hand and not a heavy hand. We believe the marketplace will take care of things and that people can solve their own problems and that they generally don't even need to have a neighborhood association.'

When considering the relationships between issue frames and the organizational membership, we find that people working for neighbourhood associations, i.e. neighbourhood revitalization, are most likely to have restoration frames. In addition, these individuals work with largely white constituencies with the respondents themselves being white too. While their frames articulate important neighbourhood concerns, they are the least infused with explicitly normative ethical—and political—values among the three (frame) groups identified. Thus, given the largely status quo nature of the issue frames used, we would expect this group to most easily identify examples of success in their work.

Reform

The second group, Reform, included 11 organizational actors. This group is defined as individuals whose frames emphasize that various economic and social inequities existed before Hurricane Katrina, especially for the city's majority African American population and low-income individuals. For example, these individuals worked with a local social service agency that advocated for enhanced services for individuals who are homeless and a local community development organization that worked to garner better access to rebuilding resources for low-income families. From their perspectives, the events of Katrina revealed structural discrimination, elevating the issues of poverty and race into a renewed public dialogue about social inequality. They argue that most of the inequities should be addressed through improved access to services, as well as better social policies and programmes. The purpose of their work is '... to make the community better ...,' according to one organizer. Another participant noted that his/her group wished to '... turn liabilities into assets ...'

Key framing terms for this group were 'access' and 'opportunity', specifically for low-income individuals, African Americans, women, and other vulnerable groups. With various prospects for rebuilding and construction work following Hurricane Katrina, one group was focusing on enhancing opportunities for women to hold such jobs. This group worked on

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'convincing women and decision makers that women could earn money in non-traditional jobs like construction . . .'. One organization helped homeowners fix their houses so that they could rent them out to low-income individuals, while another group focused on enhancing 'access to information and resources and to advocate, be a watchdog' regarding re-development in the city. This latter frame reflects a belief that the government is not concerned with the needs of vulnerable citizens and that it is the job of community practitioners to ensure access to services.

Reform framers were a diverse group in terms of race/ethnicity, economic status, and organizational affiliation. The frames employed by the Reform group clearly articulated a more critical (economic, social) analysis, including emphasis on thwarted opportunities for oppressed populations. Nonetheless, the focus on greater access to social institutions and increased public services suggest a number of ways in which this group could be expected to cite some success in their efforts.

Radical social change

The third group, Radical Social Change, consisted of five organizational actors. The radical social change individuals are those that employ frames that question the current social arrangements in New Orleans and beyond. For example, one practitioner worked with a local group that was concerned with ensuring the fundamental right to housing through public housing organizing, while another individual worked for a national environmental organization focusing on environmental justice issues. This group presented issues from a significantly different perspective compared with the Restoration and Reform groups.

Rather than facilitating equal access to society's existing institutions and resources, these individuals raised questions about the basic structure of society. They emphasized a need for a 'fundamental' and 'radical' re-direction of the priorities of the country and even across the globe. This group is particularly concerned with social structure as it relates to race, class, and gender. They explicitly reject conventional frames about Katrina that minimize social conditions in New Orleans prior to the hurricane and emphasize the behaviours of residents in the wake of this disaster. Instead, the group is concerned with accountability for levee failures and the need for a new kind of economic development. They question mainstream frames like those that malign social welfare programs targeting poverty and inequality. They argue, for example, that public housing does not cause violence and poverty, but rather the causes of poverty are linked to a white-dominated, capitalistic society.

These actors connect their community re-building work in New Orleans to historical struggles around civil rights, peace, global justice, and other

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social change movements. Regarding underlying environmental problems in local communities, one participant said: 'We're going to have to make a serious – nobody's talking about this – change in the way we're living.' Another was more concerned about racism: 'We've still got Klansmen, we've still got the Nazis and skinheads, and they're still doing what they always did. Now they're . . . going against the Mexicans.' One activist explained his group's frame of the political economy in the context of explicit efforts to profit from Hurricane Katrina at the expense of local residents:

> . . . We see the . . . ruling elite, in Washington, in New Orleans, in Baton Rouge . . . and this isn't conspiracy, they've been openly discussing this. They see this as an opportunity. Although on one side the hurricane has caused enormous pain and suffering for the great majority of people . . . for the small minority they've seen an opportunity to push through an agenda that was already occurring before the hurricane, but now they can push through en masse. We call it neo-liberalism – lifting any kind of control on the profit making of the capitalist . . .

Finally, it should be noted that though the practitioners who were interviewed were of mixed backgrounds racially and economically, the radical social change group clearly identified their constituencies as low-income African Americans. With a focus on rights (rather than access) to opportunity and a critique of existing social arrangements that emphasizes oppression, these individuals largely reject solutions that fail to transform social institutions. As such, finding examples of success in the post-Katrina revitalization efforts of this group would seem least likely.

Perceptions of success

What an individual perceives to be a success is the action-oriented side of his or her issue frame. While the participants in this study identified recent successes in their organizations in various ways, we found virtually no relationship between issue frames and perceptions of success. In other words, all three groups—Restoration, Reform, and Radical social change—equally identified successes as instrumental changes in the environment, community building, leadership/organizational development, and changing the discourse. Indeed, not only did success have little connection to the ideological frames, but the successful activities cited were often not directly related to the apparent work of these individuals and/or the larger goals of their organization. Four categories of success emerged from the interviews.

Type 1: instrumental changes in the environment

Success in this category included some kind of concrete accomplishment or instrumental change in the environment. Examples include a house being

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gutted, the opening of a recovery centre, getting a FEMA trailer park placed in a community, and getting a specific policy enacted such as garbage pick-up in a particular neighbourhood. One restoration group member said: 'I think success for our area is once people get back in their houses and get settled in.'

Type 2: leadership/organizational development

These successes emphasized organizational capacity-building including the development of leaders within the organization. Establishing block captains, obtaining funding for the organization, and increasing membership were all identified as such successes. One long-time community organizer in the Reform group said about one person whose leadership development she had been nurturing: 'I'm very proud of one young lady; she's a new board member.'

Type 3: community building events/activities/social actions

Events and activities that brought the community together were identified as another kind of success. Examples include holding a 'Night out Against Crime', partnerships, and collaborations amongst organizations that have not previously collaborated, holding neighbourhoods festivals, and having a 'Community Clean Up Day' to fill in the gaps left by FEMA and other public cleanup crews. One of the Radical Social Change groups brought former public housing residents back to New Orleans for a direct action at the housing project and identified this as a success.

Type 4: shifting the discourse

Success here most directly related to the issue-framing practices of the different community groups. For example, some groups identified success as raising awareness among local residents and/or shifting the discourse of post-Katrina reconstruction efforts, despite the difficulty of measuring such outcomes. As one organizer in the Radical Social Change group noted:

> . . . the fact that there *is* a discussion of - of public housing. I mean, the rule- you know the ruling class they rule by different ways. One is by arms, by force, but it's also by ideas, and the dominant idea was: 'public housing produces poverty. In and of itself, public housing is the problem . . .' We said no . . . by our struggle, we have changed the whole debate.

Reflecting the long-term implications of social planning efforts, one community development worker in the Reform group noted:

> The successes that we've had is that we've changed the conversation time and time again . . . and when neighborhoods were put on the backburner and given, kind of, a cursory afterthought, we insisted that we put them

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> on front . . . So, we're really poised to continue to stand up for neighborhoods and that's our best success.

Barriers

Because another function of frames is to 'attribute blame' for social problems and conditions, we asked practitioners to identify key barriers to their work. The Restoration group identified the main barriers they faced as: personality issues with members of their own and other organizations; bureaucratic red-tape; and miscommunication and lack of communication from public entities such as City Hall or FEMA. Thus, their assumptions about the effectiveness of their work ignored issues of inequality, the need to reform key social institutions, or a desire to change the relationship between government and local communities—all of which corresponds to their main issue frames that emphasize preserving the status quo.

In contrast, the members of the 'Reform' group often identified government (federal, state, and local) and the political agendas of public officials as posing barriers to their work. The analysis of these groups tended to go beyond what the 'Restoration' group members say about misinformation and red tape; rather, they hold the belief that public agencies and officials have their own agendas that often undermine the capacity and social capital of local communities. Given the focus in their frames on blocked opportunity and a need for greater government accountability, such findings 'fit' with this group's ideology. As one participant noted, 'they always have a hidden agenda. The Housing Authority always has a hidden agenda. They're not working for us. They're not working with us'.

Barriers to effectiveness identified by the 'Radical Social Change' group were often similar to those of the 'Reform' groups, particularly concerning public officials and the lack of political will to make needed changes in the community. One activist described the barriers as 'gatekeepers', which in this context meant to him those who were 'getting funding but not providing it to the people'. These group members also note that because many of their constituents and participants are working class, they have trouble participating in public meetings and protests due to varying work schedules. These findings in terms of barriers to successful community practice appear less explicitly linked to the overall world view contained in the issue frame of this group.

Discussion

The information gathered through interviews emphasized perceptions of success as reported by informants as opposed to documenting 'actual'

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successes. As a result, we cannot definitively link perceptions of success to actual events and accomplishments. In addition, since our informants are affiliated with groups that are not equal in size, staffing, context, and resources, the individuals clearly do not have equal degrees of influence. It should also be noted that this research only focused on the *first year* of post-Katrina recovery and community re-building efforts, and should be seen as an initial effort to understand issue-framing practices. Follow-up research is needed to explore differences in framing and the perceived success cited by these groups over time and its relationship to the frames used to guide their community development practice.

The discovery of three types of frames of community practitioners is a central finding of this study. Taken together, Reform and Radical Social Change issue-framing orientations dominate the sample. Importantly, practitioners identify a range of critical outcomes of community development work in post-disaster settings. We find that Restoration framers value leadership development as much as Reform or Radical Social Change framers. This raises a fundamental question: if successes are generally not related to frames, what is the importance and relevance of frames? In other words, if ideology is less influential in the actual practice of community development—if some groups do not adhere to a clear issue frame—do such frames matter?

The data in our study may be too preliminary from which to draw definitive conclusions. In one respect, despite an ability to articulate issue frames that guide their work, most practitioners in this study seem more pragmatic than ideological in their actual practice. Thus, it *appears* that the issue frames expressed by informants may be as much their own private attitudes as clear principles that define their individual and organizational practice. This suggests a need for additional research that more clearly addresses whether actual community development practice is guided by a conscious framework based on specific values.

The successes described as significant by the organizations in this research echo the outcomes noted by Mondros and Wilson (1994) in their study of community organizing. They found four types of outcomes: (i) instrumental changes in the environment; (ii) leadership development; (iii) development of an organization's resources and capabilities; and (iv) increasing public awareness. What is unique in our study is that practitioners identify community-building events and activities as ends in themselves. In addition, organizational capacity-building and leadership development are viewed as vital to the success of community recovery by those holding different issue frames. Because dispersion of the population has been a momentous problem in post-Katrina New Orleans, it is not

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surprising that re-connecting shattered social networks and strengthening organizations would be considered a success.

Of concern, however, the work of Restoration framers and even some of the Reform framers in this study may be re-building communities that perpetuate the segregation emblematic of pre-Katrina life. Their lack of consistent use of an ethical frame that challenges government and corporate practices raises the potential for policy solutions that reinforce pre-existing inequality. Importantly, a key facet of the work of organizers such as ACORN and the Radical Social Change (and some Reform) groups in this study was to counteract these predatory practices that have come to be known as disaster capitalism (Klein, 2007). Yet, as noted, the efficacy of these frames in actual practice remains an unresolved question.

Nonetheless, we suggest that community practice activities should not be developed or performed outside a frame or values orientation. Community development that is concerned solely with outcomes may fail to discern that a group with much 'success' may actually be perpetuating status quo relationships by virtue of the values and frame that orients their work. Clearly, some of the individuals (36 percent of this sample) working on post-Katrina community development had little inclination to re-frame and analyse key political and economic structures. Thus, a Restoration group, which may be engaging in good community building and advocacy techniques, may also be grounding their work in an exclusionary frame, which seems highly problematic from a social justice perspective. The Restoration frames may, on the surface, seem harmless enough. However, it is important to be aware of social desirability issues in research, which may imply that these groups are 'toning' down their message so as not to appear even more exclusionary. Although our research found that these groups are primarily white, more exploration could shed light on demographic and other factors that facilitate particular frames. That being said, the Reform groups could also be exaggerating their beliefs and the degree to which they are re-framing and advocating for social equality.

We find that community development in post-Katrina New Orleans, i.e. a disaster context, has similar purposes and practices to more traditional development contexts. The efforts of Radical Social Change groups, having connections to larger global justice frameworks, also have implications for community development practice. Although community development has historically been more concerned with reform-oriented endeavours as opposed to radical social change (Gil, 1998), it is important that community development practitioners are educated to understand what radical social change is and that practitioners be able to ally with activists pushing such agendas. Our findings pose meaningful ethical

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dilemmas to practitioners concerning their role in community development that may be perpetuating existing policies of social exclusion.

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