Katrina & the Apocalypse

What the crisis of one American city has to say about the Coming Collapse

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Part One: The Collapse

What if the lights went out? What if you couldn't get clean water to drink? What if there were no police, no schools, and no place to go if you were sick or hurt? If the shelves, in the grocery store were never re-stocked, and no one came to pick up the trash?

What if most everything we take for granted about the rhythms of life ceased to be? If the relentless motion–the motion that pushes us on to the next paycheck, the next month's rent, the next deadline, social event, vacation, the next goal in our imagined future–came to a halt, and these landmarks in our lives were suddenly irrelevant?

This scenario faced even the most fortunate people in New Orleans after hurricane Katrina, and it's a scenario that we all may face at a larger scale in the not-too-distant future. It's not just the extremists among us who believe

that in our lifetimes some massive destabilization could occur and life as we know it would drastically change. In fact, given the rate of ecological degradation, the effects of climate change, and the dependence of the global economic infrastructure on non-renewable energy, the belief that this regime could continue with only minor modifications is clearly the extreme position–the position of extreme denial. What remains in question is what form the breakdown will take and how abrupt it will be.

Speculations about the nature of the collapse, from nuclear war, Christian Armageddon, or social revolution to massive energy crisis or ecological disaster, are familiar by now, and it's obvious from considering these possibilities that each scenario would play out very differently and no universal conclusions about the future are possible. Some of these scenarios are already well under way, while others hardly seem likely. Some would take years or even generations to run their course, giving the machine the chance to manage the collapse and stay in control; others, like Katrina, would happen more-or-less all at once, causing a significant rupture. On what scale would people be affected? Regional? National? Global?

Adding to the confusion is the fact that the scenarios are not mutually exclusive–one can easily see them overlapping, even precipitating one another. And these are just the obvious, macro-level issues. Any future collapse would be a unique situation that could never be predicted (except by divine revelation) or prepared for fully. Katrina was such an event: the unique product of a particular storm impacting a particular population at a particular moment in history, a disaster caused by everything from coastal erosion and a corrupt levee board to failed schools and entrenched poverty, and in many ways has little in common with any of our apocalyptic scenarios. Compared to them, Katrina was just a hiccup in the onward march of civilization: although the city is far from well and everyone's life was changed, the forces of state and capital have quickly regrouped and now proceed undeterred, stronger if anything.

So the question is, despite all this difference, does Katrina have anything to teach us about a coming collapse, if one were to occur? How might it play out, what can we expect of people, what are the important determining factors, what can we do now and during a crisis to promote, not just survival, but the best possible future?

Perhaps the first question that comes to mind is "In the absence of authority, do people run amok and take advantage of each other, or does spontaneous order and mutual aid prevail?" Though this question is a useful starting point, it clearly cannot be answered one way or the other without falling into dogmatic cynicism on one hand or dogmatic idealism on the other, and strict loyalty to one of these dogmas will not prepare us for the tough times ahead. People are capable of acting out both possibilities and more depending on cultural conditioning, historical context, situational context, and a host of other variables that can be analyzed.

For example, many of us had our faith in humanity shaken when we heard the reports of atrocities committed inside the Superdome and the Convention Center. Thankfully, it turned out that these reports, which ironically I first encountered in far-left media, were grossly exaggerated and distorted, and seemed almost calculated to make us believe that people, especially black people, need to be controlled. A little further analysis also reminds us that being trapped and desperate in one of these pressure cookers (at the Superdome refugees were not even allowed to go outside) does not exactly bring out the levelheaded best in people and hardly qualifies for an assessment of human nature. People are not monsters. The conditions are monstrous.

On the other hand, the Superdome provides an example of what happens when people hand responsibility for their well-being over to the authorities. Now, in a large-scale crisis or apocalypse, we might imagine that the government would not exist, but realistically, pieces of it may still be hanging around, trying to take control and enforce their idea of order. If the Superdome is any indication, those seeking to be rescued by the government would variously face neglect, intimidation, dehumanization, malice, lies, and enforced ignorance.

At the Superdome and during evacuation from the Super-dome, the feared and despised refugees were stripped of all human agency, herded like animals, denied basic human needs, had guns pointed at them frequently, and were never told what was going on. It is amazing, in the accounts of people trapped at the Superdome seeing the military arrive for the first time, how many people thought that the military had come to kill them. Of course, class and race are the major subtext in these stories, most of the Superdome refugees being poor and of color.

At the nearby Convention Center, where refugees congregated on their own and were not controlled by the authorities until the buses finally came, the situation was still desperate but young men, armed with handguns for protection, were able to self-organize into teams, each member wearing the same color so they could identify each

other, and go out into the city to find food, diapers, juice, medicine, water, and other necessities to bring back for the people stranded there.

Elsewhere, residents of single-room-occupancy hotels also organized into foraging collectives to acquire and share what they needed, and all over the city, neighbors, and friends teamed up to help each other get by. In the Bywater neighborhood, a produce distribution warehouse was converted into a free produce distro, facilitated by neighbors armed with AK-47s, which functioned peacefully for days until the police arrived to shut the operation down.

People with pre-existing bonds, be they ethnic, neighborly, etc., were most likely to work together to help themselves in times of crisis, while help across social boundaries usually flowed from more to less advantaged, where advantages can include wealth, resources, physical health, living in an unflooded area, etc. Volunteer rescuers with small boats showed up in droves to rescue stranded people (in fact, despite the government's attempts to hold them back, civilians performed most of the rescues). My friend's neighbors on Piety Street took food from the corner store and cooked it up right on the sidewalk to serve to folks escaping the flooded ninth and lower ninth wards.

However, one wonders whether such charity would be as forthcoming if the crisis did not feel like a "temporary" emergency, as Katrina was, or if it affected everyone, so that no one could come from "outside" to help. Also relevant is that New Orleans is a city of neighborhoods and extended families where the isolated nuclear family is not the norm. It's a social place where people feel connected to their communities, and this connectedness leads to feelings of responsibility for those around you. While we might expect the same of communities in the global south, one wonders if it would be different in other North American cities or in suburbia?

Although, like in any disaster, behind the evident tragedy and the hysterical news broadcasts lie hundreds of stories in which people quietly organize new ways to live in the space opened up by such a massive disruption, it would be wrong to portray life on the streets after Katrina as a utopia of serene communalism. All my talks with people who were in New Orleans in the days immediately after the storm (before forced evacuation) and in the next couple months (after return) emphasized that confusion and anxiety always accompanied the post-apocalyptic feeling of living in a different reality where the customary rules of order are swept aside and new arrangements are possible and necessary.

New Orleans has always been a friendly city, but after Katrina, people stopped and talked to everyone they saw. Cars drove the wrong way down the street. The mules that once pulled tourists in carriages now ran free and grazed peacefully on the wide grassy medians of the city's main boulevards. The smell of foul water, mold, dead bodies, dead dogs, unplugged refrigerators, and piled-up garbage filled the air.

Volunteers performing animal rescues broke into houses, often leaving them wide open, causing huge uproar and sometimes confrontations with neighborhood residents. Truckloads of intimidating white guys with guns patrolled the streets. People were beaten up, sometimes robbed, by lone marauders. Some of the marauders were drug addicts having trouble getting their needs met. Some of them wore police uniforms.

Although the full implications of these and other examples remain in the realm of speculation, events occurred during Katrina that do seem broadly applicable to any severe crisis situation. For one, existing divides are exacerbated, especially those of race–and if not in reality, then at least at the level of rumors and grossly dramatized perceptions. Adding class to race, a generalized fear of the other intensifies. On the streets of New Orleans, real-life examples showed both of racially divisive behavior and people coming together across racial lines. But there were no rumors of racial harmony going around. Instead, rumors circulated that gangs of armed white men were massacring African-Americans, and reciprocal rumors ran rampant that black men were running wild in the streets, shooting white folks and looting their houses.

Cops have the right to first plunder. In the wake of Katrina, when the police were not busy enforcing law & order (and most were not), they were oftentimes getting their hands on the goods. In a now-famous example, cops drove off with a lotfull of brand new Cadillac's, and some were later apprehended driving them several states away. In another incident, cops used gunfire to drive foraging civilians out of a Wal-Mart so they could loot computers and televisions without competition.

Even if the police are otherwise occupied, some individuals will continue to enforce the laws and ways of the unraveled system. Guards will keep people locked up even if there are no courts, no justice system, no legal process. Civilians will defend stores from being looted even if the owners are long gone and the people outside are in desper-

ate need. In badly-flooded New Orleans East, a Vietnamese-American priest busy tending to his community took the time to round up all the extra boats that he saw so they couldn't be used in looting operations. It's ° true that in New Orleans these people saw themselves as stuck with the task of maintaining order through a brief instability after which the true authorities would return, but I bet we'd see the same mentality in any larger, more cataclysmic scenario.

In many of the stories and images I've related, guns play a recurring role. Already an oft discussed concern, this huge issue might elicit much more analysis than this survey could perform. Questions surround these destructive and all-too-common devices: who has them? how do they use them? how is their influence nullified? No matter what, guns will likely play a critical role in the heightened chaos that follows a collapse.

With the threat of violence being as coercive as it is, and given firearms' potential to trump all negotiations, armed groups and individuals will likely have the edge in the crucial arena of control. Throughout the Katrina saga, from the National Guard coming into the city to "restore order" and force evacuation, to armed civilians facilitating looting or patrolling their streets, we see people with guns taking control of situations.

Common interpretations of this phenomenon are that people who want power over others use guns to secure this power, and that having guns gives people "the right," at least in their own minds, to take charge. Another possibility that I see evident in the tales from Katrina I've heard is that in the minds of some gun owners, possessing a gun somehow gives you the duty to take control. The reasoning seems to be that, amidst all the tumult, someone's got to create order, and displaying a firearm might be a good, or the only, way to do that. And from the stories I've heard of paranoid, hysterical, or otherwise unstable gunslingers ordering people around, it's not always the most qualified individuals who rise to this challenge.

This psychology of firearms and duty is disturbing in two related ways. First, it gives guns the power to actually shape someone's mentality and the actions that follow, instead of guns merely granting agency to the desire for power. And second, it illustrates the fact that generations of living under the gun have robbed people of any concept of order not backed up by the threat of violence. If there were more of a tradition of cooperation and mutual aid going into a crisis situation, then perhaps we wouldn't rely so heavily on guns to counteract the expected violent opportunism of unsupervised individuals.

Until now I've spoken of guns as if they were something only "they" have, but should "we" have them too? This is the question many New Orleanians are asking themselves right now. In the same psychology as above, where everyone is out for themselves, guns give you agency and control over your destiny, and gun ownership is being promoted by some as a cure-all for the evils of society in crisis. There's no easy answer, especially if you rephrase the question away from wild-west-style individualism: Can guns help communities preserve or establish their autonomy when faced with outside, frequently armed, groups who want to control them?

Part Two: The Aftermath

The months following these crises are fraught with as many uncertainties as the days immediately after. I returned to New Orleans three months after the storm and was living on North Derbigny Street in a neighborhood that had flooded and was still mostly empty of people. But among those of us who were present, there was a new openness. Everybody wanted to talk. The life of the city hung in the balance and we all wanted to share our worries, our questions, and our opinions. Sitting on the front porch, walking through the streets, or waiting for meals from the Red Cross truck were all occasions for honest, sometimes involved conversations. Nobody knew what the future would hold.

Then, in the next few months I watched, with horror and desperation, this open door being shut as a monstrous version of the old status quo was re-imposed on New Orleans. The authorities in charge of recovery made it clear that they would do what it took to return business as usual to the city. But, despite reluctant aid efforts such as rental assistance and emergency food stamps, this new business turned out, predictably, to be worse than the old business for most residents. People returned to the city only to live in toxic, moldy houses with little or no access to health care. The main business in town, rebuilding New Orleans, was given over to out-of-town contractors and out-of-town workers, leaving New Orleanians with few options to make a living.

Still, in the absence of alternatives, people scrambled to find ways to integrate themselves into the new reality. As this terrible reality set in, the days of relative openness and possibility on the streets became a memory. People became more consumed with their own survival. New drug-dealing turf wars took over the streets in neighborhoods where the old self-policing networks of elders and extended families had been pulverized by dislocation, and the rest of us didn't spend much time out front anymore. The old regime was back, with some new twists, new tightening of the old screws, and with dire consequences in the neighborhoods.

How does the state manage to regain control after a serious rupture in the flow of everyday life? One of the principal initial methods is by taking charge of the relief effort. Rebecca Solnit, in her article "The Uses of Disaster" for *Harper's* (October 2005) describes how in disasters the failure of authority creates an opportunity for us to recreate civil society on our own terms. Contrary to what the authorities would have us believe, people often excel at exercising their powers of cooperation and self-organization when the authorities are not around to orchestrate daily life. This rewarding experience, if allowed to develop, further undermines the legitimacy of the government–whose authority has already been shaken by the disaster itself–by revealing its functions to be unnecessary.

It is therefore the job of the powers-that-be to intervene, "restore order" by force, administer relief, and steer the masses back to a course of dependence and servitude. At least as much as the authorities are trying to help us, they are also trying to make sure that they remain the authorities–the ones who are going to take care of the situation and usher us into a future they've designed. And so we see, in the case of Katrina, many instances of such paternalistic top-down relief: the distribution of military rations, the Red Cross, the National Guard, FEMA checks, rental assistance, insurance, food stamps, unemployment benefits, etc. Even if individuals do not actually benefit from such programs, and the racism and classism built into the administration ensures that many people do not, the desire and repeated attempts to receive such aid keep people engaged with, and subordinate to, the system that dominates them.

However, one important difference between hurricane Katrina and a large-scale collapse would be that in a bigger collapse the paternalistic tentacles of the state would not be so quick to re-extend, or they might not return at all. Would it be better for our communities in the long run if this help did not arrive?

Maybe so, but we must consider the likelihood that, even if the familiar order is in shambles, actors at some scale (neighborhood, city, region) will emerge to reorganize society. Who comes to help? What strings are attached to that help? These will be key questions in any coming collapse, and we must be vigilant lest we fall under the dominion of forces who, benign though they may seem at first, ultimately want to lord over us.

For example, some (not even all) Katrina victims receive help from the government and insurance companies, but at the cost of resuming "business as usual," already brutal and now made worse by deepened class and race inequalities and neoliberal redevelopment policies. Also in recent memory, we have the examples of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Hezbollah in Lebanon, both of which took advantage of a broken and desperate population to set themselves up in power and spread their ideologies.

Hezbollah established itself by collecting garbage, distributing water and supplies, running hospitals and schools, and offering protection to the poor and dispossessed Shiite community in south Lebanon. In return they get protection, power, followers, control of territory, a place to stage military operations, and a base to recruit from. Ideologies frequently come as riders tacked on to charitable operations, and Hezbollah's actions have given their brand of militant Islam wide currency in the Shiite community.

In your area, what groups would appear to feed people or patrol the streets in the wake of a collapse? A Christian organization? The guys from the army base? A militia group? Common Ground? How would their influence be felt? What are their overt and hidden motivations? What can communities do to resist help, and all the attached strings, to instead protect their own possibilities for autonomy and self-management?

This last question is for me, and I imagine for most anti-authoritarians, the most basic and most important, because as destructive and painful as any collapse might be, it is also a time of accelerated change, reordering of society, and an opportunity. Between the cataclysmic moment and the onset of a new regime is a gap, an opening, and in this opening, new futures are possible.

Who is best poised to take advantage of this moment of opportunity? Katrina was a hard lesson in this respect, because even though the state lost credibility in the public eye, the forces of capital, most visibly in real estate

development and speculation, have won major victories, a serious attempt at ethnic cleansing is under way, and on the streets desperation and violence are at new highs.

In fact, Katrina's example caused one colleague to declare that we don't want a collapse, at least not before people change their ideas about how the world should be organized, because until then people will just want to see the old order, or something like it, reinstalled; and they'll get it good and hard. Fair enough, but the future will only partially be determined by what people's ideas are. It will also be determined by the dynamics of organizational structures and infrastructures that exist going into and during a collapse. Without grassroots anti-authoritarian infrastructure in place to assert itself in the power vacuum, disasters are primarily opportunities for power to consolidate itself State and capital have the resources and the momentum, and communities without any autonomous self-sufficiency are ripe for takeover by any force that wants to control them, be it the state, an armed militia, or anything else we can imagine.

And here the image of Hezbollah again comes to mind, as a politically freighted organization that comes to the rescue in times of crisis and hijacks a population's chances to creatively meet their own needs. It is a cautionary image, an extreme example of the kind of force we neither want to fall victim to, nor want to become. In the case of New Orleans, it is useful to see even a relatively benign, non-militarized lefty organization like Common Ground in light of this image. Common Ground was formed in the days after the storm when a local activist issued a nation-wide call for help. What began as a small collective quickly grew into a large organization, made up almost entirely of out-of-town volunteers, involved in a vast array of projects aimed at helping New Orleanians get back on their feet.

These efforts were noble and mostly well-received by the community. However, the influx of so many outsiders in an organization with so much influence, working in communities they were not integrated into and had little knowledge of was not without controversy. Many New Orleanians felt imposed upon and suspicious of this outside force. Now, this is a far cry from Hezbollah, but the echoes are there. Outside aid is, whether it's intentional or not, a gateway for all kinds of other baggage that communities then have to deal with. Common Ground was there when New Orleans needed it, but it would be better if communities were in a position not to need such aid at all, or as little as possible, or be able to give aid as well as receive it in reciprocal relationships.

What factors would allow a community to maintain its integrity and be relatively self-sufficient through a serious crisis and hence be better able to decide its own fate? Of primary importance are strategies for attending to material needs. A technology as simple as the use of barrels to catch rainwater off of roofs can give folks at least some breathing room when it comes to acquiring water for drinking and cooking.

In urban areas, even extensive gardens are unlikely to provide food for everyone, but forming bonds with farmers in outlying areas in the style already pioneered by Community Supported Agriculture can go a long way toward our feeling less helpless when wondering where our food is going to come from. Having herbalists and healers in the community that are not dependent on the high-tech modern medical infrastructure helps a community care for its own without having to turn to outsiders. In general, growth of the do-it-yourself ethic and reduction of dependence on external inputs allows greater independence.

It is likely that rural dwellers would fare better than their urban counterparts in this respect. In the country, there is greater access to water, food, and natural medicines, and folks tend to have a wide range of DIY skills. In fact, some rural areas, especially in the global south, people in "subsistence economies" get along fine, or did until relatively recently, with almost no outside inputs, and would like nothing better than to be left alone.

However, in the United States and other modernized regions, fossil fuel addiction (for transportation and operating farm machinery) throws a major wrench in rural dwellers' prospects for self-sufficiency. This essay's focus on New Orleans definitely skews the relevance of its conclusions toward those living in cities, but with the massive migration of humans to urban areas worldwide, this is now the condition of the majority of us, for better or for worse.

Another thing that communities need is some collective decision-making process. In the current system, we grant this decision-making power to elected leaders instead of exercising leadership from within. We are therefore accustomed to being governed by outside forces, outside of our control. This encourages passive acceptance of one's fate and robs us of the experience of working directly with our neighbors to arrive at mutual understanding, reconciliation of differences, and a sense of collective voice, collective will. Such people are easily subjugated. If we

begin working now to develop collective self-governance within our communities, this will seriously improve our chances of emerging from a crisis with greater freedom and ability to resist those seeking to control us.

What about people's desire for security, for protection? Security encompasses both an assurance that one's material needs will be met and a feeling that one is safe from harm. In this desire for security lurks another either-or question: Are people willing to give up self-determination for security? Are people willing to be ruled in exchange for an assurance that they'll be safe from harm and that their basic needs will be met? But the question itself is a trick played by domination because it assumes that we must choose between security and self-determination. It is our job to make sure that we don't have to choose, that our communities can be secure and protect themselves. This will be especially necessary after a great collapse because, as Katrina has shown, there will definitely be instability and the potential for violence. And, as I've discussed, there may be groups trying to subjugate us, maybe violently, that we'll want to protect ourselves from. Groups wanting to control us might offer us protection from other threats as part of the deal.

This is where gun ownership might start to look good again–as a tool for protection. But if we take this route, or if we elect an armed contingent from within our own ranks to protect us, then we run the risk of being ruled by our own military, so to speak. As we know all too well in the US, fear is a powerful tool for control–another threat always looms. The only solution to this quandary, aside from the ridiculous notion of arming every one of us, is to think outside the gun. We must develop and expand on ways to claim space without weapons. Some of this work is already being done, but I am no expert, and it's too much to get into here. Even if a community ultimately decides that having some guns is the way to go, and there are good reasons to think so, for the future it would be wise to have the skills to do without them.

All of these strategies–working towards local self-sufficiency, collective decision-making within communities, feeling safe without weapons–can and indeed must be, if not fully realized, at least palpably progressed on before we experience the extremity of a serious crisis scenario. In fact, these kinds of strategies probably sound familiar because many of us are already working on them. Surprise! Our formula for seeing autonomous communities emerge from the chaos of a major collapse is nearly identical to the old tactic of creating the new society within the rotten shell of the old! Actually this should come as no surprise because from wherever the Great Change may come, be it social revolution or global pandemic, it could be an accelerated route to the changes we are already trying to make in the world, if our communities are prepared for it. Luckily, the work of building strong communities with the power to withstand serious internal and external stresses is the kind of work that pays off immediately, well before disaster strikes, and it's a lot more enjoyable than stockpiling canned food.

These suggestions are not meant to imply that anarchists should simply wait for a collapse to occur and try to be prepared when it does. There will still be those of us who actively try to bring the system down. But even if we succeed in toppling the present order, our communities must be ready with grassroots infrastructures to put in its place, or else revolutionary success could turn out to be worse than failure when we have nothing to prevent the old hierarchies from re-emerging in new forms.

The emphasis in this discussion on communities means that if this is our path, we will fight a constant battle against good old American-style individualism. The dominant ideology resolves the dialectic between the individual and the collectivity not in a synthesis which maximizes both, but in a rejection of collective values in favor of the individual. We are taught to look out for ourselves primarily and not to see our fate as bound up with those around us. During a crisis situation, and less intensely today, most of us are forced to make choices between acting as part of a larger community and abandoning that community in favor of a personal solution or escape, a lifeboat built for one (or maybe the spouse and kids too, if you're lucky). The current system actually encourages such individual bail-outs, and there are few if any social repercussions for taking them. Who's going to blame you if your uncle offers to whisk you away from the crisis zone and take you to his enclave of relative safety, and you take him up on it? For many North Americans, there is little palpable experience of face-to-face participatory community, so there are no consequent community-oriented values to transgress upon. Building community in the present will help to remedy this predicament.

In New Orleans, there is one story that always comes to mind as emblematic of a person's refusal to take the easy way out. When the military was forcibly evacuating everyone from the city in the aftermath of the storm, they were insisting on evacuating one elderly woman living on Piety Street. Her neighbor, the same neighbor who cooked

up food for passersby in front of his house, told the National Guard that if they were going to take her, then they would have to take him with her and attach the two so they would go everywhere together. He could have taken another way out, but he went with her and took care of her, being bused and flown to refugee centers all over the country, for weeks until they could return to their homes. This level of altruistic sacrifice is not what will generally be required of us, because being embedded in and committed to one's community pays off for oneself as well as for others, but this story stands for me as an extreme rejection of the dominant mentality of selfishness.

Poor folks perhaps have a head start in this realm. If you've never known security in the form of property ownership, money in the bank, or family money to fall back on, then you're closer to realizing that the only true security is in your relationships to the people around you, in sharing and in sticking together. Such knowledge will be useful going into a collapse when all forms of symbolic wealth lose their power, and the community spirit engendered by such a realization is what we would like to see take the place of the fallen order.

So powerful, in fact, is the natural communalism of the poor that the system has been attempting to chip away at it for generations–from one side with the individualist, consumerist, competitive mythology of "making it" and "getting out of the ghetto," and from the other by enforcing dependence on social programs, which deal with individuals and families, not communities, and rob people of their ability to take care of themselves. Yet despite these and other relentless attacks, this communalism lives on, is immediately apparent if you contrast, say, certain neighborhoods in New Orleans with your average suburban nuclear family enclave. Unfortunately, the flooded neighborhoods in New Orleans were disproportionately poor, and there is little that communities can do against a ten foot wall of water.

All of these stories from Katrina and talk of the coming collapse obscures the fact that the collapse is already here. The shit is already hitting the fan. Billions of people, including most people who read this magazine, survive on polluted food and water. The life systems of our planet are at the breaking point, and the brutal economic system that has gotten us here shows no signs of letting up.

Whether or not this collapse is punctuated by one or several periods of intense upheaval, the existence of empowered communities functioning in relative freedom from the global power and resource grid will be key to finding a livable future on the other side. And if lessons learned from reflecting on the tragedy of hurricane Katrina can strengthen these communities and help us through the transition, then in this we can find some consolation for all of the lives lost and the damage that is still being done.

Thanks to everyone in New Orleans who shared their stories and helped me develop these ideas.