

Race, Class, Poverty, and Social Capital Inequality in Urban Disasters

by

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Dissertation submitted in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Department of Sociology
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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation is a case study of processes of inequality in disaster response in neighborhoods recently devastated by natural disaster. The context is New York City beginning from the immediate aftermath of Superstorm Sandy on October 29, 2012. Specifically, this is a multilevel, multi-process comparative examination of emergent racial and class inequality (1) between two storm-impacted neighborhoods on the Rockaway peninsula and Brooklyn, and (2) two adjacent neighborhoods within The Rockaways. The fulcrum of the study is to understand a cumulative process by which racial minority and urban poor residents residing in cities fare worse after a disaster relative to their white and non-poor neighbors. To examine this question, over the course of two years this study collected data through interviews with 120 respondents who are residents, community leaders, field-site managers, workers and volunteers from various disaster relief entities (FEMA, New York State agencies, a large NGO, and local NPOs including small and Large Churches) working and living in these post-disaster contexts.

The first part of the analysis traces how the spatial organization, practice and culture of federal and state institutional actors privilege white and middle class residents over minorities and the poor. For this analysis, I comparatively analyze the process of response building through agency and organizational ties across Canarsie in Brooklyn and Westville and Eastville in “The Rockaways.” The aspects of response that I compare primarily focus on decisions, actions, beliefs and expectations of management of these relief centers run by FEMA, Churches and local state governmental agencies in the

respective neighborhoods. These managers are “on the ground” field site managers for the various centers.

Drilling down from the institutional to the social network environment, a significant part of this research focuses on relational-level comparisons of resident-responder interactions and informational and resource exchanges in and around warming and distributional centers of one central large NGO and one central local NPO located in Westville and Eastville, on the Rockaway Peninsula. This part of the study uses the setting of a natural disaster to examine how and why poor and minority residents living in proximity to affluent and white residents are less inclined to convert social network opportunities into social capital. Although these neighborhoods receive similar types of aid through a large NGO and FEMA, the combination of racial and class characteristics of these neighborhoods and their residents influence the relational dynamics of response, with race and class consequences in receiving disaster assistance.

The main conclusions from this research are (1) at the institutional network level, organizational social capital through *organization agglomeration, hosting and coalition building* led to a “nucleus of relief” in communities endowed with spatial privilege and the presence of large churches. (2) At the social network level, while all residents generate and benefit from *crisis capital*, which has short term benefits, whites are better positioned to create social capital which has long-term benefits, despite desegregation of interactional space.

Together these findings challenge current explanations of minority network disadvantage which emphasize macro-level segregation and deficient networks. The findings of this research in fact suggest that despite opportunities for “mixing,” inequalities emerge through racialized interactions that inhibit translation and development of new social ties into lasting resources among low-income minorities who are living and surviving in the same areas as whites. The findings also contribute to the disaster literature by showing how race infiltrates institutional and spatial aspects of response that are different from arguments of prejudicial discrimination or merely poor coordination. The emphasis on structural racialization processes is also a much needed consideration in disaster research which tends to focus on quantifying disaster outcomes by racial characteristics of individuals or community demographic composition.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandmother Mary Darius, who gave me an opportunity to excel academically from a very young age and my daughter Pristeene Modeste who, as young as four years old, would patiently accompany me to classes and libraries and believed in my stories that one day this day would come. I also dedicate this dissertation to my extremely loving, supportive, and generous husband, Floyd, who supported me through this graduate school journey by doing more than his fair share of parenting and running a household with two teenage girls so that I could focus on my academic goals. This dissertation is really his. I dedicate this dissertation to my mother Priscillia whose unwavering faith and prayers encouraged me to continue with my pursuits no matter how difficult the journey. I dedicate this dissertation to my father Titus, my daughters Melinda and Pristeene, my brother Elijah, my sisters, especially Valerie, and my favorite cousin Martin who are my greatest cheer leaders.

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1. Introduction to Research

Three decades of research in several subfields of sociology have confirmed the instrumental value of social capital in brokering socioeconomic advantage for the well-positioned and well-connected in society (Lin, Fu, Hsung 2001, McDonald, Lin and Ao 2009, Portes 1998). However, exploring social capital inequality as a mechanism of racial and class stratification remains underdeveloped. Some studies suggest that despite greater reliance of minorities on social connections, they lag behind in reaping the instrumental benefits of social capital, such as finding a job. For example, a recent study by Sandra Smith (2005) provides evidence for expecting that poor occupational outcomes of urban, poor Blacks are symptomatic of a lack of trust from other black social ties which encumber job-finding assistance within minority networks. While such studies are theoretically instructive of the constraints to activation and mobilization of already accessed social capital among members of a particular social group, they tell us little about how race and class dynamics within neighborhoods, organizations and pre-network interactions structure inequalities in the creation and distribution of social capital (Small 2009a).

This study's concern with racial and class inequality as it relates to receipt and provision of disaster support is motivated by several disaster studies, which point to comparatively worse recovery outcomes among racial minorities and the poor after a natural disaster (See Fothergill and Peek 2004). Recent disasters such as Hurricane

Katrina, have shown that natural disasters distribute the highest economic and psychological risk and the lowest prospect for recovery among those who are already socially and economically disadvantaged (Adeola and Picou 2012; Fothergill and Peek 2004; Cutter, Mitchell and Scott 2010). The preponderance of disaster research attributes these stark differences in outcomes to pre-disaster social vulnerabilities due to migration and concentration of low-status immigrants and minorities into cities; housing and employment inequalities; and differential access to financial capital (Donner and Rodriguez 2008, Massey and Denton 1993). However, material inequalities can only partially explain the racial and class disparities in disaster recovery (Oliver and Shapiro 1995), since billions of dollars in aid via Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local non-profit organizations (NPOs) are deployed to devastated locales precisely to counteract these deficits in personal resources.

Finding disaster support in a post-disaster context, like finding a job in a highly competitive labor market, beyond formal methods relies heavily on word of mouth (Dynes 2006; Yakubovich 2005). Therefore, it is a reasonable expectation that minority networks and networking capacities are potentially susceptible to similar types of constraining mechanisms that impede urban poor minority job attainment (Smith 2005; Small 2007). This research examines how the devastated context uniquely shapes such network mechanisms that influence whether, when and how one gains access to disaster information and resources pertinent for recovery.

This dissertation research is an innovative project using observational and interview data from disaster relief and recovery centers and surrounding devastated areas in three urban neighborhoods, two of which are contiguous (Lofland and Lofland 1995, Ragin 1987). This research traces and examines institutional and relational mechanisms through which race and class shape social capital creation and disaster informational and resource support between organizations, as well as between residents and disaster responders.

I theoretically situate this dissertation in the social capital theoretical paradigm, but draw on institutional conceptualizations of race and racialization processes to uncover mechanisms of race and class inequality operating during collective crises, such as during a natural disaster. Social capital, a theory of network resources, expects that assistance in the form of information or resources are informally and indirectly accessed through interpersonal connections—including those embedded in and mediating organizational ties—and that social position of actors and quality of social ties matter in this process (Coleman 1988; 1990, Granovetter 1973; 1985, Lin 2001, Portes 1998; Small 2009).

In order to examine how interracial and interclass community, organizational, and interpersonal dynamics impact the extent and kind of disaster support one receives, the research observations and inquiries focus on first identifying, then explaining (King, Keohanne and Verba 1994) (1) the mechanisms of response building among governmental and nongovernmental organizations (2) type and strength of relationships forged among disaster personnel and impacted-residents; (3) the types of disaster-related

information and resources exchanged across these newly-forged social ties; (4) the racial and class content of accounts and interactions among residents and disaster responders; (5) and finally how various institutionalized aspects of disaster response (Gajewski, Lein and Angel 2011) structure interpersonal relations, resident participation and the eventual receipt of disaster support. Ultimately, the research contributes to four sociological fields: *Social Capital and Social Network Theory*, *Racialization and Race Relations Theory*, *Class Inequality*, and *Disaster Scholarship*.

1.1 Why Study Disaster-Devastated Neighborhoods?

Disaster-Devastated neighborhoods provide a unique opportunity to observe multiple transformations in the ecological, organizational, and interpersonal, environment (Jacobs 1992) over a relatively short span of time. Emotional and physical displacement of persons (Erikson 1976), destruction to traditional places of gathering, and disruption to communication technologies and infrastructure together heighten the need for rudimentary forms of social interaction for the purpose of obtaining basic information and resources (Dynes 2006, Barton 1969, Quarantelli 1977; 2005). Due to disruption to routine distributional channels for goods and services, this makes information diffusion via word of mouth a crucial step toward disaster recovery (Fitzpatrick and Mileti 1994). Hence in a devastated context, interpersonal relationships as sources of socially-embedded resources become even more paramount for their social-support value (Magsino and NRC 2009, Iversen and Armstrong 2008, Haines, Hurlbert and Beggs 1996, Lin Woelfel and Light 1985). However, compromises to routine core networks

(Fussel 2006) also mean that there is more need for purposeful forging of new ties and networking with persons with whom there is not a prior history of relations (Desmond 2012).

The influx of volunteers and workers into devastated neighborhoods, who are the custodians of supplies and disaster-related information, together present a new terrain of relations and settings that impacted-residents need to navigate in order to access locally-available resources. Jeane Hurlbert's cumulative body of work at the nexus of social networks, social support, and extreme environments conceptualizes disaster support as a series of largely formal transactions between provider and recipient (Haines, Hurlbert and Beggs 1996). However, Hurlbert finds that help-seeking and help-providing behavior in catastrophic environments are oriented toward non-routine social ties outside core networks. Through her quantitative analysis of Hurricane Andrew survivors, she finds that "among respondents who received help in recovery, an average of only 24 percent of their core network members provided assistance" and that most support providers fell outside people's routine core networks (Hurlbert, Haines and Beggs 2000:614). This finding contrasts prevailing understanding about instrumental exchange being primarily across pre-existing social ties, as is the case in routine environments. This orientation toward newer ties in crisis situations provides further basis for turning our attention to types of interpersonal relationships developed in the post-disaster context that potentially facilitate information and resource exchanges among volunteers, workers, and residents during disaster response.

Racially and socioeconomically heterogeneous modern cities also present an opportunity to investigate relational inequalities unexplored in iconic ethnographic accounts such as Kai Erickson's (1976) *Everything in its Path* or more contemporary studies on homogeneous, fishing, coastal communities (Colten and Giancarlo 2010). Several other studies have described social relations in devastated communities as ranging from collaborative and therapeutic to corrosive and marked by social conflict (Barton 1969; Edelstein 1988, Picou, Marshall and Gill 2004, Erikson 1976). A study by Norris and Kaniasty also suggests that even when a therapeutic community ensues after disaster, not all are equal participants in therapeutic exchanges, as racial and social class disparities are evident in these contexts (Kaniasty and Norris 1995). This notion of unequal participation of minorities and the poor in therapeutic exchanges is corroborated by a quantitative study by Hurlbert in which she finds that among Hurricane Andrew survivors, Blacks and the poor were less likely than their white and middleclass neighbors to either receive or provide disaster support. This raises the question of what mechanisms and conditions lead to this apparent lack of engagement among minorities and the poor in such a crucial step in their post-disaster recovery.

1.2 Organization of the Dissertation

The organization of the dissertation is as follows: in Chapter 2, I present an overview of the social capital literature, disaster literature and present a theoretical framework that integrates race and racialization theorizing of racialized space and bodies. I present an argument for thinking about the U.S. as a racial state, with institutions that are inherently racializing and classing.

In Chapter 3, “Research Design and Field work” I describe the case study, participant recruitment, participant observation and interviews, and discuss my positionality in the field.

In Chapter 4, “Space, Race, and Institutions,” I present three models of response building *Organizational Agglomeration*, *Hosting* and *Coalitions*. In the case of the former, neighborhoods enjoy spatial privilege which make them better draws of large NGOs which later attract other smaller NGOs and various governmental agencies forming a “Nucleus of Relief”. I contrast this process with the organizational isolation of urban slums that are densely populated and residents are socially and politically disenfranchised.

In Chapter 5, “Capital in Crisis,” I discuss how the disaster erodes or suspends pre-disaster capital through social network fragmentation or depletion of network resources, outlining the differences for white middleclass, minority and poor residents. I show that both white affluent and poor Blacks lose pre-disaster capital. I discuss the role

of actualized *crisis capital* in both poor and non-poor neighborhoods. However middle class Whites create social capital in ways minorities cannot.

In Chapter 6, “Disaster Logic and Social Classes,” I present two mechanisms of inequality in the practices of response by the State called “*Victims over Poor*” logic and the *Middle-Class Bootstrap Bias* which together reorient priorities toward a new class of deserving poor, “disaster victims” who have only become temporarily poor, over the traditionally poor. I present Ricky’s story, retaining its original dialogue format to illustrate a few ways that disaster response fail the urban poor minorities battling chronic poverty, serial crises and displacement from the standpoint of an African American male who lives in transitional housing as part of a drug rehabilitation program and is in search of permanent housing.

In the concluding Chapter 7, I provide a brief summary of the dissertation findings and discuss in terms of their contribution to both social capital theory and the disaster literature. Together the findings help explain a process of how white and middle class privilege infiltrate disaster response at various stages from structuring locational decisions to structuring interactions between responders and residents leading to stark differences acquisition of information and resources across the white non-poor, minorities and urban poor residents.

2. Theoretical Analysis

In this chapter I will provide a literature review of the application of race, poverty and social capital in the disaster scholarship; a few social capital sociological conceptualizations; and a structural conceptualization of race and racialization by critical race theorists. Then I will conclude the review with my theoretical approach which integrates perspectives across these subfields. This review introduces central propositions from formal social capital theory and explore how social capital has been used to explain the socioeconomic advantage in the U.S. for whites and high status actors, and how scholars have addressed questions of social capital inequality among urban poor minorities and new immigrants.

2.1 Background: Race, Poverty and Social Capital in Disaster Scholarship

The disaster scholarship broadly attributes the relative disadvantage of racial minorities and the poor in disaster recovery to factors related to racial and socioeconomic characteristics and inequalities in disaster assistance (See Fothergill and Peek 2004, Kaniasty and Norris 1995). Disaster studies have shown that Black and Hispanic communities encounter discrimination in disaster response, as disaster management agencies are more likely to give timely and adequate assistance to white affluent neighborhoods over predominantly poorer and darker ones (Bolin 1993; Phillips and Ephraim 1992). Similarly, other studies have argued that official disaster warnings are not linguistically inclusive or culturally sensitive to nonwhite, non-English speaking

communities. While these studies emphasize discriminatory treatment and poor disaster response coordination, they tell us little about emergent network-level or relational inequalities in receiving disaster assistance among residents within neighborhoods that are already beneficiaries of disaster relief and recovery aid.

A recent review on poverty and disasters reveal that the poor are most at risk, least prepared, and least likely to have enough pre-disaster capital to buffer the impact of a natural disaster (Fothergill and Peek 2004; Cutter, Mitchell and Scott 2000). However, while it is true that more affluent residents fare better after experiencing a disaster, the mechanism through which they maintain this advantage throughout various stages of disaster, remains underexplored. As recent urban disasters have shown, the juxtaposition of races and classes in modern urban and coastal neighborhoods in some cases result in indiscriminate and exhaustive destruction of personal and community resources, essentially creating a tabula rasa in the early response period of a major disaster event (Logan 2006). Assuming equal destruction to personal and community property after the occurrence of a major urban disaster, what social conditions and social processes continue to confer advantage to white non-poor residents over their poor and minority neighbors?

One crucial potential source of advantage following a disaster that the disaster literature overlooks, is the opportunity to indirectly gain pertinent disaster-related assistance in the form of information and supplies through informal interpersonal relations with responders, volunteers and workers, who are the sole custodians of such

resources in this context. While there is a significant literature which recognizes the primary role of social support providers to disaster recovery, these studies tend to emphasize the transaction element of social support (Iversen and Armstrong 2008, Haines, Hurlbert and Beggs 1996, Lin Woelfel and Light 1985). Adopting a social capital theoretical approach to examining information and resource exchange can clarify mechanisms that potentially drive inequality in receipt of disaster assistance. Disaster support transactions are not strict economic exchanges, but rather are themselves embedded in an interpersonal context of relationships among actors which warrant close examination. The expectation is that the quality of relationships forged among residents and responders will shape the types or extent of solicited and unsolicited disaster information and resource exchange (Granovetter 1985, Granovetter 1973), consequently impacting the range of experiences related to disaster assistance and subsequent recovery.

To be sure, there is a growing body of disaster literature suggesting that there is a non-trivial association between social capital and post-disaster outcomes. However, majority of these studies concern the influence of pre-disaster community social capital on the reconstruction and recovery of cities (Aldrich 2012). Most studies operationalize social capital as aggregations of connections to civic life and to collectivities such as community associations (Putnam 2000, Aldrich 2012, Adeola and Picou 2012). However, these analyses deemphasize the importance of person-to-person relations that mediate access and utilization of available resources necessary for recovery. Most importantly, the emphasis on pre-disaster community-level social capital lacks leverage in uncovering

the unequal recovery outcomes across members of various racial and class groups within neighborhoods, and the social capital disparities among neighborhood residents, because it leaves unarticulated the interactional process through which these resources are accessed and capitalized on by individuals embedded in these environments. They also do not sufficiently take into account the temporary erosion of pre-existing stores of capital due to the disaster event itself.

Taken together, the disaster literature does confirm association between disaster recovery and social capital (Picou, Marshal and Gill 2004; Aldrich 2012), and also between minority racial-ethnic identity and poverty and disadvantages in disaster recovery (Fothergill and Peek 2004). However, there has been little investigation of the creation of social capital in the context of a devastated community and how, if at all, this newly-forged social capital impacts the prospects for disaster recovery of minorities and the poor. On the other hand, several studies in the social capital theoretical tradition have shown that deficiencies in network social capital have constrained opportunities for minorities and the urban poor in obtaining assistance in the routine context of job-seeking (Royster 2003, Waldinger 1999, Kasinitz and Rosenberg 1996).

2.2 Social Capital Theory

Social capital is here defined as accessed and/or mobilized social resources that inhere either in closed social networks (Lin, Cook, and Burt 2001) or across contacts spanning network clusters loosely connected through non-redundant ties (Burt 2001). Scholars of both social networks and social capital concur that social capital creates

socioeconomic advantage and is contingent on social networks (Coleman 1988; Lin 1982; 2000; Putnam 1995; Erickson 1995). Social Network theorists however emphasize that the properties of networks such as the strength of ties (strong versus weak), network density or position of persons in the network sufficiently provide information to predict certain characteristics, such as social status of persons belonging to the network, without specific knowledge of resources of individuals in a particular network (Coleman 1988; Granovetter 1973).

While Burt (2001) deemphasized the necessity of social closure as previously advocated by Coleman (1988) for the realization of economic advantage, he argued that one's proximity to structural holes, allows for brokering which leads to greater access to resources and information creating surplus value. On the other hand, Nan Lin (2001) a strong proponent of social capital theory (distinct from social network theory) argues that although social capital is primarily a relational resource accessed through social ties, a person's likelihood of gaining an instrumental benefit such as finding a job or gaining a promotion depends on his or her contact's social position in society. That is, beyond network properties, Lin and others would argue that a contact's position in an exogenous hierarchical structure that already stratifies persons into groups with unequal resources, such as race, gender or occupational prestige is fundamental in any analysis of social capital and socioeconomic advantage (Lin 2005).

Social capital theorists therefore argue that it is not merely the network relationship or tie that produces social capital, but that the tie merely facilitates access to

alter's human or economic capital, which can then be capitalized on by ego. The question then for these theorists in anticipating an instrumental benefit to an individual, is not simply whether a network relationship exists but whether it is a resource-rich or resource-poor network. Lin (2008a) argues that the diversity of resources in one's network or the amount of resources in a network relationship accessible to a person is what fundamentally predicts social advantage through the access to social capital, not the properties of the network itself (Lin 2005).

While it is indisputable among social capital theorists, that one's ability to gain socioeconomic advantage, net of human capital, depends on one's ability to capture social resources through one's daily social interactions with individuals, family and societal institutions, the relative salience of the sources of social capital are somewhat contested. Some theorists emphasize that social closure in the form of two-parent households translate to academic attainment for children (Hagan, MacMillan, and Wheaton 1996) while others emphasize the value of peer social capital (Ream 2005) on educational outcome. Still others stress the impact of ethnic concentration in neighborhoods on test scores (Kanas and Van Tubergen 2009; Ming, Lauderdale, and Kandula 2009). Additionally scholars of immigrant adaptation stress family and kin ties in homogeneous communities (Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Sarkisian and Gerstel 2004). The latter tend to emphasize that social capital is created through norms, reciprocity, and group solidarity (Portes and Zhou 1993; Putnam 2000; Stainback 2008) acting as a protection against the unforgiving receiving contexts of the host society.

Social capital has great explanatory power in providing a conceptual map to describe how social context and social interactions among connected persons create capital for those who lack human capital or financial capital (Blau and Duncan 1967; Lin 1999a, 199b). Lin (2001; 2005) argues that the social resources of one's contact such as his or her wealth, power and reputation, is crucial to understanding the process of status attainment or social mobility. Lin (2001) argues that outside personal capital, people experience instrumental benefits like finding a job through their association with those who are positively positioned in the status and occupational hierarchy.

Lin (2005) further argues for the importance of heterophilous resources in the creation of social capital. Social capital in the form of resource heterogeneity within ties can be measured as differences between highest and lowest values of social capital; extensity of ties, and upper reachability, the highest magnitude of social capital value such as can be measured through occupational prestige scores (Lin 2001). On the methodological front, the use of the position generator method allows the researcher to capture the universe of positions that an individual has access to by simply asking if they know anyone of a specified range of occupational status. Then calculations can be made based on occupational prestige scores. Presumably a person whose most prestigious friend or acquaintance is a doctor, has more opportunities to experience occupational advantage, than someone whose most prestigious friend is a babysitter.

Higher status actors benefit most from social capital. As a direct result of Lin's work in this area, many studies in the social capital literature explore the role of social

capital in labor market participation of individuals. Several of those studies confirm that social capital, defined as resources embedded in one's network, results in occupational advantage (De Graaf and Flap 1988; Lin et al 1981). However, the extent to which one's network relationship results in success depends largely on the amount and diversity of resources embedded in one's network relationships (Lin 2001; Marsden and Hurlbert 198). Lin and others have argued that high status individuals benefit from network contacts (Lin, Ensel and Vaughn 1981) even if they may be least likely to admit that fact on a survey (Lin 2008). Contrastingly other scholars have argued that higher status individuals are more likely to resort to formal application procedures than rely on network relationships (Reingold 1999).

Despite the proven utility of social capital, this formulation is not without critique. A fundamental debate in the scholarship on social capital and its ability to confer socioeconomic advantage hinges on the question of whether a person is more likely to gain access to jobs or higher wages because of their social capital. This question stems from a concern that people with latent productive or hidden human capital get jobs that simply reflect their skill or productivity level. Mouw (2003) poses the question, does social capital via contacts lead to occupational advantage or is it just homophily (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001)? He finds that people with higher measured social capital are not more likely to use contacts in their job search and that those who do, do not have any advantage over those who do not rely on contacts. Mouw (2003) therefore concluded that social capital through job contacts do not lead to advantages in

the labor market. He further argued that in instances where there seems to be a social capital effect, it is due to a spurious association resulting from omitted variable bias.

Lin's (2008) response to Mouw's (2003) critique was that the invisible hand of social capital may be at work even in the absence of explicit recruitment or use of personal contacts. Lin (2008) postulates that inadequacy in survey instruments and normative expectations lead to respondents' lack of admission that their occupational advantage resulted from the use of personal contacts (Marsden and Gorman 2001; McDonald 2002; Elliot 2000). More importantly, Lin (2008) argued that outside the context of formal job seeking and recruitment, the informal routinized interactions between individuals in a network relationship lead to gained information about the job market that can improve one's labor market chances. Hence social capital results in greater odds of gaining employment or higher wages via information diffusion, reputation and prestige of contacts or ties that leads to increased knowledge of the job market or favorable consideration of one's application.

2.2.1 New-Immigrants and Social Capital Advantage?

One area in sociology where the concept of social capital has been extensively applied and developed is in the migration literature. However, it is evident that the scholarship suffers from near exclusive emphasis on homophilous co-ethnic ties, in conceptualizing "social capital" networks. The particular conceptualization of social capital as merely reactive bounded solidarity of marginalized immigrant communities (Portes and Zhou 1993) has led to several studies on co-ethnic networks which form the

bedrock of explanations of immigrant labor market penetration, settlement and socioeconomic mobility.

Scholars who study international migration generally concur that co-ethnic ‘social capital’ networks are crucial to the process of immigrant economic integration in the labor market of the host society (Portes 1998; Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993). Some scholars argue that immigrant co-ethnic networks allow for information diffusion across international boundaries (Massey and Espinosa 1997) resulting in a net gain in economic capital for both immigrants and employers (Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Portes and Zhou 1996). For example, ethnographic studies on Mexican migration illustrate the importance of immigrant networks in reducing the cost of migration for successive migrants and their prospective employers over time, fostering initial job acquisition at entry (Levitt 2008; Massey and Espinosa 1997; Palloni, Massey, Ceballos, Espinosa, and Spittel 2001). Some studies have also shown that co-ethnic contacts do have, albeit limited, some positive impact on the relative wages of immigrants (Aguilera 2005; Aguilera and Massey 2003).

Others scholars however, emphasize that while wages relative to those of the home country tend to be higher for immigrants, the absolute value of wages for immigrants are in fact lowest in the receiving country context (Palloni et al. 2001). This is because the job contact is usually constrained by his or her specific social location and only has knowledge and influence in a particular low-status job at an enterprise characterized by low wages, and exploitative conditions (Lin 2005). Therefore

transnational recruitment networks, while they may be cost-effective for managers, often lead to saturation in low-status jobs at a specific establishment which in turn threatens career mobility and job security of new immigrants (Waldinger 1999).

Portes (1993) defines social capital as a series of expectations and obligations among ethnically homogeneous communities. He proposes that marginalization faced by immigrant groups influences them to act cohesively in ways that are economically beneficial to the group. Group solidarity then, emerges as a response to discrimination from the dominant society leading to those obligations that are normatively enforced, such as enforceable trust. Finally, this guarantees that expectations will be fulfilled, engendering a series of reciprocity. Scholars in this tradition typically argue that ethnic communities reward members with 'belonging', affording them immunity from the brunt of discrimination from the dominant culture and economy.

Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) have argued that social capital through community solidarity results in gains for immigrants through ethnic communities established in the host society (Logan, Zhang, and Alba 2002; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993). The logic of the argument is that homophilous co-ethnic kinship and friendship ties create public resources that may provide needed support for the transition of new immigrants. One of these public resources is the ethnic niche economy or entrepreneurial enclave. Some scholars stress that ethnic communities provide job creation opportunities through these ethnic enclaves. Presumably the ethnic

enclave acts as a buffer to discrimination that immigrants would otherwise experience in the formal labor market.

Generally, studies on immigrant enclaves begin with the premise that immigrants will fare badly in the formal labor market, but no real assessment of social capital in the form of accessible and mobilized resources is seriously taken into account. While Portes and others claim that enclaves provide a better alternative to the formal labor market, it is unclear whether they may actually preclude immigrants from opportunities outside the enclave economy. Sanders and Nee argue that entrepreneurs rather than employees in the enclave economy are the ones who really enjoy higher wages (Sanders and Nee 1987; Sanders and Nee 1996). As a result, the ethnic enclave theory is often critiqued for its lack of generalizability to other ethnic groups outside the Cuban, Dominican or Asian enclaves in Miami, Los Angeles and New York (Portes and Guarnizo 1991). A habitual neglect of exploring the network social capital accessed through the social relations of ethnic minorities lead to incoherent findings on ethnic enclaves and immigrant labor market performance.

Currently the immigrant adaptation scholarship is limited to the role of co-ethnic networks in facilitating international migration; creation of immigrant enclave-economies and fostering immigrant ethnicity (Portes and Zhou, 1996). Most of these studies tend to dwell on co-ethnic social capital (Portes 1993), emphasizing either the value or liability of ethnic communities to new immigrants and their American-born children (Waters and Kasinitz). One problem with conceiving social capital of immigrants as merely group-

oriented reciprocity of obligations and expectations is that it does not allow one to effectively analyze inequality in social capital emerging from network processes.

Although most studies focus on the utility of social capital, some studies have focused on social capital, as a negative. These scholars have argued that social closure achieved in some ethnic communities are a double-edged sword that commands strict meeting of obligations such as dress, culture and even accents. These scholars argue that this form of coercive solidarity may even shun attempts of ethnics to participate in the formal economy. However, recent studies on the second-generation children of immigrants argue that there is even a socioeconomic benefit to ethnics who maintain visible signs of adherence to ethnic community norms through asserting ethnic identities. For example, Waters in her study on West Indian immigrant students in New York, found that students who espouse an ethnic identity were more likely to excel academically and more likely to pursue college. The theoretical argument here is that the ethnic community serves as a reservoir of cultural resources that are most amenable to socioeconomic advancement. The implicit but logical inference is that those who demonstrate a lack of adherence do not reap the benefits of community social capital. Portes and other segmented-assimilation theorists have argued elsewhere that those who adopt less desirable attitudes of other racial groups particularly those of minority natives in the inner-cities will experience downward mobility (Waters 2003; Portes and Zhou 1992; Portes 1993).

While the literature on migration and immigrant incorporation has extensively relied on the concept of social-capital networks to explain the occupational and entrepreneurial activities of ethnic minorities in the U.S., the emphasis is often skewed toward network features such as strong ties of co-ethnic kin and friends and social closure of ethnic communities. Immigrant adaptation scholars argue that homophilous co-ethnic ties, and the centeredness of immigrants within ethnic communities, are inherently a form of social capital created and capitalized through norms, reciprocity and social solidarity (Coleman 1988; Blau 1964; Portes 1993; Tilly 1990). However theoretical and empirical advancements in the subfield of social capital show that heterophilous resources—in this case cross-ethnic— are most significant for predicting instrumental outcomes such as occupational advantage (Lin 2005).

2.2.2 Social Capital and Minority Disadvantage

Sociologists have for decades grappled with the question of inequality in the distribution of human capital and material resources among persons and groups (Breen, Luijkx, Müller, and Pollak 2009; Moller, Alderson, and Nielsen 2009; Saporito and Sohoni 2007). Blau and Duncan (1967) through their use of regression analysis initiated the eventual consensus among social scientists that these differences in possession of personal and material resources are largely explained by differences in social status, both inherited and acquired (Lin 1999). Also, there is little contention that intergenerational transfer of social status or acquisition of education, income or wealth are themselves constrained or enabled a priori by one's race, ethnic grouping, familial social class, or

gender (Flap and Volker 2004; Lai 1998; Erickson 2005; Moerbeek and Flap 2008).

What is less a matter of consensus is the precise social mechanism that reproduces disparities in social locations (Carbonaro 1999; Jonsson, Grusky, Di Carlo, Pollak, and Brinton 2009; Morgan and Sørensen 1999).

What are the sources of inequality in social capital? Lin (2000) has argued that social capital varies by social group, stating that racial minorities and women tend to have less social capital because of structural constraints affecting both access and mobilization of capital. A few scholars have turned their attention to this pertinent question to better understand the mechanisms that reproduce inequalities more broadly. Lin (2001) proposed developing separate models for analyzing access and mobilization of social capital for isolating the point at which inequality occurs. This two-step approach allows the researcher to hypothesize and evaluate individually, processes that affect access distinct from processes that affect one's ability to capitalize on the social capital already accessed.

Studies on social capital inequality have found that urban poor minorities cannot mobilize their social capital. An illustrative study is Sandra Smith's (2005) qualitative study of 105 African Americans. From her study Smith (2005) was able to conclude that blacks' poor job acquisition is not due to lack of access to job networks as others have proposed, but rather problems with mobilization of social capital. Essentially Smith (2005) argues that potential job contacts of African Americans who are embedded in hiring institutions are reluctant to refer co-ethnics for job openings because they do not

trust their work ethic and are fearful of jeopardizing their own jobs. Smith's study demonstrates that access to social capital does not necessarily guarantee mobilization into instrumental outcomes such as occupational attainment for minorities.

Some scholars argue that the social networks of racial minorities and the poor are not brokered by resource-rich organizational ties, and that differences in opportunities to form resource-rich relationships explain their network resource disadvantage (Small 2009b). Other social capital studies focus on inequality stemming from access to social capital. Mario Small, in his book *Unanticipated Gains* (2009b), agrees with Lin's formulation of individuals' realization of social capital through accessing another's human or economic capital through social relations. However, where Small differs from Lin, is in his ideas about how people form network relations that may lead some, and not others, to form resource-rich networks. Small (2009) argues that social relations are not merely a result of purposive action of individuals in order to gain instrumental benefits; rather that the organizations people belong to, largely determine the social networks they form. As such, Small's explanation for resource stratification in network formation stem from differences in organizations' ability to create opportunities for building relationships with persons rich in resources. According to Small, individuals who belong to institutions with more capabilities generally have more access to social capital because they belong to institutions with the capacity to structure opportunities to access higher resource contacts. For Lin these factors are important but exogenous to social capital access or mobilization models.

Other studies have suggested that working class minorities are linked to exclusionary networks. One study that implicitly looks at differences in mobilization of social capital even within the same institutional context is Deidre Royster's (2003) *Race and the Invisible Hand: How White Networks Exclude Black Men from Blue-Collar Jobs*, a study of working class African Americans and whites belonging to the same academic institution. Royster (2003) finds that although both black and white students had identical contacts structured by their institutions, blacks still were excluded from job opportunities because of racially-biased gatekeeping of contact. Royster's study (2003) illustrated that whites formed exclusionary networks, effectively keeping blacks out of jobs they were equally qualified for. However Royster left the question of why the black networks of kin and friends did not present opportunities for occupational advantages in a similar fashion that the extra-institutional networks of whites afforded their white contemporaries.

Studies have also found that racial minority networks tend to be constrained by homogeneity. Some scholars argue that minorities are more likely to use contacts than whites, but merely fare poorly in the labor market due to over reliance on co-ethnic ties (Elliot 2000; Reingold 1999; See Fernandez, Castilla and Moore 2000). A growing consensus in the literature on minority networks is that they are resource-deficient and therefore have a negative impact on wages (Korenman and Turner 1996). These networks tend to be racially homogeneous, but most importantly contain homophilous resources, which constrain chances for instrumental benefits necessary for occupational gains (Lin 2005). For example, Hispanic networks stemming from migration processes tend to be

homophilous in resources primarily due to the homogeneity in social location of migrating persons in the networks (Waldinger 1999; Sanders, Nee and Sernau 2002). Even among minorities, blacks are excluded from Hispanic networks making them even more homogeneous (Kasinitz and Rosenberg 1996).

Some scholars have found that minority ties also tend to be disconnected from institutional resources. In a study of minority occupational participation through job referral networks, Fernandez (2006) argues that minorities tend to experience occupational disadvantage in the form of low wages compared to non-minorities, because they are under-represented in entry-level jobs. This underrepresentation effectively excludes other minorities outside the firm from entry-level job-referral networks that could potentially lead to job promotions. Whether minorities are connected to dysfunctional networks or whether minority networks suffer because they are not embedded in lucrative institutions such as hiring organizations, the consequences are great in isolating minorities from opportunities for socioeconomic advancement (Wilson 1987; 1996).

2.3 Foregrounding the Racial State

In order to understand how ecological, organizational and social network environments structure racial outcomes, one must adopt an institutional view of race and racialization processes outside mere attitudes or prejudices of individuals. Recognizing the hegemonic nature of race (Hoelscher, 2003; Omi & Winant, 1994) allows for the understanding of how seemingly benign and democratic arrangements and institutional

practices structure unequal racial outcomes. For this reason, making explicit this lens is crucial in a study that focuses on prosocial behaviors of individuals and philanthropic activities of organizations in order to uncover easily missed mechanisms of inequality. This study adopts a structural definition of race that foregrounds “whiteness as an organizing principle in social and cultural relations” (Lipsitz 1998:1). This lens requires redefining the democratic state as a racial state (Mills 1997) replete with institutions that are inherently racializing.

The racial state is a political economic system which promotes racialization of members of social groups and geographies to promote the economic interests of members of racially superordinate groups in society (Marable, 1983). Charles W. Mills (1997) in the *Racial Contract* writes a revision of classical theories of the formation of the democratic State founded on principles of rights to equality and justice for the citizenry, by pointing instead to the fact that nonwhites were always excluded as men in the founding documents and were therefore excluded from these guarantees. Mills (1997) argues,

America like other imperialist nations is “a racial polity, a racial state, and a racial juridical system, where the status of whites and nonwhites is clearly demarcated, whether by law or custom. And the purpose of this state secures the privileges and advantages of the full white citizens and maintaining the subordination of nonwhites.” To the extent those . . . categorized as white fail to live up to the civic and political responsibilities of whiteness, they are in dereliction of their duties as citizens” (Kindle version).

Racialization is the practice of assigning exclusionary signifiers to bodies, cultures, and spaces in order to justify exploitation of others for the sole purpose of

promoting the self-interest of a particular social group. Omi and Winant (1986:83) write that “every state institution is a racial institution.” This means that the agencies, policies, programs, regulations and social relations that govern a racial state involve assigning nonwhite social identities to undesirable spatial and class locations based on specified racial codes organized within an existing racial order.

The currency of the racial state is “whiteness” which is a property (Harris 1993) of the powerful who escape signification by others, essentially remaining raceless (Hoelscher 2003) and invisible while they gain access to economic, political, and spatial privilege. George Lipsitz (2008) in a book chapter in *White Privilege* argues that European Americans’ identification as whites amounts to an “investment in whiteness” which gives them an economic advantage over blacks, which we can also extend to Mexicans, Asians, Native Americans and other black and brown new immigrants. As such, whites invest in both white privilege and its invisibility, not by being overtly racist, but by being moral citizens of the racial state (Mills 1997), strictly adhering to race neutral neoliberal policies and practices that allow spoils of exploitation to be cloaked in euphemistic ideals of individualism, personal responsibility, and meritocracy. These theories of white elites become institutionalized to promote the prosperity of the racial state. These ideologies also serve as myths that diminish the significance of oppressive institutions that shape the welfare of racial minorities, who form the working and nonworking classes.

Manning Marable, in his book *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America*, argues that African Americans are a colonized people within America's borders. Marable argues that the exploitative economic relations between core countries and periphery countries are mirrored in the relationship between white-owned corporations and neighborhoods and black ghettos and their inhabitants. Blacks are forced to sell or "export" their unskilled labor (Tabb 1970, See Marable 1983:22) to the owners of production who have historically and continue to be overwhelmingly white. However, blacks are the losers in this transaction because the true value of their labor is, according to Marable, expropriated away from workers through meager earnings and job insecurity. Marable (1983) further argues that this leads to underdevelopment of black men and women and black neighborhoods and that underdevelopment is a necessary part of capitalism. This underdevelopment manifests as low and stagnant wages, unemployment, lack of educational opportunity, and inadequate cash subsidies through social welfare programs. Marable asserts that widespread deprivation and a lack of cash flow in Black urban neighborhoods lead to survival strategies in the form of the underground economy that often involves petty to more serious crimes. These include buying and selling stolen merchandise at a low cost, bartering of noncash benefits, drug peddling and prostitution (Marable 1983).

Many scholars define the urban Ghetto as an isolated geographic area of high poverty and crime, where the residents live in substandard living conditions and often outside the bounds of civil society (Marable 1983). However the urban ghetto is better

understood as intricately and functionally connected, both spatially and economically, to core areas of enterprise. Urban ghettos are by definition segregated by race and class arise out of the racialized economic relations across white business interests and the nonwhite working class. In this framework, capitalism is both a mechanism and a motivation for racialization and exploitation of nonwhites in the racial state. The economic linkage between ghettos and business centers are exploitative, because economic relations result in developing the wealth and spatial privilege for the latter, while the former experience poverty and underdevelopment. Therefore it is no surprise that urban slums are often juxtaposed with financial centers of major American cities, such as Wall Street (Marable 1983). This spatial proximity does not occur accidentally, but engineered by affluent white business interests, to easily access unemployed blacks (and now new immigrants) who are a “reserve army of labor” (Marable 1983:65) for low-skilled jobs in the racial capitalist enterprise. These labor intensive jobs are only available during peak periods of the economic cycle and so having a dispensable pool of low-wage workers is an integral part of the racializing capitalistic system (Bauder 2006).

The urban “Black” Ghetto began since the Great Migration of 1.8 million southern Blacks to northern cities from 1910-1950. By World War II the urban Ghetto became a feature of all modern American cities. Thomas McCarthy (2009) in *Race, Empire, and the Idea of Human Development*, argues that Black segregation was distinct from segregation of other ethnic minorities because it became institutionalized by both the federal and local governments at the request of private white citizens who did not

want to live in the same neighborhoods as the black working class. According to McCarthy (2009), in the 1940-1950's, a litany of racializing collective actions, governmental policies and institutions such as redlining by HOLC (Home owners Loan corporation), the FHA (federal Housing Authority), VA (veterans Administration), and government-funded highways, made possible white suburbanization and segregation that together led to the isolation of poor Blacks—who whites saw as a threat to their property values—in overcrowded inner cities. These racializing policies in the 1950's and 60's remain as a past present in contemporary patterns of “blacks and whites living in wholly separate neighborhoods” (McCarthy 2009:127). Beyond mere isolation, “urban renewal” projects of the 1950s to 1960s allowed cities to engage in “slum clearing” that relocated blacks to public housing, creating the new phenomenon of “concentrated poverty” and “hyper-segregated neighborhoods” (Khan 2009).

Majority white neighborhoods that are adjacent to urban slums are often overlooked by urban scholars but deserve similar analytic scrutiny as majority Black Ghettos. White wealth resulting from the exploitation of America's poorest and darkest workers and consumers accumulates in white American neighborhoods and white-owned corporations. Massive erosion of wealth in the Black ghetto and stagnation of Black income often accompany accumulation of assets among white residents in adjacent affluent neighborhoods. Landlords, creditors, small business operators residing outside the ghetto, extract capital out of poor neighborhoods through exorbitant rents, consumption of products and credit, further depleting poor disadvantaged neighborhoods

(Marable 1983). Many white owners of small businesses like pawn shops, fast food restaurants, payday lenders, that line the streets of impoverished neighborhoods, reside in adjacent more affluent neighborhoods in order to lessen their commute and monitor their establishments. Furthermore, white residents in these adjacent majority-white neighborhoods often draw poor minorities as day laborers, baby sitters, landscaping or seasonal construction workers, but do not desire these black and brown bodies as neighbors. In all instances, capital flows out of poor neighborhoods to surrounding more affluent ones.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Conceptually, this research proposes a framework for understanding how race and class processes operate at multiple levels in devastated neighborhoods to constrain the opportunities and choices of minorities and the poor, in creating instrumental social capital, by incorporating perspectives from social capital research, racialization and class reproduction theory. A structural definition of race is central to an understanding of how institutions play a vital role as racializing agents even in situations of crisis.

At the interpersonal level, the social capital theoretical perspective is useful for studying help-seeking and help-providing among strangers (Desmond 2012), since it illuminates the aspects of social relations that confer privilege or preference in a particular social exchange (De Graaf and Flap 1988; Lai, Lin, Fu and Hsung 2001). Social capital and social network research find that poor racial-ethnic minorities tend to belong to co-ethnic networks of kin and friends that offer physical or expressive support

(Sarkisian and Gerstel 2004; Stack 1974, Hofferth and Iceland 1998), but generally lack resources necessary for instrumental social capital (Fernandez and Fernandez-Mateo 2006). Other scholars further argue that even in instances where poor minorities have access to social capital that is potentially instrumental, their networks are functionally deficient (Smith 2005). Why do poor racial minorities end up in deficient networks in the first place?

Racialization and race relations theories have long argued that minorities are excluded from white organizations, communities and networks through segregation and discriminatory practices (Bonilla-Silva 1997; Bonilla-Silva 2006; Denton and Massey 1993). William Julius Wilson's (Wilson 2012) theory of concentrated disadvantage similarly argues that not only are urban poor Blacks segregated from whites but also from the black middleclass, leaving them in an environment saturated with need. At the social network level, this scenario would create a pool of prospective ties that are racially homogenous and equally disadvantaged. In this instance, macro-level segregation (Charles 2003; Crowder, South and Chavez 2006), preempts any consideration of race and class in the networking process. However contemporary phenomena such as desegregation, affirmative action policies and spatially-bounded collective environmental trauma (Logan, Oakley and Stowell 2008; Tomaskovic-Devey et al. 2006) provides the rationale for renewed emphasis on the analysis of interracial and interclass relations in these contemporary institutional and community contexts. To be sure, social network scholars do discuss social closure (Coleman 1988, 1990), but these discussions hardly

entail a serious exploration of how race and racializing mechanisms exclude minorities and the poor from the opportunity to form heterogeneous networks.

Alternatively, social network research has traditionally emphasized the role of homophily, sameness of potential ties, in forging homogeneous networks (Kossinets and Watts 2009; Mark 2003; McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 2001). However, this theory would lead one to expect that race and class are merely social identities of individuals on which preferential sorting or self-segregating occurs. However if race and class are the relevant identities on which preferential association hinges, we must assume, uncritically, that at similar points in time both whites and minorities of various class locations have at their disposal equal considerations for networking with others. With such stringent assumptions, such explanations do not take into account the power and influence associated with one's race position or class location and consequently the power relations that inhere in interactions in multiracial settings.

For example, the migration literature's treatment of social capital emphasizes homophily. Portes (1998; Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993) and others have produced several works on the social capital networks of migrants and ethnic enclaves (Oh 2007), stressing the importance of shared ethnic identity. A common identity through national origin and migration experience forges strong affect and trust or solidarity among co-ethnics, which facilitate reciprocal exchanges of obligations and fulfilled expectations (Portes 1998). In this instance, social capital residing in these immigrant networks and enclaves is seen as a response to social inequality in the form of discriminatory exclusion

from the formal labor market and mainstream American communities (Portes 1998, Fong 2010). This means that social inequality within these enclaves is left unexplored. This treatment of social capital does not clarify differential access to social capital within the enclave (Burdsey 2009; Gilbertson 1995), and provides no comparison between this co-ethnic social capital and the potentially missed social capital that exists outside the enclave in the “dominant” society. Notwithstanding, the research on ethnic networks and enclaves does establish a basis for expecting that racial-ethnic identities are salient markers on which decisions relevant to social capital creation would be negotiated.

Nan Lin (2001) and others in the status attainment branch of social capital theory, do take into account social hierarchy in the networking process. These scholars recognize that connecting to social ties higher in social status is crucial to accessing social capital. Contrary to the assumption that social capital stems from similar actors gravitating to each other in homophilous relations (Coleman 1988, Putnam 2000, McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001), these theorists emphasize purposive action motivated by heterophily. In short, social capital advantage is created not by sameness, but by the status or resource differential across social ties, leading to indirect access to resources that one does not directly possess (Lin 2001a). However, while this theorization of social capital does consider the social status of actors in a dyad or network, it does not take into account competition or conflict among members of unequal categorical groups within communities (Olzak, Shanahan and McEneaney 1996; Rieder 1985). Hence in social capital research, social hierarchy only intervenes as a facilitator of social capital (Burt

2001; Lin 2001; Lin, Fu and Hsung 2001). However social class like race, as articulated by Charles Tilly (1998), constitutes a notion of social hierarchy of “categorically differentiated experience” may “produce differences in social relations in another” hence complicating resource and information sharing across unequal pairs (Tilly 1998:86).

This research explores what conditions and mechanisms connect certain categories with certain rewards, paying attention to myths in the form of beliefs, symbols, and practices in interpersonal relations and organizations in a particular place. According to Tilly, one such practice is opportunity hoarding which occurs,

“When members of a categorically bounded network acquire access to a resource, network members regularly hoard their access to the resource, creating beliefs and practices to sustain their control... [through] unequal relations across the boundary which connect them” (Tilly 1998:91).

Therefore considering persons as both individuals and members of their social group that is racially organized in a particular place (Breiger 1974), allows one to consider the importance of social position differential as a discriminant factor with the potential to transmit not only social mobility but also categorical inequality.

Race, like class, is more than a social identity but rather, a notion of group position relative to others within a particular racial order (Blumer 1958). Racialization and race relations theories, in contrast to the treatment of ethnicity as merely social identity of individuals, theorize ethnoracial categories as contested social categories (Barth 1969, Lieberman 2000) that assign groups to rank-ordered social positions with specific socio-historical and socio-spatial underpinnings (Blumer 1958, Bobo 1996).

According to Eduardo Bonilla Silva, U.S. society constitutes a racialized social system which “allocates differential economic, political, social, and even psychological rewards to groups along racial lines” (1997:474). Race theorists further argue that such unequal allocations of resources permeate networks of relations in a society (Whitmeyer 2010, Bonilla-Silva 1997). The preponderance of race research does point to the importance of considering the historical and contemporary inter-group relations and relative positions of ethno racial groups in a given geography (Sidanius 1999) to uncover the power relations, influence and privilege wielded in cross-race relations in any particular institutional or community context and certainly how this impacts one’s social capital.

3. Research Design and Field Work

3.1 Neighborhood Selection

The chosen field sites are three New York City neighborhoods, all of which suffered comparable levels of flooding from Hurricane Sandy. The two Rockaway neighborhoods are adjacent (Aptekar 1990) but highly segregated by race and class—one is a predominantly Irish affluent neighborhood and the other a predominantly poor black and new-immigrant community. These neighborhoods possess sufficient race and class heterogeneity to accommodate qualitative analyses of disaster-response experiences of residents within and across the main artery that separates them. The third is Canarsie, a neighborhood in Brooklyn with a significant black immigrant working and middleclass, home-owner population. Adding Canarsie to the analysis, allowed for a comparison with Westville, which is a predominantly middleclass but, as aforementioned, these residents are predominantly white.

“The Rockaways” is a peninsula in New York City dividing the Jamaica Bay from the Atlantic Ocean. The peninsula has a combined population of 106, 700, with 22% of residents living below the poverty level (Olsen et al 2006). The targeted neighborhood toward the western tip of the peninsula is a majority white, middle Class to affluent population (87%) with 46% of homes being occupied by homeowners, contrasted with the neighborhood located to the east which has a majority black population (71%) with 71% of housing occupied by renters and more than half of all households (52%)

earning under \$30,000/year. The race-ethnic distribution of immigrants is similarly skewed from west to east with the western community comprising white ethnics and their descendants (primarily Irish, Italian, Jewish) while the eastern side is home to primarily black and brown immigrants from the Caribbean and Latin America, which make up 56% of the immigrant stock.

3.2 Community Site: “The Whitest Neighborhood in the City?”

The Rockaways does not quite follow the usual story of “white flight” to the suburbs, partly because it had many characteristics of the suburbs yet easily accessible to the city by train. It was never a manufacturing base, but relied on seasonal tourism. From 1830, The Rockaways served as a seaside get away for wealthy Manhattan business men and civil servants who came to escape the scorching heat of the summer (Bellot 1917). However it eventually lost its appeal after WWII, leaving many of its summer bungalows vacant. Rockaways residents have always considered themselves separate from New York, and in 1917 actually sought, albeit unsuccessfully, to secede from New York State on the grounds of disinvestment despite paying more than their fair share in taxes (Bellot 1917).

New York was a significant port welcoming over one million Irish immigrants fleeing the Potato famine in 1845 (Glazer and Moynihan 1970). While the Irish met with discrimination in northern cities, such as Boston, in New York Irish immigrants soon became a politically formidable ethnic group (Ryon 1999). They also became dominant in civil service jobs such as those in the New York City Police and Fire Departments. In

the mid to late 1800's the Irish formed one quarter of New York's residents. New York City, to date, continues to have the largest Irish American population. The Rockaways became an attractive place for Irish immigrants to settle. Other white ethnic groups to settle in the Rockaways were Italians, Southern and Eastern European Jews, Poles and Russian immigrants. In 1950, the Welfare Department, placed the poorest Blacks who migrated from the South as part of the Great Migration in the Rockaways. Finally by the early 1970's a new wave of Hispanic and Caribbean immigrants began to settle in the Rockaways.

The arrival of African Americans to the Rockaways was a highly racialized process. In 1950, Commissioner Hilliard and the welfare department tried placing welfare clients "ineligible for public housing and not easily placed in private rentals" due to the unwillingness of white landlords to accommodate welfare recipients who were primarily African American (Kaplan and Kaplan 2003:69). The government incentivized small business owners of vacant summer homes toward the Eastern part of The Rockaways to convert their homes to rooming houses to accommodate welfare clients. In exchange they were to receive guaranteed government checks with little to no accountability for providing inhabitable housing for poor Blacks (Kaplan and Kaplan 2003:69). The Rockaways gained a reputation of being a "repository for problems the city did not want to leave in the city's center" (Kaplan and Kaplan, 2003:69). The Black population was also put in proximity to Jews because "the Irish population provided more resistance than Jews . . . to the placement of Black tenants" (Kaplan and Kaplan 2003:58).

Race continues to shape the topography of the peninsula. According to a 2001 New York Times article, the westernmost part of the Rockaways was “the whitest neighborhood in the city, once known as the Irish Riviera [where] families go back three and four generations.” These racialization processes of the past, have essentially concatenated into racialized spaces on the peninsula today. The result is that there are Irish Americans living to the west in Affluent neighborhoods, and working and nonworking poor Blacks, Hispanic, Caribbean immigrants, Native Americans and poor whites living to the easternmost parts. At the center are Jews, Polish and Russian immigrants. Through eminent domain laws and the city’s urban renewal projects beginning in the 50’s, dilapidated bungalows were bulldozed and replaced with what is today a concentration of high rise public housing lining the beach (Vitullo-Martinez 2008). Also, the Rockaways has a large pool of dilapidated nursing homes, drug rehabilitation centers and mental health clinics that line the shores.

3.4 Race and Class Demographics of Participants

The study participants in this research are residents, managers, staff and volunteers from local nonprofits including churches, and those from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as well as various New York State governmental Agencies. The total study population (see Table 1) were local actors in the disaster relief and recovery efforts in Brooklyn and on The Rockaway peninsula. The largest number of residents who were phenotypically white, and who identified as third and fourth generation Irish lived in Westville. I classified most of these residents as Middle Class

based on their homeowner status, neighborhood and zip code identification, which fell within high median housing values. I also used other qualitative measures from our conversations such as owning a second home. I also conducted interviews with residents I classified as non-Irish white, who tended to reside in Eastville or in Westville near the Eastville-Westville boundary. These tended to be working class renters, retirees and immigrants from Poland, Russia, and also, phenotypically white residents who identified as being of Native American descent. These were generally represented among the working and nonworking poor. Among the residents I identified as phenotypically Black, some identified as African American with no migration in their family history. The majority however, identified as first and second generation Caribbean immigrants. Phenotypically black Caribbean immigrants tended to live in Canarsie and Eastville, with the majority living in Canarsie.

Most of the Brooklyn Interviews were conducted in Canarsie, some were at the FEMA disaster Recovery Centers (DRC) where FEMA staff and NYS state staff volunteers were stationed. I interviewed a total of four church leaders, and two directors of a prominent NGO in Brooklyn that were responding to the local residents' needs. Among the interviews I conducted in The Rockaways, many of the interviews were conducted in NGO warming centers, FEMA centers, and a local NPO located in the heart of Eastville. Majority of the interviews in Westville were with residents visiting the large NGO warming Center. Across the neighborhoods in the Rockaways and Brooklyn, I interviewed a total of ten NPO founders and managers. I also interviewed three

volunteers that cycled in and out of the central NPO in the hub of Eastville. I also conducted thirteen interviews with volunteers of the same NGO stationed in the warming centers in the heart of Westville and the periphery of Eastville. I also conducted interviews with volunteers who were residents of surrounding communities who came to assist in the relief effort but considered themselves unaffiliated with any particular organization. I also interviewed the field manager for the two warming centers where I conducted my participant observation, as well as one field manager of an affiliated NGO assisting the large NGO. I visited and conducted interviews with the three FEMA field managers and one New York State field manager at the three FEMA centers located in both Rockaways and Brooklyn.

Table 1: Demographics and Geography of Participants

Study Participants	Study Population
Age (in years):	
18-29	16
30-39	18
40-49	24
50-59	31
60-69	21
70-79	10
Gender:	
Male	56
Female	64
Ethnoracial grouping:	
Whites/White Irish	21
Other White Ethnics	20
Blacks (African Americans)	24
Black Immigrants (West Indians)	40
Other Racial Minorities	13
Socio-economic class:	
Working Class	24
Working /Non-Working Poor	33
Middle/Upper Class	63
FEMA and state responders:	
Field Site Manager	3
Volunteers/Staff	6
NGO responders:	
Field Manager	2
Volunteers/Staff	13
NPO responders:	
Leader/Manager/Founder	10
Volunteers/Staff	3
Unaffiliated resident volunteers	10
The Rockaways Interviewees:	
Eastville	36
Westville	34
Brooklyn Interviewees:	
Canarsie	48
Flatbush	2

Total number of respondents across Rockaways and Brooklyn is 120

3.5 Data and Methods

The criteria for selection of sites for participant observation were based on information from key informants involved in the relief efforts, intimate knowledge of NYC communities from eight years of residence (Weinreb 2006), tours of devastated communities, presence of NGO and FEMA and volunteer activity, and preliminary interviews with residents. My entry into Canarsie, was through my own work in disaster relief in Canarsie and collaborating with local church leaders in the area. This quickly led me to residents impacted by flooding, and other local NPOs and churches instrumental in the recovery. I also stumbled onto the FEMA center housed in one Catholic Church in Canarsie, through word of mouth, during an interview with volunteers at one of the local NPOs. My first awareness of the significance of going to the Rockaways also began with conversations with local church leaders I worked with in Canarsie, who also did work in the Rockaways, although I would pursue this site through an alternate route.

My first visit to the Rockaways was with a colleague who worked as a low-wage healthcare assistant at one of the nursing homes lining the beach that had to be evacuated due to flooding. Our first visit just consisted of driving around and surveying the devastation and identifying areas that were most visibly devastated. Given that one of the goals of the research, was to understand the network-level mechanisms that drive racial and class inequalities in receipt and provision of disaster assistance, I chose the two neighboring communities on the Rockaways peninsula where residents had experienced 6-8 feet of flooding and where there was a presence of the same large NGO and a local

NPO responding to the disaster. Once the devastated areas in the Rockaways were selected, I proceeded to recruit participants within a 15-block radius (walking perimeter) of three disaster warming and distribution centers (two tents and one storefront location). Following confidentiality standards customary in ethnographic research, in particular for residents whose actions and words had racial connotations, I refer to these locations merely as *Large NGO* and *Local NPO*. Public transportation had not yet fully resumed and it was also during the winter months. Although I rode with my friend that first day, I would subsequently have to make the trek on my own which meant that keeping warm was always an important consideration.

Across all three sites, the selection of cases was theoretically and contextually motivated (Small 2009). I randomly approached and recruited storm-impacted residents as well as disaster responders (relief volunteers, disaster workers, and community leaders) at the relief sites, neighboring streets, and outside homes. Important theoretically-relevant dimensions sought were race-ethnicity, employment status, housing type and tenure (Adeola and Picou 2012); and migration or move experience (Donner and Rodriguez 2008). I also paid strict attention to symbolically-relevant spatial boundaries (Massey and Denton 1993) and social-services program receipt, as these emerged as important experiential cleavages in the local context as well.

The Interviews began on November 10, 2012, twelve days after the disaster struck. I conducted interviews with 120 participants and followed-up over a course of thirteen revisits and up to two sequential interviews with participants (Small 2009, Burawoy 2003). The data for this project was collected in three ways: (i) in-depth

unstructured interviews, (ii) semi-structured questionnaires, (iii) and ethnographic participant observation (O’Leary 2005). I collected interview data via multiple modes. That is, although the research project began as a video ethnography, as it expanded, I had to adapt interviews to suit participant preferences, which meant alternating among video recording, audio recording, pen and paper recording during interview, or informal talk without the formality of note-taking. These particular mode was always at the preference and comfort level of participants.

I compared the help-seeking and help-providing interactions between residents and volunteers from various race-ethnic and class backgrounds. I interviewed volunteers and field-site managers, in order to get at the meanings (Blumer 1955) volunteers assigned to their observations and interactions with residents. One major part of the analysis of the observational and interview data was to distinguish between what volunteers and site managers said and how they actually responded to the needs of these residents (Blumer 1955). I also made comparisons of types and strength of social relationships forged among volunteers with non-poor, poor, minority and white residents. Specifically, my analysis focused on the interracial and interclass interactional and institutional environment in the warming centers, investigating whether and how the race and class dynamics of the communities, intervene in social interactions during disaster response.

Three key questions which guided both my participant observation and analysis of the ethnographic data were: (1) Whether there were noticeable differences in the nature of social interactions between responders and residents, by race and class of residents (2)

Whether and how the types and quality of resident-responder newly-forged social ties, influenced reciprocal exchanges of pertinent local disaster information and resources, (3) What factors, events and conditions in and around the warming centers affected social interaction and social exchange among residents and volunteers.

To assess the possible impact of context-driven factors on the attitudes, behaviors and interactions I directly observed, I took into account socio-spatial and socio-historical racial and class tensions and boundaries among poor and middleclass residents of the majority white, high socioeconomic status neighborhood; the majority minority, low socioeconomic status neighborhood; as well as the majority minority neighborhood with a substantial black middleclass population. For this part of my analysis, I take seriously the intersubjective meanings (Blumer 1955) the participants made of self and their relation to others in the local environment to capture social distance and symbolic boundaries among residents of these communities (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, Lamont 1992). Finally I present my results that captures the “main story underlying the analysis” (LaRossa 2005: 850) of the racial and class organization of disaster response, weaving in race and class projects and narratives of local actors around specific events. I also connect these to the changes in the ecological environment (Klinenberg 2002) of the devastated neighborhoods I studied.

3.6 Ethnographic Methodology and Analysis

The data analysis for the dissertation writing integrates principles and approaches of grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss 1990; Charmaz 2006; Burton et al. 2009) and extended case method (Burawoy 1998), allowing both inductively and deductively

attained concepts to inform each other (Burawoy 1998). The research design follows a case-study logic, in which each participant represents one independent case (Small 2009b; Yin 1994) through which the researcher aims to understand the phenomenon of disaster support participation from the various experiences of local participants in the chosen context for a specified period. The rationale for subsequent recruitments was based on achieving saturation on theoretical relevance.

I initially imported the video and audio files into Nvivo and coded as case nodes during preliminary analysis. Later on, once the videos and audios were transcribed, I linked those to their corresponding case nodes. Working with transcribed text data allowed for more efficient manipulation of all the data. This allowed for more exhaustive coding of concepts as nodes, classifications of characteristics, which facilitated more systematic content analysis using word cloud, word tree, and query functions in Nvivo (Maxwell 2005, O'Leary 2005, Yin 1994). For example I was able to visualize concept maps and correlations of demographic, relational, and contextual factors with behaviors such as “help-seeking” or “help-providing”. I also coded more abstract concepts such as “social distance” by locating all uses of words like “ours, we” versus “theirs, them” using the word recognition feature in NVivo. A strong capability of the software is the data visualization features which allowed me to better discern the relative prominence of enumerated themes through word cloud or word tree. This in turn allowed me to see the connections and contexts of word use and to construct matrices to represent relationships.

To ensure validity of analysis and reliability of the data, the project followed accepted standards for the particular traditions of inquiry employed in this research

(Small 2009b; O’Leary 2005). Multiple angles of triangulation were achieved by analyzing data from a range of cases, sources, and settings using multiple modes of inquiry (O’Leary 2005). I gave participants the option to review written work prior to submission. The two-year long field study allowed me to better understand and compare the significance of the daily lived experiences during the early response period to the accounted experiences several months later, through researcher reflexivity. Interview data was then contextualized with oral histories of key informants and written artefacts (O’Leary 2005) of race relations, migration, and economic history of neighborhoods. Together these allowed me to gain an empathetic understanding (Small 2009) of the nuances in the diversity of experiences among the current residents who are the participants in this study.

3.7 My Positionality in the Field

As a researcher conducting fieldwork in New York City, I situated myself as a returning New Yorker to volunteer and research the unfortunate devastation that Super storm Sandy had visited on fellow New Yorkers. I was generally warmly received by residents, community leaders, and volunteers. I only got turned down for an interview by four persons. Most people I approached wanted to help me because of my student status. Some were impressed, or pleasantly surprised that I was going to earn a Ph.D. Interviews would end with comments like “I hope this helps you get your degree!” I told participants that one of my motivations for pursuing this project was that learning of their experiences would help me convey to helping organizations responding to disasters to

better do their jobs for future disasters. This continues to be my hope that I can achieve this.

I am a Black woman. Given that this project relied on observations related to various manifestations of race, I think that my minority racial status meant that language or actions revealing racial prejudice could only be a conservative measure. Therefore my discussions of actions that can be construed as racially prejudicial are few, and are relegated to inadvertent slips. For this reason the bulk of my research centers on structural conceptualizations of race—ecological, organizational, and social network organization—that lead to pronounced differential experiences and outcomes among the racial minorities and white residents I studied. Several studies have pointed out that researchers' and respondents' race and gender matter in the validity of interview responses and analyses (Weinreb 2006; Stanfield 1993). I tried to minimize these issues by adopting several situational identities in order to find commonality with and adapt to research participants.

My positionality was often situational as I straddled the lines of race, class and citizenship. To new immigrants, I emphasized my St. Lucian background. In speaking to middle class and affluent residents, I emphasized my affiliation with a private elite University. In speaking with women with children I emphasized my own motherhood. Despite these flexible positionalities, I could not negotiate my way out of my phenotype. However, it was clear in certain situations, that my Caribbean accent led to intrigue and questions about my nationality. In mentioning I was from St. Lucia I occasionally got “Oh St. Lucia, such a beautiful vacation spot” which in some situations made me

“exotic.” Several race studies have suggested that ethnicity can be used to escape racialization.

As a human instrument, going into the field I knew that my own Blackness could pose obstacles in my research regarding extracting valid information on race. I knew that elicited responses on race would at best be indirect or coded in some way. Interviewees used distinctive language that allowed me to decipher whether race was relevant and I include in my analysis the interesting ways that people referenced actions or words of nonwhites. I had to take an inductive approach to uncovering whether and how race appeared in the discourse or actions of persons I observed and spoke to. This meant that I have more confidence in my race data, as these were always unprompted. Even when some things clearly had a racial undertone, I pretended not to understand and continued to prod with more general questions.

There were a few “gems” on interpersonal prejudices that showed up in the data. These were usually indirect accounts of persons speaking about their friends, or residents but not themselves personally. Only one white male interviewee said “Roy, he’s my friend but he is a racist. He hates black people.” Some of my race data were based on how participants interacted with me. For example after conducting one of my longest interviews, the interviewee said to me “see, see, I talk to black people. I bet you thought I wasn’t going to talk to you.” As a person of color, one is often aware of his or her subordinate racial position in interactions with others in a racially superordinate position. Similar arguments have been made for gender. However, with some of these interviews at times this awareness, if it were there, was subconscious. This was one of these

moments, so when I heard these words, my surprise surfaced as a “jolt” throwing me out of researcher mode. Thinking to myself, “Did he really just say that to me?” I quickly got back into my role, and quickly replied. “No not at all, the thought never even crossed my mind. Thanks for talking with me.” Shaking my head (internally), this experience made me more cognizant of the fact that my blackness contextualized my interactions with participants, regardless of how pleasant the conversations really were. For the rest of the day, I began to question all of my interactions. Did I fall into the color blindness trap? Did I really think that these residents were blind to my race? Even as I was empathizing and sympathizing with them, were they simultaneously “othering” me? I decided to table these questions, because I would never know where and when this actually occurred. This is why there is a notable absence of discussions of “racial prejudice.” However, this only speaks to the fact that I could not have been the best instrument for capturing this kind of data, and not as evidence of its absence in reality.

While I went to the field equipped with an interview guide and questionnaire (See Appendix A), most interviews ended up being organic and conversational. These often took place while residents were either standing in front of their homes or peeking outside their doors from their foyers, (while some graciously invited me in to see their basements and debris in their backyards) sitting at tables to eat at warming centers; sitting in the waiting area of FEMA centers; doing laundry at the laundromat, sometimes walking, waiting at the bus stop or even riding the bus. Others were in churches, at community meetings, and in business establishments. My initial interviews felt scripted, awkward and generally inappropriate for the setting. My white paper with my questions served as a

“white coat” that only separated me from residents. I began to feel like I was interrupting the flow of what the residents really wanted to share about their disaster experience. In fact one lady whom I was interviewing at a laundromat, after answering all of my questions with terse responses, at the end of the interview asked who prepared these questions and complained about the details that the questions were asking. I had included the position generator instrument, a measure of social capital used in survey research which asked about their social connections, the occupations of people they knew and who offered to help. In a playfully embarrassed tone I said with a smile “well . . . that would be me” at which we both laughed. It was only then that she became more relaxed and began to tell me about her neighbor who was displaced from her basement and that no one had heard from her. She expressed how much she wanted to help but that she had gone to the shelter and could not be reached. The conversation proved most illuminating for the rest of my research, as I was more attuned to similar patterns of fragmentation of social networks resulting from the disaster. At that moment, I decided that a more organic exchange would yield more interesting insights and make the interviews more pleasant for my interviewees who were already enduring so much.

Researchers researching abject circumstances have to be mindful that they may further contribute to the trauma of individuals. I kept that at the forefront of my mind. If anyone hesitated to talk, even for a second, I instantly stopped describing my research. However, I would still feel guilt that what appeared to be people’s cheerful and welcoming gestures to speak with me, was just because they were lonely and would probably talk to anyone regardless of the purpose. These residents had lost everything,

and here I was, asking them about their experiences because I really wanted to know on a personal level. However, the fact that this exchange would also result in a dissertation, articles or a book made me feel like I was also benefiting from their misfortune. These feelings came and went. Other times, I felt fulfilled realizing that many of these residents would not have anyone to process these feelings of helplessness, isolation, indignation, and despair with at that moment when they probably needed it the most.

In many ways, I had more access to residents and connected with them more closely than FEMA staff and or any other agency could. One lady who was leaving a FEMA center, looked frustrated. I told her about my research and asked if she had a few minutes to participate in a video recorded interview. She jumped at the opportunity to tell me her dissatisfaction with FEMA, who rejected her application and found the thought of an appeal insurmountable. During the course of the interview she broke down crying profusely. She began to say that she woke up that morning knowing that she was going to jump off the Manhattan Bridge if FEMA did not help her that day. FEMA did not help her that day. I immediately put down my recording device to empathize with her and to dissuade her from these suicidal thoughts. Surprisingly, she said “no, no, I want you to turn it on. I want everyone to know what has happened to me.” She relayed that she was 73 years old and that she had essentially become homeless because her basement where she lived was flooded. She said that all she was walking around with was this bag with two panties in there. She said that the night before she slept by a friend and was not sure where she was going to sleep that evening. In that moment, I was torn but quickly realized that the very process of telling me her story, was a cathartic experience for her.

She had made several trips to FEMA, was sent to the State, SBA and all the other entities represented at this center, but felt that all these bureaucracies that was set up to help her did not hear her pleas for help. Recording the interview validated her experience and her way of creating recorded history to say, yes this really did happen and it happened to me.

My use of videos and to a lesser extent audios, made me question whether these mediums introduced an additional layer of dramaturgical bias. Erving Goffman theorized that people seldom present their real selves which are hidden in a “backstage” and what we really see and hear is their “front stage” or what they wish to present to others (Goffman, 1959). Interestingly, I noticed that participants would adjust the pitch of their voices, their posture, and would become very introspective about stuttering, and mispronounced words. Some would even ask me to stop recording to make sure their hair was in place or in order to speak more smoothly. In these respects, presentation of self-mattered more. However, on the *substance* of what people said, I seldom found inconsistencies between what they said off camera and what they had begun to say in small talk before I interrupted them to go through my IRB protocol and the formal consent process (See Appendix B). Very often the conversations continued for a few to several more minutes off camera and while professional tones became informal, the rendering of experiences seldom changed. I draw on insights from these off camera conversations to give context to what was said on camera. Also repeated interviews served to validate earlier stated experiences. Overall I found people’s accounts to remain largely consistent even after seeing them several months later. This is perhaps because of

the traumatic nature of their experiences and the fact that they were still living in the experience and context that they were describing.

As a field researcher, I was always aware of the fact that my very presence altered the dynamics of behavior. I have already discussed how my race certainly introduced silences and linguistic detours for talking about race without every mentioning it. However, to the extent possible, you want to minimize your influence on the setting and the trajectory of outcomes so that you may better understand those. This was something I struggled with in the field. I was studying the aftermath of disaster. People's lives were in shambles. There were clear inequalities across neighborhoods in terms of people's awareness of the availability of resources. My back and forth across contexts and gaining multiple viewpoints on the disaster, made me an expert on many relevant insights related gaining resources and information. It was often heartbreaking to speak to residents in high poverty areas and realize they have no clue about certain services that others in the more affluent area have known of for a while, applied for and even received. A large part of my research was about understanding the processes that created and maintained such disparate diffusion of information across residents. If I told residents this information, in many ways I would be altering the course of events that would prevent me from tracing the processes that keep some residents out of the loop.

After interviews, I sometimes found myself providing helpful information to residents through "cross pollination" of what I learned from other centers, residents and neighborhood observations. One example was in the Westville tent, where after talking to a poor, white Westville resident who had not applied for a FEMA voucher that was

available. I asked him if he had read the flyers on the table at the entrance, he said no. I found myself going over to the table and providing him with the information. Another time, when I saw him again, I asked if he called, he still hadn't. I also had to stop myself from plunging head first into apartment hunting for a poor, Black Eastville resident when I realized that despite being connected to so many social service programs, still became homeless. In some cases, I found that researcher intervention can lead to deeper understanding of nuances in experiences that I may have missed. In the case of the elderly lady who was suicidal, I called the crisis hotline to find her psychological services. I spent 45 minutes listening to several automated options, being bumped from one menu to another before getting a live person on the phone. I was finally able to give her an address to go to. I called the next day to see if she got help. Apparently the address I got was an abandoned building. I went through the whole process again before she could be seen. She gave me permission to share her needs with other community disaster responders in another area and I was able to get a team to help her with mold remediation. Before this, she had been trying to battle mold in her basement by herself by using bleach she bought, only to find that it would grow right back. I knew that since she was already suicidal I wanted to minimize her stress as much as I could. I am sure, some would see this as perturbing the field a little too much, but there were moments where I had to make the split second decision that I was going to be human first and researcher second. However, much more often than not I found myself leaving the field frustrated that the problems were far too big and far too many for me to have any real impact other

than through publishing and presenting my research in policy circles, a far cry from the public sociology I envisioned.

4. Space, Race, and Institutions in Crisis

In this chapter I trace a process of institutional inequality spanning neighborhoods that differ in their ethno racial and or class make-up. One important aspect of resource inequality across devastated neighborhoods is inequality in neighborhoods' capacity to attract relevant governmental and nongovernmental entities to devastated locations. Several studies have focused on the media as being important to drawing attention and consequently resources to more affluent neighborhoods over poorer ones, or whiter neighborhoods over darker ones. While my observations certainly confirm both this premise and this outcome, I discovered another process that I have identified as *Organizational Agglomeration*, that is, the chain reaction process by which organizations become concentrated in certain devastated areas. I also observed two other models of response building namely a *Host Model* and a *Coalition Model*.

While in the field, I became fascinated with this question of Response Building or how governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and local NPOs come together to orchestrate disaster response. This question became even more significant when I observed differences in organizational presence across the three neighborhoods I studied, particularly the lack of governmental and NGO presence in the most devastated area in Eastville. In this chapter I draw on my observations of local churches, FEMA and New York State agencies as my basis for comparison across these neighborhoods. I foreground each section with an excerpt of “conversational” interviews with managers of various field sites across the levels of federal, state, and local nonprofits. Through these interviews I was able to see how organizations come together to work on response. This

included the chain and order of events that attracted various organizations and agencies and related outcomes. I present these three models of emergence of organizational ties and discuss in light of existing disaster literature.

4.1 Racialized Urban Spaces in Crisis

The case of Hurricane Katrina established the significance of race and class inequality in the collective memory of Americans. The stark difference in experiences of Black New Orleans residents from those of white residents, the disproportionate deaths among Black residents in the lower ninth ward, and finally the slow governmental response to the crisis led to public allegations of “racism” or “racial prejudice.” Prior to Katrina, discussions of race in the disaster literature focused on indicators such as race and socioeconomic status of individuals and measuring how these impacted risk and access to services (Bolin 2006). However, once it became clear that a lack of appropriate and timely governmental response essentially became “the disaster” or “the crisis,” a new wave of disaster research began to reconsider how we theorize the workings of race and class in majority minority poor urban neighborhoods in crisis.

Decades of disinvestment by the local government in the infrastructure and welfare of the predominantly Black community, and in particular the lower ninth ward, largely explain the “wider disparity in adaptation and recovery between black and white storm victims” (Bullard 2009). Gotham and Greenberg (2014) write that New Orleans, like New York City and other American cities, are “crisis cities” long before a cataclysmic event. In other words, a disaster is not an event as such, but rather, a historical moment in the life of a city and its inhabitants, when unattended serial disasters

largely unnoticed by dominant society but regularly endured by the nonwhite urban poor reach a crescendo. Katrina came to be defined as a man-made disaster, hence implicating the State in the loss of life and property of an already deprived minority population. The case of New Orleans also revealed that the State and NGO response only served as a multiplier effect on longstanding race and class spatial inequalities. Environmental Justice Scholarship gained traction because of the obvious correlation not just between race and class, but also the spatial proximity of poor Black residences to the insecure “patchwork” the levee system (Bullard 2009).

This disinvestment was also at the federal level. King (2009:169) writes that by the time Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and the rest of the Gulf Coast, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was already “crippled by cutbacks and gutted by personnel.” Neoliberal ideology that has impacted social welfare policies also promoted reduced governmental intervention and increased personal responsibility in disaster recovery. This ideological turn in disaster response has led to a devolution of the responsibility of relief and recovery to local governments, communities and citizens. States that were already experiencing fiscal problems, would in turn rely on the private sector. Unsurprisingly, this privatization of disaster response resulted in private business interests playing a significant role in disbursing disaster aid, proposing redevelopment plans, and bidding on government contracts to rebuild devastated cities. This means that disaster response follows a market-oriented model of redevelopment that equates rebuilding communities with subsidizing business recovery and revitalizing financial centers (Gotham and Greenberg 2014).

Private interests often use crisis as means to restructure under the guise of redevelopment. There are spatial consequences for this privatization of disaster relief and response. Gotham and Greenberg (2014) write that disaster *redevelopment* in New Orleans after Katrina and New York after 9/11 bolstered the French quarters and made the Wall Street areas “vibrant and dynamic 24-hour communities,” respectively, to the neglect of the lower Ninth Ward and China Town (Gotham and Greenberg 2014:45). Many cities capitalize on disaster aid to realize their goals of this kind of unequal redevelopment (Gotham and Greenberg 2014:45). These projects amount to “slum clearing” and replacing with white-owned business and housing. These often lead to economic and environmental degradation of adjacent neighborhoods, increasing inequality across these segregated spaces.

In this way, disaster response can be understood as a form of internal redevelopment, a significant undertaking of the racial state. Thomas McCarthy (2009) in *Race, Empire, and the Idea of Human Development* explains that racialization has always accompanied ideas of “development” of third world countries during European-American global colonization and imperialism. He argues that domination and exploitation of non-European countries has always been accompanied by “conceptions of development, enlightenment, civilization, and progress” (2009:166). He further argues that these continue to shape modern development that has simply replaced dichotomies such as “backward/civilized” with “underdeveloped/developed” (2009:200) and that the institutions of development continue to dominate these non-western countries. He also argues that although neoliberalism has replaced the state interventionist policies of the

global liberalism, “peripheral” countries are still exploited since they are not really competing on a level playing field. Free market international institutions and policies act as safeguards of profits to the West while postcolonial nations continue to be underdeveloped. McCarthy contends that “exploitation, expropriation, dispossession, slavery, colonialism, and imperialism were not just accidental by products of developmental forces [but were] among its central mechanisms” (2009:226)

While these studies by disaster scholars have begun to make strides toward uncovering how racializing policies combine with capitalistic interests to further racialize and disinvest in certain urban spaces to promote post-disaster racial outcomes, they all tend to focus on the effect of neoliberal policies on the built environment. Similarly, while they make a strong case for the co-optation of response goals and aid by for-profit business interests, we know less about the racializing role of NGOs, NPOs and FEMA in perpetuating racial outcomes for individuals in the aftermath of disaster. This dissertation chapter focuses on these gaps in the literature.

4.2 Westville: An Organizational Agglomeration Model

It is no surprise that more affluent, usually majority white, neighborhoods have better institutional resources than neighborhoods of concentrated disadvantage that are almost always majority minority neighborhoods. What is less clear is how and why these neighborhoods accrue more institutional resources after a crisis than poorer neighborhoods that may need such resources most. In my observations of organizations coming to Westville compared to the lack of organizational presence in Eastville it was evident that some neighborhoods are better draws for nongovernmental organizations than others. In the hub of Westville, there were mobile trucks from a variety of organizations and state agencies, volunteers, food trucks, and mobile health clinics all providing essential services and resources to Westville residents. This essentially created a “Nucleus of Relief” and a “busy-ness” or “buzz” in that part of Westville. I was curious as to why there was this disparity across corollary devastated areas in Westville and Eastville which were only a few blocks apart. After interviewing key actors in local NPOs and NGOs on the scene, I realized that this was not a coordinated effort, but the result of a chain reaction of organizational ties formed on the spur of the moment, a process that I have identified as *Organizational Agglomeration*.

My initial assumption regarding the development of relief coalitions was that a “lead” state agency would solicit the help of a number of organizations and send them to a particular location where the need was determined to be greatest or unmet. However, I quickly found out through my interviews with church leaders who were heading major relief operations in Westville and also Canarsie, that the process was much more diffuse

and even somewhat happenstance. I draw on my interview with Monsignor Paul, a 60 year old local priest of the large Catholic Church and school spanning three blocks in the heart of Westville. Monsignor's church spearheaded an effort which ended up serving over "10,000 residents per day."

Monsignor Paul: I started maybe two days after, uh, the storm. Some people came. Young people with clothing. Uh, it started with a very small room and ended up with the whole school building, and then food, and then the government kind of attached itself to us little by little.

Sancha: How did they contact you - the government?

Monsignor Paul: They showed up

Sancha: Oh, literally?

Monsignor Paul: It started—it literally started by the community for the community. And then little by little, the mayor's office sent somebody down, and then they worked with us. Then Red Cross came and they worked with us. Everybody's been very good. The military came down, worked with us. All of them are helping us.

Sancha: So, how did they get to hear about you?

Monsignor Paul: Uh, we were really the only ones on the Peninsula at the time doing anything. And so that's why we ended up with 10,000 people-- 10,000 people a day.

Sancha: Okay. And so all of the organizations that were here? I did come here a few days after the storm, and there were lots of different organizations--

Monsignor Paul: Well, they came--around that area--they came little by little. Uh, it really started by the community for the community, and then little by little, things got added on. Uh, as we worked, uh, a tent got put up maybe a week later. Uh, and then everything was added - a heating tent, and then the food, and then--- whatever else we needed, we just added on to it.

Sancha: Okay. So it's not like you had preexisting relationships with organizations?

Monsignor Paul: No, no. They just-- it just kind of happened. We never had anything like this before, so.

The Westville example illustrates how several governmental and nongovernmental entities ended up creating this "Nucleus of Relief" in Westville. Monsignor Paul describes a bottom up process of how random acts of kindness mushroomed into a massive relief effort that ended up serving thousands a day. His

“community for the community” emphasis is the classic bootstrap story that stresses the assertive actions of average white citizens that eventually lead to monumental achievements.

However, by comparing this process and outcome to Eastville, this is as much a story of the emergence of organizational ties and pooling of resources in one area versus another area with equal or arguably greater need. As Monsignor pointed out, the initial crisis capital, which I will discuss in later chapters, of the community was quickly supplemented by the local and federal government once efforts were already on the way. How were they so successful when I had seen and heard similar “initiating actions” by a central local NPO in the “hub” of Eastville and among some smaller churches in Brooklyn that were not as successful?

Monsignor Paul’s account illustrates the creation of organizational social capital. One that begins with individuals within a large NPO, a catholic church in this instance, which eventually attracted the mayor, a large NGO, the Red Cross in this instance, followed by the military. The social capital literature talks extensively about the value of organizational ties brokering the social capital of individuals (Small 2009) but here we actually see how this occurs temporally and how non-managerial individuals can help forge bonds across agencies and organizations. Monsignor Paul also described these emergent bonds as collaborative. This is a departure from other organizations in Eastville and in Brooklyn where leaders of local NPOs describe fragmented disbursement of relief and others even distrustful relations between small NPOs and large NGOs. For example,

in Canarsie a minister of a store front church working in the relief effort describes the organization of relief in Canarsie and Eastville.

Minister Ward: The mayor's office for example, in some areas what they do is bring in military food in the military package and give them out to the people but people have gone for two, three weeks without a hot meal. The Red Cross is not as prevalent as, we thought that Red Cross would have been and the Salvation Army.

Minister Ward's statement lies in stark contrast to the Westville organizational agglomeration narrative. In both instances, both church leaders reference the mayor's office, the Red Cross, and the military as being important actors in disaster response in their respective neighborhoods. However, the key distinction is the kind of neighborhood presence they establish. This contrast reveals the importance of the kind of presence large NGOs establish in neighborhoods. In some locations the Red Cross's only presence was through the visibility of their trucks as they came to drop off items to local organizations. Although media accounts and public outcry of disaster inequality across neighborhoods focus on absence or delayed deployment of organizations, it is not sufficient to assess whether or not organizations are present or disburse resources in communities, but rather whether they are stationed in these communities and to what extent their efforts can be described as collaborative with local entities.

In the case of Westville, Monsignor Paul also pointed out that he did not seek out this collaboration, but that they "added themselves" to the church's ongoing efforts. How did these entities know about the Westville location? A crucial importance was the erection of the tent which served as the Westville warming center. More affluent communities enjoy spatial privilege that communities of disadvantage lack. This church

had a large multipurpose space where the tent could be pitched. Further investigation, including media reports revealed that a wealthy Irish Contractor who had secured large contracts in the rebuilding of ground zero after 9/11 and would later gain contracts in the Rockaway recovery through the Mayor's Rapid Repairs program, erected this tent. This remained a mystery to residents and volunteers. All the residents knew was that Navillus (which turned out to be the reverse of "Sullivan" the last name of the wealthy Irish contractor) just set up the tent and left. Other sources of crisis capital for Westville were Friends of the Rockaways which also coordinated fundraising and relief for the Westville area.

My interview with a volunteer who began working in the Westville warming center only a few days after the storm further explains the cumulative process of how various agencies and organizations came to function within this tent,

Cheryl: So once they set up the tent then the organizations would just-- I was here at the tent on the days that it happened. LIPPA (utility company) would come in and say, "We're here. We can talk to residents. Can we have a table?" And now here I am. Nobody. Just absolutely nobody. Oh, and Monsignor going around and Monsignor will be like, "Well, ask her." and I'm like, "Ask me?" Is it-- ask me, why ask me? And I'm like, "Okay. LIPPA, you can set up there. FEMA, same thing." And we-- FEMA didn't-- FEMA didn't find this tent for a month.

Sancha: How did FEMA finally get to you?

Cheryl: That's the point because then they finally started to see the tent, and they started to put their heads in the tent and say, "Can we come here?" "Of course, you can come here."

Why would a large NGO decide to set up in the "hub" of Westville? In deciding where to set up, representatives of large NGOs would drive around to see where there was already activity. They depend on local input as well. My interview with the field manager of the

Westville NGO that operated in this tent revealed that there were both push and pull factors. These were beyond assessing which areas were hardest hit.

Sancha: Some neighborhoods are visibly destroyed, but some aren't. How do you know where to set up?

NGO Manager: Um, you work really closely with community partners like local volunteers and the city. And our volunteers, we won't-- I mean, we're human too. If we see that there's not a need for it, we'll report it too.

Once the Red Cross set up in a particular location, several smaller less well known NGOs also come into the area. An important aspect of deciding where to set up the base is largely tied to the presence of a “giant” in the business of disaster relief, such as the Red Cross. For smaller organizations looking to gain legitimacy, and future donor funding, working with a large and reputable NGO is an important endeavor. I spoke with a field site manager (who was also a board member) for a smaller NGO working with the large NGO in Westville. Since this smaller organization was from another state, I asked how they decided where they should set up their operations. Her response was “work orders, regional leaders, mapping and work orders from online applications” from their members, leads from the media and where the large NGO had already established. The field site manager, stressed the importance of getting to work with the Red Cross. When I asked if they had pre-existing ties with the Red Cross, she said no, but conveyed that it was a big deal to work with the Red Cross. She stated that they processed “thousands of volunteers” for the Red Cross, and hinted that this would help them with future roles in future disasters.

The kinds of organizational ties formed across organizations differed across neighborhoods. While some NPOs and NGOs talked about collaborative ties with the

Red Cross, other relations were distrustful. One founder of a local NPO in one of the hardest hit areas in Brooklyn talked about having to conceal from the Red Cross the actual numbers of constituents in order to gain adequate resources for their area. Similarly, the Eastville NPO leader thought they were “rationing” supplies and were generally not interested in collaborating with them. Other interviews with volunteers and residents suggested that they were there to “take over,” a claim Red Cross volunteers refuted. For local NPOs, the ability to create collaborative bonds with “anchor” NGOs such as the Red Cross was an important missing link which is crucial to the organizational agglomeration process.

4.3 Canarsie: A Host Model

In Canarsie, the significant local actor was also a Catholic Church headed by Father Francis. Like the Westville church, their efforts ended up serving thousands of residents. However, the process was quite different. The Canarsie model was a Host model of response, where the church simply facilitated the local and federal governmental actors. When I arrived at Father Francis’s Church, there were a host of governmental agencies and programs with representatives stationed at various tables throughout a large space. This area had been converted to a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) by FEMA. There were representatives from Small Business Administration (SBA), Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and others. In a smaller, but separate room, there was a distribution center with cleaning supplies and food supplies. At this location, FEMA was clearly the dominant actor in this space. I seized the opportunity to interview Father Francis about the response building process:

Sancha: Can you tell me who you are and how all this came together?

Father Francis: Father John Francis . . . and it was gratuitous that we happened to have a building here that could be used for FEMA after the disaster occurred, because our school was not rented. And therefore, o-or used as a school. So we were able to invite FEMA here to, uh, our parish, so that the people in the Canarsie area could, uh, have the help that they needed. Because the first few days after the, uh-- for a long time really after the hurricane, Canarsie wasn't even recognized as an area that was flooded. They lost so much, they lost everything. And then we had a meeting here in this, this room.

Sancha: A meeting with who?

Father Francis: A meeting by-- started by, uh, Mr. Perry and Mr. Sampson, the assemblyman and the state senator of the area of New York. And they gathered people here and we-- the first night we had 1,300 people in this room and in the cafeteria, which is on the other side.

Sancha: And what date was that?

Father Francis: I cannot remember the date.

Father Francis: Because I was here about ten days. It was before that. A couple days before that.

Sancha: Before that? Okay.

Father Francis: Yeah just before that, and then FEMA said they would try to open a place here [in Canarsie]. And then I said, "Well you've got the place, use this."

Sancha: So FEMA called you?

Father Francis: They were here. They came but--

Sancha: Oh, they came?

Father Francis: The state senator got everybody together and then they announced there would be a meeting here at this auditorium, because it was the largest place that was free at the moment. And then we-we got it. Then through the politicians and got FEMA, and we got the people together. We were able to get people to recognize that the need is here, and this would be a great place to have... So FEMA and the church provided it, you know. So we were there to be able to serve the community here in Canarsie. So that's how things got together.

In this instance, the response building began as a political process where local politicians were able to make all the necessary connections with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as well as with residents who are their constituents. The church was significant because of the spatial resource it was able to provide both for the gathering and to extend the invitation to later to "host" these governmental entities.

Father Francis: And then it became not only a place for FEMA, but then became a distribution center also--For the longest time it was a large distribution center.

Sancha: And how did that start - the distribution?

Father Francis: Got started through, through three people from, from the area - from Senator Samson's office uh, this woman, Valerie, which I don't know if you've met her. She was here with us just now. And Brandon. Brandon works for Senator Sampson. They volunteered to help, and then we were getting all kinds of things from Facebook and all kinds of things people volunteering. We had one beautiful little thing that happened. We got a big truckload of uh, non-perishable food in boxes from Porterville, Illinois - Catholic parish there.

Although Father Francis stated at the beginning that the response building was “gratuitous,” this process shared some commonalities with the Catholic Church in Westville. They both had access to “free space” which could be used by FEMA and other agencies and both resulted in being a “Nucleus of Relief” in the respective communities. However there are key differences here also. While elected officials such as the mayor and others participated in getting Federal resources to these areas, in Canarsie the elected officials played a major role in initiating and facilitating the partnership between FEMA, the church and residents which led to FEMA setting up a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC). The local government also played a direct role in getting private donations to this location, which was later supplemented by other parishes of the local NPO, the church.

4.4 Brooklyn: A Coalition Model

Yet a third model of relief and response building is the Coalition Model. In contrast to the Westville and Canarsie cases, the Brooklyn relief effort was largely due to pre-existing organizational and political ties among faith-based and non-faith-based organizations. The presence of hundreds of small and large church partnerships with elected officials prior to the disaster was instrumental in this kind of coalition building.

This is due in large part to the flavor of Brooklyn politics. These various organizations had already been working closely with the local government on issues relevant to the community during routine periods. This means that when the disaster hit, these groups and leaders relied on their existing “social capital infrastructure” to respond to the disaster. I illustrate this process through my interview with Reverend Dennis from the United Methodist Church located in Brooklyn in an area that was not affected by the storm.

I attended the second meeting of what would be called the Brooklyn Long-term Recovery nonprofit. This coalition was hosted at the United Methodist Church. In attendance were about 25 organizations and representative agencies and large NGOs. At that meeting the organizations decided that they needed to form a separate 501c3 in order to petition federal funds that would become available in the coming months through FEMA grants. They were all already involved in disaster relief and recovery efforts, but wanted to gain access to federal funds to rebuild Brooklyn. At the close of the meeting I had a chance to interview Reverend Dennis, the pastor of the church hosting that meeting.

Sancha: How did you come together to work on the disaster?

Reverend Dennis: The meeting today, uh, was formed out of volunteers working in disaster response. So it's, it's a broad spectrum of interfaith, interreligious, nonreligious community groups. Just people working in response to the disaster. And trying to mold, uh, an organization, a structure, so that we can respond in a cohesive manner to the, uh, disaster response.

Once more, I was interested in the same basic question of the process of response building.

Sancha: When was the first time that you met as a group?

Reverend Dennis: We met about a month ago for the first time as a group in this place - in terms of the groups working in Brooklyn specifically.

Sancha: Okay. So who initiated getting the group together?

Reverend Dennis: Well, it was through, um, uh, several groups, actually - ourselves, through FEMA, and, uh--

Sancha: Did FEMA contact you or you reached out to them?

Reverend Dennis: Well, it was through, a sort of mutual contact between one of the FEMA VALs - Voluntary Agency Liaison, and myself and also World Care and several others.

Sancha: Okay. So you're saying that these were pre-existing relationships?

Reverend Dennis: Not necessarily so. Although we a part of NYDIS, which is New York Disaster Interfaith Services. And, New York VOAD - Voluntary Aid-- Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. And, um, so there was some pre-existing, uh, relationships, but not in terms of working in Brooklyn-- because we haven't had a pre-existent group. So it, it came out of, uh, just, um, active, activity in the Brooklyn area in response to this storm.

Sancha: Okay, so, um, do you know roughly how many people were at today's meeting?

Reverend Dennis: Probably about 25, thereabouts.

Sancha: And of those, how many of them did you, your organization have a relationship with before the disaster?

Reverend Dennis: Well, in terms-- we've had a relationship with the Red Cross, um, and several of those who have been-- although in, I'd say the, the organization-- when you say, organization, are you talking about--?

Sancha: Just, um, relationships. Just organizational relationships. Knowing them, or having worked on something before with them.

Reverend Dennis: Well, we have, we've had Presbyterian Services and Lutheran, um, the Lutherans and Presbyterians. We've had the Red Cross. We've had several others. So they're about maybe a dozen or so we've had relationships in other places with in terms of the United Methodist Church and UMCOR relating to them in, in various places. Like for example, in response to Katrina, in response to, um, Irene last, last year, and so on. So we've had some pre-existing relationships on different levels in different places. So I will say, this office was formed directly in response to the storm.

Sancha: Right. I hear. I guess what I'm interested in is, how do organizations come together to respond to a specific need, and whether or not these were pre-existing relationships--

Reverend Dennis: Okay, okay—when, and how it unfolded.

Sancha:--and who did the calling--

Reverend Dennis: Well, as I said earlier on, we have a pre-existing committee structure, based on response to disaster. So that was already in existence.

This meant that meetings could be announced through pre-existing listservs. Many of the leaders of these organizations, having worked on other issues and in some cases have also created personal social capital with others in these organizations that they were later able to draw on during response to this particular disaster. The interconnectedness of the politicized community churches in Brooklyn and other “inland” areas also helped facilitate this coalition building. Although elected officials were part of the story, they were not the main actors here. Also, pre-existing rather than new ties were significant in the response building.

The coalition among small and large nonprofits and local government around longstanding issues also proved to be an asset:

Sancha: Okay. And you're saying that you've not had an issue with resources in terms of transportation, getting generators or --?

Reverend: To some extent. Well, of course, we always need more equipment

Sancha: Where did you the resources from?

Reverend Dennis: We have some equipment and resources of our own. Um, one of the ways that we are able to respond fairly quickly and, and, uh, to disasters is through the membership of our church nationally giving. So we have-- UMCOR has a, uh, continuing, uh, appeal for funds for disasters.

Sancha: And about how much have you received just for this local community in terms of what you have?

Reverend Dennis: For this-- well, we haven't-- they haven't specifically, say, said, "Here is \$20,000 for Brooklyn." What happens is it operates through our conference. So immediately a disaster occurs and, and we have a structure through which it-- they-- it, it works, the bishop is able to ask UMCOR instantly for \$10,000. And there is no red tape to go-- they haven't-- you don't have say, "Well, we need for this, or the other." And that's our immediate response as United Methodist Church. Immediate response to a disaster--

Sancha: So you had that? You had the \$10,000?

Reverend Dennis: We have the \$10,000 upfront.

Large churches are a significant part of the story in all three cases. Large churches have a built-in advantage to responding to disasters. First they tend to have several branches dispersed throughout the country. This means that at one point or another, they will have gained experience responding to these events. Since these churches tend to have headquarters or conference funds, this also gives them access to funds quickly. Another significant quality is that if one location has been devastated, many others are not and can help both in terms of manpower and finances. They are also able to attract volunteer members who do not live in devastated areas. Even for their members that are affected, this serves as an “entry point” into the communities to know exactly where the need is.

All three models of response building seen in Westville, Canarsie and the broader Brooklyn area, bore out characteristics of the neighborhood political, institutional and socioeconomic wellbeing. In Westville and Canarsie, having available space through the presence of large Catholic Churches was instrumental in attracting attention and pertinent actors. Westville’s Irish ethnic enclave and connections to affluence led to instituting the tent. Similarly, local organizations already having considerable command of resources pre-disaster helped them mobilize instantly. Although the Broader Brooklyn Coalition had a late start, their political and organizational interconnectedness meant that they could quickly repurpose their ties toward disaster recovery.

4.5 Eastville: Organizational Isolation

In the hub of Eastville, there is not this interconnectedness of small and large churches and the kind of political mobilization that church leaders in Brooklyn tended to show. Many of these leaders in Brooklyn were from the Caribbean and have been

involved in this “social gospel” in responding to the needs of the West Indian community. The fact that the representatives are also from the Caribbean, also helps facilitate some of the expectations that politicians should care about their constituents who are affected by disasters. Although Eastville, has new immigrants, they also live in a neighborhood of concentrated poverty, political disenfranchisement, and very few organizations outside social services serving the needs of the community. Local NPOs are often working on shoe string budgets and operating out of small store front spaces. In short, Eastville lacks the social, spatial, and institutional infrastructure that would enable local NPOs to host, build coalitions, and attract lead NGOs to set up bases in central locations.

In particular areas in Eastville, many of the residents are dubbed the undeserving poor, which includes ex-convicts, drug offenders and addicts, and prostitutes. Not only are they geographically and politically disconnected from the inland, they are hyper-segregated from more affluent areas such as Westville. Therefore their crisis capital does not get supplemented through these models discussed above. Therefore communities like Eastville, do not benefit from organizational agglomeration which would in turn bring in a Nucleus of relief. Albeit they did have engagement with some of these organizations. For example, FEMA applications were located in a grocery store, and Red Cross delivered water and assisted for only short periods but left. NPO volunteers mentioned the Red Cross coming to deliver bottles of water and leaving, coming with a mobile clinic but not handing out any medical supplies, going to community meetings with other local NPOs and the Red Cross being “notoriously absent”.

4.6 Race and Place: Segregated Zones of Care

The socio-spatial and socio-historical cleavages of race and class of Westville and Eastville led to Segregated Zones of Care. Longstanding race and class processes and conditions structured the organization of disaster response by influencing decisions of large NGOs and local NPOs regarding volunteer deployment and relief center placements, and through the racial memories, beliefs and practices of both residents and responders. During my fieldwork on the peninsula, I encountered residents, and responders volunteering with a grassroots nonprofit organization, (henceforth Local NPO), at the heart of the disaster response in the predominantly minority and poor neighborhood, Eastville. Similarly, I met several impacted residents in the predominantly white, high socioeconomic status neighborhood, Westville. A large national nongovernmental organization, (henceforth Large NGO), set up a warming center in both neighborhoods. Several residents of each neighborhood stated that they have historically defined themselves in opposition to the ascribed identities of residents of the other, making distinctions purely along racial and class lines. As 60 year old Italian grassroots organizer of *Local NPO* in Eastville, Vinnie, confirmed:

Sancha: Can you tell me about the race or ethnic make-up and relations in this community?

Vinnie: It's like from 580's and 590's streets down is pretty much people that are on Social Services.

Sancha: And ethnically?

Vinnie: Yes, African American and some Hispanic...then you have from 610 to 611— the area that I'm in— some people are homeowners but a lot of it is displaced . . . just people that are displaced . . . the SRO's [single room occupancies], three-quarter houses and stuff like that . . . so they kinda in the middle. Then from 616th up its lower middleclass to upper middleclass . . . you know? . . . They can afford the Land Rovers you know... but people who live

[here] in this area . . . they're not in the social services muck because they can't even think that far.

Several responders and residents in both Westville and Eastville confirmed these socio-spatial boundaries and hierarchies, Vinnie described. The occurrence of the storm, however was “no respecter of persons” according to Rose, a 63 year old, African-American woman and retired lawyer on disability “so all that I’m better than you and I’ve got this and you have that...that’s gone. Everybody is now on a level playing field. Nobody had anything so suddenly it was not just you without hot water and electricity everybody was without it.” Prior to the storm, Rose lived in Westville, but she was displaced due to the storm, and now occupies her Westville friend’s vacation bungalow which, ironically, is situated on the beach in Eastville. Rose and several other Westville and Eastville residents experienced displacement and dispossession of their homes which forced them to traverse the spatial boundaries of the two neighborhoods to seek refuge. Other mechanisms that contributed to contact between Eastvillers and Westvillers was the flooding of the Westville post office. The consequent rerouting of mail to the Eastville neighborhood forced Westvillers to make a trek that they had not made, in some cases decades, as Iman, a 60 year old white, unemployed Westville resident admitted. However, the most significant desegregating mechanism was the placement of disaster relief centers. Eastvillers trekked to the Westville relief center in search of assistance. Despite disaster-induced desegregation of these neighborhood residents, vestiges of racial and class distinctions survive the storm and in many ways contextualize the cross-race, cross-class social relations among residents and disaster responders within and across

neighborhoods. Reported perceptions, beliefs, and observed practices of both volunteers and residents reaffirm the intersubjective awareness of race and class hierarchy despite similar loss and harm dealt to both neighborhoods.

Responder perceptions of racial and class distinctions within and across devastated communities are significant, because they influence which neighborhoods volunteers choose to, or are deployed to work. Anticipating the racial climate of the community also affects how volunteers perceive and exercise their role as responders. Large NGOs tended to attract white and middleclass out-of-town volunteers and deployed them in neighborhoods with similar demographics. Alternatively, minorities tended to volunteer with local organizations in predominantly minority and poor neighborhoods, particularly their own communities. For example, Sapphire, who was Puerto-Rican and spoke fluent Spanish, continued to volunteer in Eastville because it had a “strong El Salvadorian contingency” that she felt especially obligated “to do advocacy for.” She explains that the Spanish speaking residents who spoke little English were “lost” after the storm. She further explains Eastvillers were “discarded” because of the neighborhood’s extreme level of poverty and reputation for crime.

Another way racialization of space organized disaster response, is through the placement of warming and relief centers which adhered to race and class socio-spatial boundaries both within and between neighborhoods (Charles 2003, Hunter 1974). For example, Large NGO, supported by several other supporting NGOs from out of town, established its distribution center in the hub of Westville. Contrastingly, the only support center in the hub of Eastville was Local NPO, where Sapphire volunteered. There were

no large NGOs in the visibly decayed center of Eastville, which was littered with decrepit nursing homes, boarding houses, and drug rehabilitation outpatient clinics or “halfway houses.” Many Eastville residents were racial minorities, poor whites and recent immigrants. A 56 year old unemployed white Eastville boarding house resident describes other single-room occupancy (SRO) neighbors as “mostly elderly, some are drug addicts, you know some work the streets, they’re retired people, ex workers from the home—they ain’t workin no more”. Although the large NGO later erected a warming center in Eastville, the location was closest to the Westville border and inconveniently located away from where most Eastville residents lived.

The historical geographic distribution of wealth of the communities, which correlated with race and class of residents also affected disaster center placement. For example, the Westville center was conveniently located on 630th street, in the heart of the residential areas of Westville. Westvillers knew this location well and frequently travelled by, as it was the best route to several stores. The location of the Westville center was predominantly third and fourth generation Irish residents, who are at the top of the racial-ethnic hierarchy both in terms of wealth and status. The community church was a catholic church which has historically owned the most real estate and continues to own several buildings, but most importantly vacant land. This is significant because large vacant land space is prime asset during disaster response, since it is a primary factor in locational choices of Large NGOs wanting to set up their distribution centers. Contrastingly, the correlating street in Eastville used to house an immigrant “storefront”

church, sandwiched within a row of retail spaces stacked with second floor apartments, which burned to the ground during the hurricane.

Co-constructed responder narratives that link poverty level and race-class composition of neighborhoods with threats to volunteer safety also influence the service perimeter of out-of-town NGOs. Unaware that I had conducted participant observations in both the Westville Large NGO and Eastville Large NGO centers, a local NPO volunteer in the Eastville support center talked about a warming center in Westville and the racial dynamics that surrounded the erection of the center. She recounts,

“When the Westville center was open, we heard from more than one volunteer that agencies would not provide services beyond a certain point on the peninsula, supposedly for safety concerns...Stories of a death of a volunteer which has never been confirmed in anyway shape or form but was only a folklore. We heard this from volunteers...especially those coming from other parts of the country.”

Referring to the Large NGO's Eastville border location, Sapphire the Eastville Local NPO volunteer explained that a large NGO was told they could not set up in places that is not safe and that the NGO “defined that as right next to the police precinct and that's where they operated.” Several months earlier, upon entering the Eastville warming center, for the first time I greeted the police officer at the entrance. At the time, I thought nothing of the police precinct across the street. However, I did note the oddity of the placement of that center. Although there were housing projects and concrete parks a few blocks down, the immediate vicinity was old abandoned industrial buildings and evacuated apartment buildings undergoing massive storm renovation. I also noted that it was not pedestrian friendly as there were long stretches with no sidewalks and extremely long intervals between bus stops. There were hardly any local residents inside. The

Eastville NGO location served primarily park and recreation workers, police and sanitation workers.

Another mechanism that perpetuated the segregation of the post-disaster communities were the racial and class memories narrated by the residents themselves. An exemplar is Samoa, a 64 year old, Eastviller and Native-American woman who had moved from Dakota several years ago and now illegally stayed in Eastville with her Boyfriend in a single room occupancy (SRO) paid by social services. Sitting at the Westville center where she comes for lunch every other day, she jokes about the Westville residents.

“They are filthy rich I heard . . . in order to live here you have to be filthy rich . . . but look at them (smiles and jerks her chin toward them) . . . you can’t tell they’re rich. They look like you and me.”

Clearly Samoa is associating race position with class location in this context. Where she assumes that since neither of us were white Irish women, neither of us had Westville money. By her use of the pronoun “they”, she also distances herself from the experience of the impact of the storm on Westvillers. She continues to joke wryly that disasters are a consequence of sin and that the “poor” Westvillers had never had the experience of need, something many Eastvillers are all too familiar with.

The residents of Westville I encountered and interviewed were primarily owner occupants of single family homes. Some also owned a vacation home, usually a co-op or bungalow on the beach. Others were landlords, business owners and current and retired civil servants, a historically prestigious occupational class on the peninsula. Up until the hurricane, non-poor Westvillers had enjoyed the trappings of middleclass living as they

had settled into their single family homes and bungalows on the beach which as one resident put it “I believe this is my last stop.” Many residents talked about their daily runs or walks along the beach and the beauty of this natural resource. As a retired school teacher explained her attachment to the ocean, “I came here and got sand in my shoes and I never left.” Their pre-disaster community social capital was evident in their sense of loss of community after the storm. “I want to sit in my local bakery and have my coffee . . . not here in a tent,” a 38 year old white female massage therapist Westviller pouted. They often reminisced about old coffee shops, schools and libraries that were now gone. They were equipped with stories about the community as being one that was strong and resilient.

5. Capital in Crisis

5.1 Network Fragmentation and Resource Depletion

The hurricane significantly compromised, albeit in different ways, the utility of the pre-disaster social capital of both non-poor whites and minority poor I observed and interviewed. Prior to the storm, the social capital of the poor rested in interpersonal connections with friends and they tended to be spatially concentrated within a building or at most a few blocks from these residents. This meant that minority networks were most susceptible to fractures from social ties due to displacement from basements and SROs and due to frequent moves to and from shelters and hotels. On the other hand, non-poor whites' interpersonal networks were geographically dispersed in neighborhoods outside the peninsula and, with most local community-based social capital stemming from their organizational ties. Since most businesses and places of gathering were flooded or destroyed, white network resources quickly became deflated. The white residents who moved out of the neighborhood utilized their social ties outside the devastated areas. However, since most were homeowners, many had to remain to protect their property from looting and further damage. Even those who initially left had to come back and face the reality of their destroyed houses and community.

5.1.1 Minority Poor Residents: Loss of Pre-Disaster Social Capital

Several minority residents I observed, spoke with and indirectly learned of through neighbors, had experienced displacement due to Hurricane Sandy. In Canarsie, prior to the hurricane, many rented and resided in basements. Basement renters were

unable to salvage any of their belongings as their entire living space became completely inundated with a mixture of “toxic ocean water” and “toxic sewage water” up to the ceiling. Residents who occupied basements in Canarsie were overwhelmingly first generation Haitian immigrants. This is yet another way that spatial privilege, in this instance vertical space, aligned with race and class position and location of residents. The Canarsie homes were dual family homes and many owner occupants rented out their basements to supplement their mortgage payments. Many basements were illegal, which meant that they did not furnish leases to rent out these spaces. New immigrants, particularly those without legal documents need not have the necessary documentation needed to rent legal apartments. This meant that the most vulnerable incurred the worst loss and damage.

Alternatively, in Eastville many African American men lived in single room occupancies (SROs). Several of these men, who were placed there as part of their terms of their social services program, lived in “three-quarter houses” or outpatient clinics in the heart of Eastville, were displaced and dislodged from their social connections. Jordan, a six-foot 3 inches, 40 year old outpatient resident worker, talked with me as he dragged out an old soggy mattress of a displaced resident. He explained that, as a clinic worker who resided at the home, he “basically helped residents with their drug addiction and...help with whatever they needed.” When I asked what happened to the former residents as a result of the storm, Jordan answered “some of them are at shelters, at friends’ houses, some are on the train...homeless . . . some of them are homeless!” He also mentioned many came back to seek him immediately after the Hurricane to ask him

for information and advice regarding seeking disaster assistance. He told me he gave them information to apply for various disaster recovery programs. However, on subsequent visits to the field site, I found the building tagged, condemned and vacant. Jordan would no longer be a contact for these men who may have wished to reconnect with him. A former resident, who was now homeless, from a “three quarter home” across the street, told me that many other residents from other buildings in the area were displaced...and relocated to hotels in an entirely different borough. Unknown to him then, several months later he too, would follow.

Another compromise to minorities’ access to their pre-disaster social network resources, was social capital deflation due to the stripping of social resources of social ties. Since poor and minority networks tended to be geographically concentrated within the same building or block, this meant that social ties were equally impacted by the storm and could not provide housing, monetary or food assistance. This stripping of meager resources held by these social ties rendered them unavailable for providing resources. Among the few who had familial ties outside the neighborhood, some mentioned that these presumably close ties were severed even before the storm. For example, Ricky a 50 year old displaced outpatient clinic resident who became homeless because of the storm mentioned that he was estranged from his sister in New Jersey and would not ask for her help. He explained that she had a drug problem and since he had been clean for seven months, he was not “tryin to do that”. Others talked about family rifts that could not be mended despite their predicament. Even for those with friends in other states, the resources of these ties still proved irrelevant several months after the Hurricane. A 63

year old African American woman on disability, who had moved from California but now lived in Eastville explained, “My birthday was Christmas and well-meaning people were actually sending me checks . . . and I says, there’s no bank . . . Where could I possibly put this? They says well, is there a check cashing? . . . I says, dear there’s no electricity (laughs)” Even in cases when poor residents had ties within a reasonable distance, who did not experience flooding, they quickly exhausted the resource-conferring capacity of these ties. As George, a 58 year old unemployed white (Italian) boarding house resident explains why he returned to his SRO despite no heat or electricity,

“Oh yes I been to the shelter. But . . . how long can you stay in a shelter? (spreading his hands, shrugging his shoulders). . I’ve been by my niece three weeks . . . you know she doesn’t want me there no more . . . [shrugging his shoulders indicating that this was also reasonable].”

Several minority and poor residents who stayed by family or friends initially, moved out only to sleep in cars, return to extremely cold, dark rooms, or move from shelter to shelter. Harold and Henrietta, a 69 year old and 73 year old Black married retired couple living on a fixed income explained their multiple displacements and moves induced by the storm. The husband, Harold, who is from Jamaica, explained,

That time, when the hurricane, I wasn't with my wife. My wife said I must come with her [to her daughter’s house]. I said, "No, I'm not coming." So, I went down by my sister and stayed there and then the water started coming in the basement. Then from there, we started to bail the water out and the hurricane start and then when the hurricane passed through, then the water started to dry out. Don't see no more water. Then I went down by my house now. Yes, when I went back, went to my home, first thing I opened the door and I looked in there and I said, "Oh my God. Somebody was in here". The fridge was on the back. The bed was flipped around like that. When I looked in the next room it was full of water. I came home and went to my wife and that was it. Then, without nowhere to sleep we

have to sleep in the van one night and like the gas was bad too. We weren't getting no gas so we go by the gas station in the line and sit in the line till I get gas and by the time I get gas go back home. From home to the hotel, from the hotel back home. From hotel you go back home; from home, we over now. So, it's not really saying, it's not one place. We back and forth, back and forth. It's a good thing I got the truck too like when I tell my wife, "I'm not coming". She say, "Why you not coming?" I say, "No Honey, I'm not coming. You go." and that's the only way I could save that truck from water flowing. When I park it at my sister, look through the windows and see water start to come up. I run out and I move it to the next sister house, that's how I save that van up till now. Still running.

Despite the literature's emphasis on the social support value of kin ties among Black families (Stack 1974), there are also cultural rules about asking for help, regarding when one should ask, what can one legitimately ask for, what should not be asked, and limits as to when one has expended their acceptable amount of support (Hansen 2011). All of these constrain the social capital value of these ties. Studies on social class have also shown that working class individuals, are not as good at asking for help as middleclass (Calarco 2011). In this example, although Harold and Henrietta have extended family on both sides this couple still resorted to sleeping in their van in extremely cold weather, incur multiple "back and forth" trips of up to seven times between their home, family, van, shelter and hotel. Even as I spoke to them that day, they were still contemplating where they would spend the night.

5.1.2 White Non-Poor Residents: Loss of Social Capital

White non-poor networks were equally compromised due to the hurricane, but in different ways. The geographic extensity of many whites networks meant that their social ties were typically outside the neighborhood in other affluent neighborhoods such as in Long Island, New Jersey, and even in Florida, as one co-op maintenance superintendent

explained, as we walked through “gutted out” first-floor apartments of his co-op building. Such hiatuses were an avenue for some to “escape” for a while, but they eventually had to come back and face the devastation. However, those who lived in co-ops were the fortunate ones because they were able to use their social capital outside since they didn’t have to be present to do or to oversee repairs to their homes. However, for the white residents who were stayers, most of them were home owners of single family homes which meant that they were bound to the neighborhood to repair and protect their homes from further damage. This made their out- of-town ties essentially unusable for the purpose of providing shelter. Similarly, the storm also destroyed places of gathering, communication technologies and transportation channels, also making inaccessible the organizational ties of non-poor whites.

Another form of social capital that the more affluent whites had enjoyed prior to the storm was their ability to get favors based on their reputation or status from being members on boards or having a personal connection to a local bank. However the storm created a situation where demands on social ties and elevated transactional risk far exceeded the capacity of social ties to exercise preference. Due to the overload of requests from several residents, favors were not as forthcoming. In fact several landlords and well-to-do residents expressed frustration with not being able to access this form of social capital. Furthermore, the needs of residents were different than what they would have been in routine circumstances. As Bill, a 60 year old white landlord who resides in Westville, but has tenants in Eastville, explained,

Sancha: What was the most stressful?

Bill: Well nobody was really prepared or had any idea of how to deal with all this...it's like everyone in the community all of a sudden had to pump out their basements, try to deal with mold, do demolition, try and . . . try to reach out to plumbers, electricians to put their homes back together again. ...we're all used to getting things immediately! You make a phone call and someone comes out the next day...so that was stressful...

Similarly, an 80 year old business owner whose establishment was directly across a bank he patronized for 30 years expressed his disbelief and frustration that the local bank, which had now partially resumed operations, would not approve his business loan application. He could not accept that he would not get preferential consideration based on his reputation of successfully running his business for 30 years directly across the bank. He was surprised to learn that his credit worthiness would now be objectively be based on the current state of his damaged building and neighborhood. Other white affluent residents enjoyed a more generalized form of social capital, in the form of preferential treatment that hinged not on personal reputation, but on status (Smith 2005). In this situation of crisis when the number of residents who needed favors exceeded the capacity to deliver, it rendered this form of social capital unavailable. The most appropriate social capital after the disaster was church capital. Resident parishioners went to their churches for help and also shared this information with their neighbors. However, since church resources became a public good, these benefits were extended to everyone who was impacted by the storm.

The most vivid example of resistant pre-disaster social capital I observed was between the owner of a damaged business and its patron. I stood in a print shop, interviewing a visibly despondent owner, which wreaked with the smell of backed-up

sewage, with shelves of paper and unrecognizable things that were water-logged, moldy, and damp with debris everywhere. However a resident walked in with a smile, called the owner by his first name and places an order for a print job, pretending like the store was still how it looked before the hurricane. Clearly, this was a gesture of encouragement to the business owner, but not many patrons had that much confidence in their own ability to pay for or use such an order.

5.2 Crisis Capital of Devastated Communities

5.2.1 Crisis Capital: Actualization and Overload

It would not be accurate to say that the pre-disaster community characteristics did not provide a means to social capital that would be available during the disaster. In fact immediately after the storm, long before the out-of-town NGOs came in, organizations and persons within those neighborhoods actualized neighborhood crisis capital. This is not quite the same as accessing pre-existing social capital, but rather actualizing, or setting in motion, the social capital potential of communities. What I mean is, this form of capital was forged among community residents with no personal connections or mutual associational memberships before the disaster. Even after the disaster, unlike traditional social capital, there is no requirement of a specific relationship or tie among actors. However if one were to conceptualize a social tie being formed, it would be between the actualized actor and a class of people such as “neighborhood residents” or specific demographic subpopulations like “elderly”, “poor” and not any particular person or organizational group. In this case, actualized disaster or crisis capital was not directed to any specific person, just a category of residents. The last distinguishing quality of

crisis capital is that once formed, it becomes a public good available to everyone in that class, such as “hurricane victims”.

The source of actualizing crisis capital is usually from residents and persons residing, or who have a direct connection to someone, in the devastated community. Typically this high-resource actor has already gone through the disaster experience his or herself. This type of capital is vital within the first couple days of the disaster even before the official first responders: police, fire and sanitation get to survey the damage. For example, when speaking to a local resident and volunteer in Eastville, I asked about what motivated her to help, or essentially become an “actualized actor.” She explained “even though I was impacted, the only thing was loss of water and loss of light...but I still had a home to go to sleep...And I never thought that when I walked through this door someone would say I need a hand can you help me” provide services for residents. The actualized nature of the capital is that the true resource is “know how” that really was not present prior to the disaster and is really acquired as a result of the disaster experience. Also, the resources from these actualized ties are finite and so the value of this form of capital is inherently unsustainable. Rudy, a 56 year old white male describes that the owner of the grocery store “emerged as leader” and was doing well but then he got tired and frustrated and left. As these actualized ties first became inundated, fatigued and watched their resources deplete, their capacity to assist also faded. Another form of actualized community crisis capital came from former residents who grew up in the neighborhood and only had a sentimental connection to the “memory” of the community, but no personal or associational connections left there. Yet another form of actualized

community social capital was from neighborhood residents who were victims themselves trying to help those whom they think are worse off. For example, one Westville volunteer explained there were residents who began to bake cakes and brought it to the church for the neighborhood in the beginning, until “Monsignor” deemed it unsanitary.

Yet another form of actualized capital is the grassroots community organizing in order to do relief work. This type of capital is therapeutic and well received by residents, but fleeting. For example Rudy, a 56 year old white male describes his connection to a local grass roots organization. “People bonded with Apples Cares people because they gave us food and they took care of us . . . they’re not considered first responders but they were the ones who fed everybody...it’s the energy they gave out that was an impact”. After the out-of-town NGO took over from these local organizations, residents felt the loss. Rudy says that his dog misses them because “she bonded with the people here . . . with Apple cares . . . everybody knows her.” The greatest value of this form of capital stems from the intimate knowledge of the community needs that enable customized assistance to be deployed quickly, particularly to less fortunate and hard to reach demographics. Despite the utility of this form of capital, like other forms of actualized crisis capital, it is often short-lived due to fatigue, overload, and resource depletion, making it unsustainable for the duration of a protracted crisis and recovery, such as after a hurricane.

5.3 Responder Social Capital Potential and Community Distrust

The erosion of pre-disaster physical, financial and social capital of residents and neighborhoods, left both non-poor whites and minority poor in need of disaster assistance. The influx of aid from large NGOs, Local NPOs and FEMA created an opportunity to gain disaster informational and resource assistance. However, in a non-routine context of strangers in make-shift centers in tents, and compromises to distributional and official communication channels meant that residents had to relate and rely on these strangers to access these resources. Both poor and non-poor residents met this challenge with ambivalence due to a conflict of perceptions and necessary actions. The Large NGO set up two warming centers, one in the heart of Westville and the other on the periphery of Eastville (nearest to Westville). Ultimately newcomer volunteers were outsiders. Eastvillers held similar perceptions of volunteers. “You haven’t been out here for the past two and half weeks? It’s a tourist town!” Commented Leroy, a 68 year old poor white (Italian) male boarding house, SRO, resident in an impatient, annoyed tone as he flung his hand in the general direction of the Westville center. As he sat in the balcony of the decrepit boarding house overlooking the sand-covered street and vestiges of the broken boardwalk in the distance, evidence of the unrestrained ocean during the hurricane only two weeks prior. Leroy was expressing a common sentiment that reflected ambivalence toward strangers. Although he expressed annoyance at the notion of a massive influx of strangers, he still visited the warming centers for food. Large NGOs did not collaborate very well with Local NPOs in Eastville, and Eastvillers perceived NGO

responders as out-of-towners who came to “take over” daily operations of local grassroots relief efforts.

As a 30 year old local resident volunteer with Large NGO on the Eastville periphery explained,

The day after the storm when the water receded, we had Apple Cares out . . . but we also had local churches that were also giving a hand. There was no place to place things inside a building. They were just placed on sidewalks . . . or steps of religious organizations. St. Peter’s church was accepting a lot of donations . . . Beach 500, it was a large space before the tent and people just dumped their items here . . . and someone came and thought of putting things in the tent. Now it became organized with donations and distribution in one tent and food in one. With everything being so organized [sarcastic irony], a lot of things people need . . . they’re being placed somewhere else.

Some of the ambivalence toward newcomers also stemmed from the racial and class social distance between the volunteers and most Eastville residents. Many of the volunteers were white . . . As a black female researcher, this was one of the most striking observations about the hundreds of volunteers I encountered in devastated areas both Westville and that NGO location on the Eastville periphery. Many of them were government employees, retirees and college students. Others were middleclass families with religious backgrounds and a tradition of helping others. Since Large NGO’s locations also incorporated a few local volunteers who were Black or from other minority groups, some Westvillers were a little suspicious of their intentions. As one 46 year old white volunteer told me about her experience and observations in the Westville center “volunteers get abused here. They get abused everyday but they come anyway. People question why are you here? Are you making money? You’re not from this neighborhood so why did you even come here? . . . but volunteers just do it anyway.”

5.3.1 Out-of-Town Disaster Responders: Network Detachment

The personal networks of newcomer responders were also compromised due to physical or cognitive displacement. Volunteers, workers and disaster managers all told me what I now call the “48-hour story”. Whether they signed up on-line through an NGO, or were “on call” through their jobs, they all received an email or telephone call informing them they would be in a different city within 48 hours with very little additional instructions. Some slept in cots in an open army barracks, hotels or even a shelter as one told me. Through interviews and informal conversation with several disaster responders, although no one expressed regret and were often very happy that their work had a direct impact in the communities they served, it was evident that they were disconnected from routine life. Unfamiliarity with the environment was common: They had no idea which neighborhood they were deployed to, had very little local knowledge of the streets right outside the tent, nor the flooded zones, or demographics of the wider neighborhood. Any acquired local knowledge of the neighborhood, storm impact, resident life and mental map of the area came from their interactions and conversations with residents who visited the relief centers.

Both newcomer disaster volunteers and residents experienced emotional displacement as a direct or indirect consequence of the disaster, albeit on different scales. Many volunteers talked about “feeling displaced” as they were away from the familiarity and comfort of home, and placed in an environment that looked and felt like a “warzone,” with visible marks of devastation to the infrastructure and faces of passersby. Some had made the difficult decision to stay for another cycle, which meant that they would be

spending the holidays away from family. Furthermore, since these centers also operated on generators, hardly anyone, except field site managers, used their phones (once this became an option), further crystalizing their isolation. This meant that the main source of interactions for the volunteers were with the residents they encountered. As a 46 year old former resident and volunteer assisting in the Westville warming center recounted her experience immediately after the storm,

Remember there is no internet, there is no cell phone...you don't know what's within a 10-block radius...It became all so apparent how we are so dependent on internet and cell phones...people don't know there was help 10 blocks away...you had no way of knowing.

This scenario presented a situation where both residents and volunteers benefited from interaction.

5.4 Social Capital Creation: Non-Poor Whites' Strategies

In the Large NGO tent in Westville, there were distinct differences in the way that the poor and minorities and non-poor whites related with others in the warming centers. Whites employed strategic projects that resulted in forging strong affective bonds with newcomer volunteers and site managers. Middle class whites employed symbolic boundary-making narratives (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, Lamont 1992) that set the criteria for claims-making and resident deservingness and un-deservingness of disaster assistance. They also recognized the social capital potential of the make-shift centers and repurposed the tents for creating social capital with responders as well as other Westville residents. As one middle class resident revealed, “The key to this is the tent . . .that’s where people get their information . . . information is the key to it . . . it’s where you found out what you needed to know, where you got the latest information from.” These methods proved to be particularly effective for learning about non-official, time-sensitive information requiring immediate action.

5.4.1 Becoming Regulars

One of the projects that Westvillers engaged in was becoming regulars in the warming tents. Becoming a regular meant coming to the tent every day, even several times a day, engaging in small talk, laughter, and exchanging of personal stories. It involved learning the names of volunteers and ensuring that volunteers knew theirs and using conversational cues like “see you tomorrow” as they were leaving. Westville residents had essentially converted the space of the Westville center to a street corner café with regulars who knew the “waiters” and “waitresses” by their first names, and

disaster responders who knew what their residents were “ordering” today. Of course there was no money exchanged, but it had the ambiance an old diner full of patrons. At times when I sat to interview residents one, usually male, would perform a hand gesture toward the food, insisting I get something to eat, as if he were saying put it on my tab! She’s my guest. I had qualms about eating because although I was there during the daylight hours I knew I had the option of riding the bus back over the bay and ground myself back into my reality of routine life, where I could order at a real restaurant or even cook if I was not too exhausted. I know this was public space, but at times the lines got blurred.

5.4.2 Enlisting as Volunteers

Another middleclass project was becoming volunteer citizens, essentially erasing the boundaries between residents and volunteers. In Westville, being a volunteer conveyed a status of moral importance, which gave one access and clearance. This project took on several forms including adopting and repeating the “we’re rebuilding” mantra as residents did their daily runs between their private homes and the warming center. Volunteer citizens’ “enlistment” as volunteers sometimes involved formally registering and being processed as volunteers, and receiving a badge revealing their affiliation with a Large NGO. In other cases Westvillers skipped this formality, but it was understood as they zoomed in and out of volunteer designated spaces and developed rapport with out-of town responders, like one would expect among co-workers. After repeated visits to the field site, which included canvassing the neighboring blocks in the devastated area, I would occasionally encounter some volunteer citizens and engage them in informal talk. I quickly realized that residents who had “enlisted” as volunteers, were

local residents working on their own homes. It wasn't that they were working to rebuild or clean public or community property or even the neighbor's house or yard. They were cleaning up the debris from their private property or in some cases had come from out of town to help a family member, but had only assumed the identity of volunteer citizens. By assuming this identity, they were able to work more closely with disaster responders. More importantly, they became known on a first-name basis by site managers as well. Two white college students in their 20's serving food from food trucks which the mayor had ordered to provide the volunteers and Westville residents with warm meals, also confirmed this ambiguity when they said to me that they "really can't tell the difference between the residents and the volunteers. They all look the same...they are all rebuilding the neighborhood" and that they were just happy to serve them.

5.4.3 Symbolic Boundary-Making Narratives of Deserving

Besides bonding projects, middleclass and working class White Westville residents engaged in boundary-making narratives around symbolic categories of deserving and undeserving residents. After the Hurricane and several weeks later, Westvillers were wearing coats from the distribution centers, as many of their clothes were destroyed by flood waters. It was three weeks after the storm, and there was no water, heat or electricity. Residents could not take showers. People looked disheveled and were unconcerned about grooming. It did not matter because everyone looked like they looked. That is, everyone except those who lived above the first floor of high rises, many of whom were public housing residents. While these high-rise residents and renters, suffered flooding up to the first floor of their buildings, effectively trapping them in cold

and pitch black apartments, with no hot or running water— since water heaters and boilers were flooded and corroded by saltwater— their clothes were not destroyed. Although they were legitimate victims of the storm, their appearance looked more presentable than homeowners who suffered similar levels of flooding of their one or two-level single family homes. Ironically this, at least aesthetically, flipped the hierarchy where African Americans and Hispanics were at the top and white Irish men and women at the bottom. Carl, a 45-year old white male Westville resident, was recounting a scene outside the Westville center, where he thought some individuals were receiving assistance they were not entitled to:

People who weren't involved were taking clothes . . . which they really shouldn't be doing . . . taking away from the people here . . . [or] for Eastville who needed it. People were coming in all dressed nicely. They weren't in this. People who were in this didn't have showers for days, we know who they are . . . people driving up taking water taking food that didn't belong to them . . . that was allowed to happen

I heard a similar narrative, on a bus ride from Eastville heading toward Westville from a white working class male in his 60's who was informally occasionally employed as a mechanic. At first I thought he was from Eastville, but once he started talking I recognized that familiar narrative. He confirmed my suspicion that this narrative was an early form of social closure when he said he was from Westville and patronizes the Westville center and had only gone to Eastville to retrieve mail.

Sancha: How did you find out about the Westville center?

Iman: When I was looking for socks at a dispatching center between Eastville and Westville. They told me "We got centers at 13 blocks down in Eastville or 16 blocks in Westville . . . I walked 9 blocks from my apartment to the Westville center and 9 blocks back

Sancha: Did you interact with other residents there?

Iman: Yes . . . and a few cheats who came back from Brooklyn and Queens who parked their cars somewhere else . . . That's when they institute the rule that you had to show ID that you were from Rockaway.

Sancha: How did you know where they came from?

Iman: (Pause)

Sancha: How did you know who came from the neighborhood and who didn't?

Iman: Basically because most of the people from rockaway were dirty . . . come on . . . How do you take a shower? How do you clean yourself up very well with no heat no hot water and some people didn't even have running water. The Rockaway residents . . . and no offense . . . because I was one of them . . . were DIRTY (emph) even several weeks after the storm. These people were perfectly clean. Like they had taken a bath that morning . . . looked clean like they had taken a bath that morning . . . Obviously you're not from Rockaway . . . How do you get to take a bath when 90% of Rockaway don't have heat, don't have water?

Sancha: Anything else?

Iman: So they started instituting that . . . after that everyone who came to the center had to show something valid

Sancha: Any other differences from the people that made them stand out . . . The people from outside . . .

Iman: some of them took carts but the carts were clean too... Your cart is dirty! 'cause you can't clean that all the time . . . you're clean and you have a clean cart?

Neither Carl, nor Iman ever mentioned race as an important factor in categorizing who they thought belonged and who did not, and by extension who was entitled to lay claim to assistance and who was not. Interestingly, after getting more details of the timing I realized I had witnessed first-hand some of the events they were describing on an earlier trip. In fact I had even interviewed a few of the potential perpetrators in these narratives. It was a fairly distinct day, because it was the first day I had ever noticed this many Black residents in one location in Westville, since my fieldwork began. There were at least 50 men and women, mostly women, standing in line outside the church near the Westville warming center where Carl would be talking to me on a subsequent trip. After speaking to some of the residents, it was clear that most were from Eastville. Among those I spoke briefly to were, West Indians, Haitians, Mexicans and African Americans (Campbell

1990). They had heard that the Westville church would be handing out food and basic supplies. Some had heard from their neighbors and others from co-workers. Some had borrowed cars or gotten rides since they had lost their cars to the flood waters. What was most remarkable was that they were only now hearing about this location although it had been open for some time. These predominantly minority and poor working class first generation immigrant Eastvillers were there getting supplies because the stores were all destroyed and their perishable food had spoiled due to lack of electricity.

Despite the avoidance of race-specific language (Bonilla-Silva 2006), which may be an artifact of my own minority status, the most obvious distinction between these two white male residents and these residents was the fact that by and large, they were poor black and Hispanic residents. These boundary-making and counterintuitive symbolic narratives around “the clean” and “the dirty” reflect the early stages of exclusion through practices of social closure (Coleman 1990), and opportunity hoarding. Carl and Iman was drawing a symbolic distinction (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, Lamont 1992) between those they considered to be deserving neighborhood residents (Campbell 1990) who bore the visible markers of loss and devastation and those who did not. Based on Iman’s account that these events led to requirements of showing identification or proof of address, suggests that these boundary-making projects had real consequences for residents who would not be able to furnish these, such as precarious basement dwellers, ex-offenders, and undocumented immigrants who typically do not have these documents. A 47 year old, white female who began volunteering in the Westville tent from its inception indirectly confirmed Iman’s assertion, as an issue when she said that

“Monsignor”, the priest who oversaw the volunteer activities warned volunteers, “You don’t say, ‘you don’t live below this street so you don’t come here.

5.5. Crisis Capital Access: Racial Minorities and the Poor

Unlike non-poor whites, minorities and the poor did not engage in social capital creating projects and narratives. They neither recognized, nor capitalized on the social capital potential of the newcomer responders and the tents. Consequently, they did not benefit from this valuable avenue for gaining non-official information to get ahead in the recovery process, as their white counterparts did. Inside large NGO centers in both Westville and Eastville, minorities related with newcomer responders minimally and mostly in a formal fashion. While this facilitated their access to official information and supplies for immediate survival, this type of assistance had little consequence for long-term recovery. Comparatively, my direct observations of minority and poor residents, in some cases the same residents, in Eastville Local NPOs and surrounding areas, revealed that minorities informally related with both local and out-of town disaster responders. These observations strongly suggest that minorities and the poor's lack of interaction in large NGO centers, was not because they were cultural isolates.

Both minority and white poor Eastvillers verbally expressed and demonstrated preference toward Local NPO responders over Out-of-town NGOs'. The bonds between Eastvillers and Local NPO responders were therapeutic and exhibited strong loyalty and trust. Although non-poor whites of Westville and minorities of Eastville were similarly ambivalent toward strangers, they pursued different strategies to access post-disaster capital. While non-poor whites sought to create new social capital, poor minorities simply benefited from actualized crisis capital. In the case of actualized crisis capital, members of vulnerable populations do not need to purposefully try to create bonds, because the

bond is created by the actualized tie. Minorities and poor are automatically grandfathered into this relationship simply because they belong to a known vulnerable population.

However, while actualized crisis capital is optimal for yielding quick unsolicited emergency or survival assistance to minorities and the poor, the fleeting nature of this capital makes it unsustainable for long-term recovery

5.5.1 Maintaining Visitor Status in Tents

Minorities who came to the Westville area, largely remained outside where the supplies were visibly stored. The few minorities who ventured into the tents, walked past the information table, and approached the tables where volunteers served them plates of food. They also sat at the tables furthest away from the traffic near serving tables. They did not interact with other residents and their verbal interactions with responders did not exceed responses to questions about what sides they wanted on their plates and if they've gotten a coat. Their engagement in the tent was basically "pack and go" as they often left immediately after eating. Even for the few who stayed for several hours, there was still little or no interaction with other residents and volunteers.

The Westville warming center was essentially a dining hall for whites, where Eastville minorities engaged in a "pack and go" fashion. The few Eastvillers who ventured in either sat by themselves at tables as they ate, and left only after an hour or so. One black male, Ricky, and his white fiancée was the exception. He was a 60-year old man who had lived in a halfway house in Eastville, where all his personal belongings were flood damaged. He and his fiancée, who was pregnant at the time, would come to the Westville warming center and stay there all day, huddled together at the table at the

center of the room. They did not interact with others, but they did spend long hours there... This couple was an anomaly in many respects. First, they were an interracial couple in a place where many residents confessed as being a white, predominantly Irish zone. Several residents confirmed that Irish Whites of this area enjoyed the highest status and class position. The couple were also not homeowners. In fact, now they were homeless.

I spoke with Bob, one of the mental health professionals in Westville, a 60 year-old white male with an academic position from out of state, who volunteered with a large NGO as a mental health consultant for residents. He had mentioned that part of what he did was to initiate conversation with residents in order to determine if they needed mental health services. I later also had an opportunity to observe his interactions after we spoke... While Bob invited himself to sit next to various residents and talk to them informally, he did not approach Ricky although he would have been the perfect candidate for such services since he had endured chronic stress due to poverty, substance abuse, recent storm-induced homelessness and having to endure numerous bureaucratic hurdles in order to find permanent housing. Ricky later told me that he would just “snap” at people for no reason—something he thought occurred more since the storm. In an environment buzzing with “small talk” no one engaged the Ricky in conversation.

Even more so, racial minorities who lived in public housing projects near Eastville Large NGO by and large completely disengaged by not utilizing the tent at all. The atmosphere in the Eastville warming center was different from that of Westville, despite similar structure and management. On my first visit I noticed there were only a

few people, all of whom I approached for interviews. There were only a few residents among the people I interviewed and these were state employees who worked with the parks and recreation department, and other state departments working on the disaster recovery efforts. Besides those who were directly employed or subcontracted by the city, the few who came in periodically, only came to get supplies and left immediately. For example, Portia an Africa American, 23 year old public housing resident with a toddler who came to get food, only browsed through a stack of children's books at the back of the tent, and was about to leave, had I not approached her for an interview. I asked the Large NGO newcomer volunteers, whom I also interviewed, whether the demographics and slow pace in that center was the norm and they all said yes. Then I finally approached a woman named Merissa, who was both a volunteer and a local public housing resident, also impacted by the storm.

Merissa, an African-American public housing resident and unemployed, self-confessed "Jack of all trades" in her 30's, agreed to an extensive informant interview since she was the only local volunteer at the Eastville large NGO location, whose tenure began even before the first responders and large NGOs came in. When I inquired about the notable absence of residents, she explained that ever since the Large NGO took over from the local grassroots organization, the residents stopped coming. Merissa recounts,

Merissa: Large NGO has a permit but basically the local community ran it all before . . . Large NGO came in about late November [four weeks after the storm] . . . most of it was [food] hubs in the trucks . . . Local persons were running the tent.

Sancha: What difference did you observe with the transition?

Merissa: Well when people came here it was a place of warming . . . just knowing there was someone around, especially someone that was from the community . . .

that was lending a hand to them despite the trauma they went through. It heal what they might have been going through . . . because they had someone from the community that they were familiar with to give them a hand, feed them and . . . give them supplies . . . things that they needed as well as having some form of ther. . . mental consultation . . . people to talk to so tis basically inspite of what they had lost, they had somewhere to come to and they felt comfort coming to this location

Sancha: It looks pretty empty

Merissa: Yes it's pretty empty. We have been going through a lot of changes . . . who is supposed to take charge . . . the main thing's . . . It boils down . . . is bringing back the communities together and having them come back to where they felt warmth. So it's not just that the tent was warm . . . They felt warm in heart.

Since I was also curious about what the state of race relations was in the tent on a typical day before the NGO "took over" I informally asked,

Sancha: Racially. . . who comes in? I went to the other location and there were not many minorities . . . mainly Irish

Merissa: There are people of many nations coming into this tent. . . Rockaways is interracial

Sancha: Do the residents interact?

Merissa: Well those that have (hesitant pause) . . . Here everyone is interacting because we have the interracial. We have some from Upper-Westside Westville that may come down (hesitant pause). . . I can only talk about those from Eastville. . . They come in and they interact.

The hesitation and dissonance in Merissa's response when she speaks of residents outside of Eastville, reveals that she was uncomfortable with vouching for Upper-Westside Westvillers who came in. Contrastingly she emphatically vouches for the sociality of the "interracial" population in that part of the peninsula. She further explains that there is no distinction between poor whites and poor minorities and poor immigrants in that part of Eastville and that everyone got along.

5.5.2 Poor and Minority Preference for Altruistic Localism

Several observations of interactions and interviews with Eastvillers confirm Merissa's suggestion that residents had a preference for local responders and the

“warmth” they provided. While minorities and poor residents failed to establish informal and close social bonds with Westville NGOs, newcomer responders and Westville residents, there was a stark contrast with how they related with both local and out-of town responders of grassroots NPOs. Observing the loyalty these Eastvillers, verbally expressed and behaviorally demonstrated toward local grassroots relief organizations and the quality of relations between these volunteers and residents, reveal that Eastville minorities and poor residents were not cultural isolates, as a singular site analysis may have prematurely suggested. Eastvillers had a preference for localism and they were better able to actualize crisis capital instead of creating new social capital with newcomers. Sapphire a 30 year old Puerto Rican Local NPO responder shares her unsolicited help-providing experience, to an Eastville family, despite their many barriers to help-seeking:

Sapphire: There’s a big family from El Salvador. Three of the sisters lived here...two sisters who lived there with children [pointing to a vacant lot]...had to run out of their homes in the flood to escape the fire . . . There was 17 people living in a one bedroom home. You know? . . . we’re talking about very un-acclulturated El Salvadorian immigrants doing . . . day laborers, informal workers that have had very little access to education . . . barely speak the language . . . in terms of knowing what aid was available for them. . . who they can trust . . . who they can reach out to . . . what services they were eligible for. And solving the most basic problems became twice or three times more complicated for them than anyone else because of lack of access to language, cultural aspects and just because they lost everything...with the family dealing with loss.

Sancha: How did they hear about you?

Sapphire: They came to Local NPO from the first day asking for donations. I took it upon myself to be that person to work with them since I was one of the few volunteers who was here who spoke Spanish...so I ended up meeting all these families...The first day we provided them with clothes, blankets, flashlights but eventually medical services. At one point everyone in the family was sick . . . we were able to bring in a doctor to evaluate everyone in the home and provided antibiotics to a couple of them. We also eventually . . . now that they are finally in

the 4th month, they have new apartments to move into, we try to get them furniture and beds . . . you know we've helped them out and with FEMA applications and their appeals.

5.5.3 Unsolicited Assistance and Reciprocal Loyalty

Similar to the relationship between Large NGO responders and non-poor white Westvillers, Local NPO responders and Eastvillers also had strong bonds between them. The crucial difference was that Local responders already felt and expressed these deep connections to residents in the absence of sharing personal stories. The rather intimate knowledge about class of residents and the unique issues associated with any individual in that status pre-empted the need to employ bonding strategies. Local NPOs demonstrate strong commitment to the community beyond the disaster as they are aware of the chronic problems with the community residents. This means that residents can automatically benefit from actualized ties, without explicitly making a case for one's needs. The affect extended to these residents are then reciprocated through loyalty and trust. This loyalty is similar to the loyalty one would expect of a patron to his or her barber or hairstylist. You walk in, sit down and he or she knows what you need without explanation. Because volunteers from Local NPOs knew not just the neighborhood demographics, but the uniqueness of the problems residents faced, including vulnerabilities with legal liabilities, so well that residents were able to bypass the labor of claims-making narratives and did not have to engage in projects to create bonds. They only needed to reciprocate this affect, through loyal reliance on these actualized ties.

My conversations with several other Eastvillers on street corners and near the Local NPO location confirmed that Eastville residents patronized relief centers partially

because of the uninitiated affective bonds Local responders made accessible to them. Eastvillers valued the disaster work of locals over those of newcomers. A follow-up interview on a revisit to Eastville with a 46 year old poor phenotypically white resident who identifies as a Native American descendent, when asked “Who has reached out to you and helped you?” Answered “most certainly all churches have stepped in, Local NPO is another group, the Occupy Sandy people have helped feed us . . . and uh . . . get us assistance and uh Large NGO has showed up . . . maybe 5 or 6 days after the storm they were here”. Eric mentions local NPO and others as helping and the Large NGO as merely showing up and late. Interestingly while sucking deeply on a cigarette and shivering from the bitter cold and harsh breeze that blew in from the ocean, during a previous interview on an earlier trip a few months before, he had stated, “There is a warming center down by the Westville Catholic church . . . from the first night people have brought in clothes. See? [Pinching his jacket] I’m wearing a nice warm Jacket [smiles].” However, months later, standing inside the warm local NPO center with broom in hand, he demonstrates his loyalty and reciprocal commitment to Local NPO stating “I’m here trying to sweep up for Local NPO and helping out and giving a little bit of my time. . . Local NPO is one of the first groups that came and fed us. . . gave us hot meals so it is a way to return that favor”. He immediately follows this expression with “Vinnie is a great person. . . he’s done a lot of stuff in the community” revealing the broader community context he is using to evaluate the Local NPOs worthiness of his patronizing. Although both non-poor whites and poor Eastvillers associate their disaster “work” with disaster assistance, the logic in this instance is reversed. Non-poor whites’ “volunteer

citizen” bonding strategies anticipates a later generally defined, assistance. However in this scenario, Eric does not need to labor in order to forge affective ties, but simply benefits from actualized social ties. He then later uses work to repay the benefit he has already received.

Eastville residents did not need to declare to their Local NPO responders their needs or their worthiness of receiving assistance. When I asked a local NPO “Have you talked to people about their experiences?” She replied “Yes I have..,” but quickly interrupted herself “We had problems before Sandy came”, revealing that her real awareness and understanding of needs does not come from solicitation, but from her own local knowledge of persistent issues. She then gave an example of one such problem. “Senior services people could not get . . . elevators did not work . . . one building has 11 floors.” By exercising agency on behalf of her neighborhood residents Merissa states, “I had raised the issue about sending people over for the senior citizens. There was responses . . . people were going to each door knocking on the door from top to bottom...I believe it was Apple Cares.” I asked, “You suggested that to them because you knew?” She answered, “Yes I knew of the situation...Then the media put pressure on things...”

This type of unsolicited assistance from local responders reveal their intimate knowledge of the community, the vulnerable populations, structures and the specific type of vulnerability residents would be experiencing. Their ability to empathize partially stems from similar experiences before and during the disaster. They are also uniquely positioned to work collaboratively with other Local NPOs creating a more synergistic

response. In this context where there is no asymmetry of information regarding the needs of minorities and the poor, there is no need to creatively network to establish ties and no need to explicitly solicit assistance.

6. Disaster Logic and Social Classes

The disaster literature is replete with theories of inequality, ranging from overt discrimination to poor coordination of response. However, my observations and interviews with federal, State, and NGO field managers and volunteers in both Brooklyn and The Rockaways revealed a context-resistant logic in the discourse and practices of disaster responders that I have coined “*Victims over Poor*” Disaster Logic and the *Middle-Class Bootstrap Bias*.

6.1 “*Victims over Poor*” Disaster Logic

One of the notable ways that the poor are displaced during disasters is through institutional policies and practices of disaster response agencies and responders that prioritize disaster-induced resource scarcity over longstanding or chronic resource deprivation. Meyer and Rowan (1997:341) also argue that organizations as formalized institutions “reflect the myths of their institutional environments” which are raced and classed. I draw on observations and interviews with field managers across five disconnected sites and illustrate with excerpts of interviews this tendency in practice and expectations of responders. I observed this *Victims over Poor* disaster logic across two FEMA centers, one NGO distribution center, an NYC restoration center, and a community meeting among NPOs responding to the disaster. *Victims over Poor* Disaster Logic essentially reoriented definitions of need and deservingness to include anyone who was impacted by the storm. This tendency conflated chronically poor residents with residents who had only become “temporarily” poor as a result of the storm. Since words like “survivor” “disaster victims” or “impacted residents” are used regularly in

discussions about disasters this amounts to a linguistic displacement of “the poor” from the lingo of disaster response. However, this displacement is more than just semantics. Claims-making for securing disaster aid, is also about proving one’s loss as a consequence of the disaster event.

Where are the poor during disaster? What are their needs? Well the answer is that they are still poor and they continue to have the same needs in addition to what the disaster introduced. Kai Erickson (1976) coined this distinction in his study of the Buffalo Creek flood, when he observed differences between acute and chronic trauma. I argue in this chapter that devastated communities transform into a machinery of “help-providing” that reorganizes the institutional environment to cater to a new class of “deserving poor” which is justified around the notion that disaster victims are really the ones who are at the bottom after an acute crisis. I was often amazed at the assumptions of the prior socioeconomic standing of “disaster survivors” or “victims” among the most well-meaning disaster responders.

I illustrate this *Victims over Poor* Disaster Logic in the following conversation with Reverend Dennis:

Reverend Dennis: The main object of the long term recovery group is not to make people better off than they were before the storm, but to bring back people to some stability, where they were before the storm.

Sancha: But when you think about people in the neighborhood who were already in bad shape before the storm, what are the alternatives for them if you're not going to be putting them in better shape?

Reverend Dennis: That is a question that case management has to deal with.

Sancha: Case management. So tell me more.

Reverend Dennis: In fact, the case management will be able to help, help them assess their circumstances. See what their needs are, and see where the resources to bring them back to a better position than they were before the storm, can be.

For example, they might be able to direct them to social services or to other services that can help them move from where they were before the storm to a better place.

In another conversation, with a psychological counselor of a large responding NGO, a similar view was expressed:

Mr. Harris: It's important to remember that we are a disaster relief operation. So we're not necessarily here to provide psychotherapeutic or longer term counseling services. We are here to assist people in overcoming and dealing with the immediate crisis. So that they can marshal their resources - both the personal and community in order to allow *their own personal resilience* to kick in.

These two statements illustrate what I heard constantly in speaking with local NPO volunteers and traditionally poor residents, i.e. the needs of the most chronically vulnerable subpopulations is not the business of disaster relief and recovery, but rather other social service agencies. Reverend Dennis's statement, for example, that they are not seeking to put people in a better position, was repeatedly echoed at the meeting among other local NPOs with hardly any rebuttal. In both cases assumptions about residents' personal or social resources or "resiliency" were signaled as the natural expectation for disaster survivors. The imaginary "disaster victim" is one that is at the very least non-poor. Also, in both statements above, these disaster responders suggest that they are not providing the kind of help that would benefit those who are lacking pre-disaster resources and that this is simply neither the mission of "long term recovery" nor that of shorter-term "relief" organizations.

Other interviews also revealed that the only real assistance disaster response organizations can give is in the way of referrals. A characteristic feature of response is a revolving door experience of persons going to state agencies. There is a constant referral

system, where one goes in to see one state agency represented at a table, only to be sent to another table, and another. Each successive table is closer to the exit door. For those who do not find relief from either of these, they make it to the exit door and unto the streets with unmet needs and visibly frustrated. This experience was more common for minorities and the poor.

6.2 Middle Class Boot-Strap Bias

Another mechanism that displaces the poor is the *Middle Class Bootstrap Bias* of responders evidenced in my conversations with FEMA staff, and state field site managers across Eastville, Westville, and Canarsie. Several studies have shown that institutional expectations tend to align with middleclass ideals or “cultural capital” in the form of in ways that they don’t with that of the working class (Calarco 2011). These responders tended to promote a morality of individualism in their expectations of residents’ behaviors and their assumptions related to pulling oneself up by his or own bootstrap. I saw and heard examples of this in the way responders spoke favorably about residents that they thought were being “proactive”. Contrastingly it was also apparent in their preference for assumptions about residents’ lack of initiative as explanations of unfavorable outcomes. In some cases these appeared to be personal ideals among responders, but often these were also weaved into institutional practice independent of personal ideals.

Through my interviews with residents who were at the lowest rung of the socioeconomic ladder, it became apparent that poorer and newer immigrants and minorities who were of low socioeconomic standing and lacked higher education

experience, tended to hear about programs a lot later than white middleclass residents in an affluent neighborhood. Many times the former were just hearing about a program that white residents in the more affluent neighborhood had talked to me about several weeks before. In some cases, they were learning of these from me. The FEMA manager, at one of the locations mentioned that initially Haitians were not well represented in the earlier flows of resident applications coming to the center, but more recently a lot more had come. He attributed the recent increase to word of mouth among other Haitian immigrants to others, that being part of a mixed immigration status household would not negatively affect their applications. This was plausible given that we know that information tends to diffuse in networks and also within ethnic groups.

Alternatively in speaking with an employee under his supervision, who staffed one of the service desks that residents interfaced with, she explained her work process of mold remediation as a need blind, color blind approach to support provision:

Sancha: Can you just tell me a little bit about your experience here in terms of what you noticed about the community, the people who came and the types of issues that you've had to help with?

Ms. Beverly: I talk about mold issues and insurance and how to stop the mold in its track. That was initially. Then as it progresses it got to people who did some work and then didn't do anything or they did. It just got overwhelming. . . Now what am getting is people—it's been two weeks—who have not done anything—the basement or anything at all, have not [removed] the sheet rock, have not kept up with the mold.

Sancha: What sense do you get about these people? Any differences that you discern between those and those who came earlier?

Ms. Beverly: No. Well the ones that came earlier are a lot more *proactive*. You know, they knew they had a problem. They knew they needed to register with FEMA. They knew they needed to get some funding. Hopefully some help from us and they knew that they were going to have a problem because of the type of flood water this was. It was pretty nasty water. So they knew that. The type I'm getting now [are not]

Sancha: So you think that reflects probably socioeconomic status, education level or any of--?

Ms. Beverly: I'm not saying that. But then you know I don't see that. I don't see any of that in people and I don't recognize it and I don't ask it. So I don't see-- I couldn't tell you

Sancha: Oh so once they come to you--

Ms. Beverly: They come to me just clean. I have no information about them. When you register with FEMA over here (pointing to the first intake table) they take information. I don't have any access to that. Know all of our computers have different securities. Hum so I'm just dealing with them one on one.

Sancha: Okay.

Ms. Beverly. . . . The ones that are coming in now just seemed to be um *too relaxed*. They're not as worried about the health issues, *as they should be*.

Sancha: So from what I've encountered from the different people that I've spoken to, I've started to see a pattern among people who are probably with less education probably, they're just not aware [of the dangers of mold]. They just know it's an annoyance, but they're not aware that it's a health risk.

Ms. Beverly: See, I don't know that because I don't, like I said, I just talk one on one to the person. I just listen to what their dilemma is and then try to walk them through that. You know I never ask them what they do for a living or you know.

In this instance, Ms. Beverly recognized residents who came in earlier as being “proactive” and those who came in later as being “too relaxed” and not as worried as “they should be.” Another favorable description of the early birds I heard from a FEMA field site manager at a different location was “first you get the needy, then you get the greedy.” Ms. Beverly’s explanation, unlike that of her supervisor who happened to be a member of the same ethnoracial group, Black Haitians, did not take into account the possibility that those coming in later were probably just learning of the presence of the Disaster Relief Center or their eligibility and how their social standing may have influenced their access to relevant information in a timely manner. In fact she continued to reiterate that she was blind to socioeconomic, educational or any differences. The people who came to her were “clean” so she dealt with everyone in very much the same

way taking into account only the needs that were induced by the disaster and nothing else. However what she described does not simply reflect her own personal preferences. These are also consistent with institutional operations, protocol, and technologies that organize and compartmentalize, effectively stripping residents of their social vulnerabilities that are essential to their particular experience of trauma and deprivation. Although FEMA collected some of this information, it was not made accessible across the different stations that residents encountered. I confirmed this by asking the workers at the various stations. At each table a resident came up to, he or she became a clean slate and nothing more than a disaster victim. On its face this seems admirably equal, but race scholars have argued that “color blindness” or class blindness as is the case here, actually have the opposite effect (Bonilla-Silva 1997). These promote inequality even as they sound neutral.

6.3 Primacy of the Built Environment

Another mechanism of *Middle-Class Bias* and *Victims over Poor* disaster logic, was the progressive steering of services toward the needs of homeowners and the simultaneous scaling back of services for low-income and nonworking poor residents. During disaster response, there is great emphasis on the built environment. Therefore catering to the repair needs of homeowners is paramount to the operations of disaster centers. This was evident in my interview with the field site manager of the New York State-run disaster center. Ms Caroline, the NYS field site manager says,

Ms Caroline: Rapid Repairs (the State-subsidized home repair program) was one of our highest service areas - you know one of the service areas with the highest numbers because, you know, a lot of residential owners experienced damage.

Right now that is the big piece that's going around this agency and this operation is making sure that landlords can connect to contractors and get their rapid repairs to deal with some of the issues like boilers and, you know, and mold, basement damage. That's a major thing.

When I asked if data was collected and used to target the needs of residents, Ms Caroline, NYS Field Manager, responded with a similar logic to Ms. Beverly, the FEMA rep discussed above:

Ms Caroline: There's no targeting at this point, um, not through this operation. This operation is we are here, and we are manned, and we try to have every service that we think would support someone who needs disaster assistance. There's city, state, federal, and community organizations that are here, and, um, our central office is in contact with us daily to find out what kinds of trends we're seeing, what types of services are we, are we seeing. There's been a change in the, uh, the types of services that were placed here, because there was no real need for them, you know, beforehand. Well, for a point, NYCHA (New York City Housing Authority which oversees public housing). They were here just for a short while, but no one was really utilizing their services.

When asked how they determined the needs of community, she responded,

Ms Caroline: The need you know based on the numbers because we're growing numbers every day and based on the activity with them. So they know we're here. You know, so there is agencies that, we didn't really need them here. And so as, as we report on numbers, the central office would make decisions on, that service is not really needed. And if there was a service that was needed, then they would bring that agency in.

Here she does mention that she reports to her superiors who scale back or add services based on what she thinks is needed or not, which she and they base on “numbers.” While the seemingly bottom up approach to collecting data and providing services seems like good practice, it was not clear to me how “demand” for services that cater to the poor was necessarily a reflection of a lack of need out in the community. The

unstated, but problematic underlying assumption was that everyone had access to information about the services offered and are equally able to make it to these centers.

Other programmatic biases towards assumptions of middleclass status was the routine divergence of Canarsie residents to the SBA loans station. This practice reflects the assumption that residents want to have access to this low interest loan, but most homeowners I spoke to, who were either of working class backgrounds, retired and near the end of their mortgage commitments, could not fathom taking on a loan that they would have to pay back. Upon coming to the DRC homeowners in the Canarsie area, who were either retired or minimally employed, were often deferred to apply for an SBA loan. I would later find out that this funneling to SBA after a rejection of one's FEMA application was just procedure and that those who went through the process, only to get a denial from SBA could then return to FEMA with their denial confirmation and use this as a basis for their appeal. The residents I spoke to who had received a denial, and diverted to SBA were adamant that they would not apply for a loan, completely unaware of this SBA-FEMA connection. This meant that this practice only served as a deterrent to completing a successful FEMA application for these Black homeowners of dual family homes.

Another example of a middle class bias woven into the program implementation was toward formal employment. Self-employed residents did not get compensated for their tools of the trade such as a DJ's soundtracks or a mechanic's tools, because the application did not provide a means to categorize these correctly. Another bias was through the insurance adjusters who audited damage and loss of residents' belongings. A

common complaint from low-income basement residents was that their belongings did not receive the correct valuation. Many felt that adjusters who were of a different race and of more means made subjective judgments about the value of their belongings and what they ought to be able to make do without. This mismatch in race and class of responders and residents led to subjectivities that potentially obscure the assessments of residents' circumstances. One example of this cultural mismatch can be seen in the comments of a middleclass FEMA representative regarding basement apartments, a common feature of New York City living, particularly among the working class and new immigrants.

Ms. Beverly: The sad part is here that most people are living in basements and basements are not what the government ever consider what a person should be living in. I mean I don't know because I'm not from New York but it seems that everybody rents a basement out so many of them are illegal to rent out. Um, I mean, I don't know why people live in basements. It's like kind of dark down there but they do and they are very content. They have huge apartments in these basements. I know I always thought these were like a small basement. There are big homes down there. So it's very different. It's very different. Each disaster each state is so different.

This statement illustrates Ms. Beverly's sympathy for the residents, but it also reflects her middle-class cultural bias as well. In talking to her she told me that she is from a different state and based on the neighborhood and zip code she provided, she lived in a middleclass neighborhood where there are only single family homes and people don't live in basements. It's therefore hard to relate to residents who live in basements. Similarly, many of the adjusters who were assessing residents' loss were from other states and often white.

6.4 Ricky's Story: The Anatomy of Chronic Poverty in Acute Disasters

Below are excerpts of interview transcripts with Ricky, a 50 year old SRO (Single Room Occupancy) resident enrolled in a drug rehabilitation drug program in Eastville before Sandy. Although my interview with him took place in Eastville only a few days after he gets displaced from his dwelling, follow up interviews with him took place at a warming center in Westville where I encountered him again, and several months later through a telephone follow up after he gets transferred to a Brooklyn motel by FEMA. The irony is that this is essential transitional housing, which he loses as a result of the storm, becomes homeless and spends much of his time going to the warming center in Westville to keep warm, going to his social services counsellors and caseworkers, and interfacing with FEMA, and finally ends up in transitional housing again.

His story, retained in it dialogue form is a perfect illustration of how chronic crises become enmeshed with acute crisis during a disaster event and how taxing it is on the urban poor. Although he is in contact with FEMA immediately after the storm, his social location presents several obstacles to receiving resources in a timely manner. Finally his story ends with the irony with which it began—He gets placed in transitional housing, which is where he began. Through his own words he talks about the cycle of poverty, his frustration and lack of trust in “the system” which he sees is really not designed to really find a permanent solution such as permanent housing for him and others like him. His story also shows how ill-equipped disaster response is in dealing with persons caught in cyclical resource deprivation and displacement.

An Encounter in Eastville

Sancha: So how were you affected by the storm?

Ricky: I was living over here.

Sancha: Which one? The blue building?

Pre-disaster Transitional Housing:

Ricky: That white building over there. That's a three-quarter house. You know, water damage, everything got done--to it. So I lost clothes. I lost stereos, everything. So yeah, I'm really affected by it. And I'm still looking for, you know, placement. Because every time, you know, I try to go, you know, to FEMA Hotel, they don't have none. And I'm, and I'm really stressed out about this, you know-- And, um, I'm walking the streets, and I don't like to do that. That's not me. That's not me.

Sancha: And you lived in that house

Ricky: That's where I used to live at.

Sancha: Okay, describe what type of housing it is.

Ricky: It's a three-quarter house, I guess, for like people that have drug problems, you know trying to get their life together. And that-- that's what I was doing, you know. I'm still doing it. So I'm doing outpatient for all that. I'm not going to give this up. Because, you know-- actually, I'm tired.

Sancha: So when you-- you say you tried to get help from them. When you go, do you call them?

Storm-Induced Homelessness:

Ricky: Yeah, we call. I call and there's no hotels open, right now. And, you know, some of the shelters are full. So me and my girlfriend, we walks the street, you know? And I don't-- that's-- I don't like doing that. I mean, I feel bad. I'm the man, and I can't-- I don't like to see her out here with me. And that really, that really stresses me out.

Sancha: They're saying that all the shelters are full?

Ricky: When I call, they say they're full and whatnot. So you know, I just deal with it right now.

Sancha: They told me that FEMA actually was out here. Did you actually see anybody--?

Ricky: Yeah, yeah.

Sancha: --from FEMA?

First Encounter with FEMA:

Ricky: They-- yeah, I seen-- I did the application. They came to the house. They seen everything that was damaged and what not--to my room and all that. And I qualified for just about everything.

Sancha: Okay good

Ricky: So right now, I'm waiting on--

Sancha: And how long is the wait? Did they tell you?

Ricky: Uh, probably about seven to ten days--- about five to ten days for the money or whatever - replacement money. It ain't gone be much, but it's something to get me on my feet. You know?

Sancha: Right. And then, during that time, they didn't say what else you can do?

Ricky: Eh, no.

Sancha: It's just waiting?

Ricky: Yeah. And how long did it take for FEMA to actually come out here? It took them like-- it took them-- they came out quick, I mean like three days, four days. Yeah, three days. It took them-- they came

Sancha: But it's just the process of having to wait for them--?

Ricky: So in the meantime, you see what I'm doing. I'm helping--Helping. --to keep the money in my pocket, you know? Other than that, I'm good.

Sancha: Do you know any other residents who were displaced as well, and they're looking for a place to –

Ricky: Well my girlfriend, she's on the next block. She's a white woman. You can talk to her. Tell her

Ricky sent you. Her, her, her-- I call her my wife (smiles). Just tell her that her husband sent you (smiles).

Two Months later in Westville: Continued Homelessness

Sancha: you had told me the last time you were living in the, the building where we were nearby.

Ricky: Yeah.

Sancha: What happened since then because you were waiting on FEMA...?

Permanent Housing and Mail Access Assumptions:

Ricky: FEMA did give me a run around. They haven't sent me my check. I mean they sent it to the address, but it went back. So what I gave was-- I changed the address to a drop program with my outpatient program. And they said they sent it and it was supposed to be there. I went there today to find out from accounts. Say I need additional hold on the thing. He said, "If you can do it like that, it's only one time, because it's like an emergency." They allowed my mail to come in. Right now I have nowhere to live. Okay, you know. I'm not ashamed to say it, you know, 'cause I'm still waiting on this money. This way, I can get me an apartment, right along with my fiancée.

Acute and Chronic Trauma Combine:

Ricky: This way, we won't have to be out here in this cold. I'm not proud of what I'm doing, you know. She's out here with me, and, and that makes me feel small, and she's pregnant.

Sancha: Oh no

Ricky: That-- that makes me feel like this, (holds thumb and index finger together indicating "small") you know. I don't like that. I'm still going through the bad

experience, you know. I've had some time-- sometimes I have attitudes, you know. She say something to me, I snap. Maybe I don't mean--

Sancha: Is that happening more after the storm?

Ricky: Yeah, more after the storm. It's just-- I don't know how to deal with this. I ain't never went through these storms before. Where I'm from in New Jersey, we don't have this type of stuff.

Sancha: Right.

Ricky: This was a shock and a surprise to me. I didn't even think it was really going to happen like it did, but it happened.

Sancha All right. Did you get to see the storm happen?

Ricky: I was out-- I was out in the storm. Me, me and my fiancée was out in the storm

Sancha: With the water?

Ricky: Yeah, watched the water come right past us, you know, and--

Sancha: Do you remember that a lot?

Ricky: It's still on my mind, yeah. Next day you wake up, you find everything destroyed. Tables floating down the street uh, people's homes destroyed. Hot dogs floating down the street. I mean people were actually picking those hot dogs up and eating them, and going like, "Oh yeah." Even though it was in a bag, I wouldn't even mess with them.

Credit Access and Identification Assumptions:

Sancha: So you told me you were not sure where you were going to be able to stay after. Did you find a place to stay?

Ricky: Well, FEMA they do the hotel. Okay, they set you up with a hotel.

Ricky: Any hotel. FEMA hotel they've got a deal with FEMA. You can-- I mean you can-- they can tell you they're gonna pay for the room and taxes. But what they don't tell you that when you get to the hotel, you have to pay a deposit out of your pocket. They don't tell you this. So you get there without the deposit, they not going to let you stay in the hotel, regardless if FEMA is paying the money-- you know to stay in the room. And I, just in case you wanted to use the bar, or the snack bar, or the phone, or something was wrong with the room, they keep that money. But, you know, you use nothing they give you that money back. Being that I don't have a credit card like she does (points to girlfriend), or I have a picture ID, but my picture ID is coming from my benefits, like from HRA.

Sancha: You don't have a driver's license or uh--

Ricky: No, none of that.

Sancha:--state id?

Ricky: No, I don't have none of that.

Communication Access Assumptions:

Sancha: And you still haven't heard from FEMA yet?

Ricky: No, I haven't heard from them yet on that yet, but eventually it's going to come. So I've got--

Sancha: And you're calling them via phone?

Ricky: No. Right now I have a free phone, but I haven't got any more minutes. So when I do get this, I'm planning on getting a unlimited phone, so I don't have to worry about running down the minutes. If FEMA was here now, I would go talk to them, see what's going on. I'm good right now (self-talk).

Sancha: Okay.

Ricky: I'm dealing with it (self-talk)

Disaster Response and Social Services Needs Collide

Sancha: So right now you're still at the FEMA hotel. How long can you stay there?

Ricky: Huh?

Sancha: How long can you stay at the hotel?

Ricky: Maybe through January 13th or 14th.

Sancha: And by then, they'll give you something more permanent?

Ricky: They'll give me an extension. They'll keep giving me extensions until I-- well when I get the money, [inaudible] it's called transitional housing-- I'm still going to be able to take that money and go find an apartment. That's what I plan on doing. I'm not planning on going and blowing it on nothing else. I've got to get out of the cold, you know. I can't stand this cold.

Ricky: Like I said, after, you know, after, the alcoholism departments will, you know, drug, alcoholism, supposed-- --to help you get your, help you with an apartment, you know, find housing. But, sometimes they do and they don't.

Sancha: Mm-hmm.

Ricky: But, after you graduate from these programs--

Sancha: so after the 30 days what happens?

Ricky: Um, after the 30 days, if you don't have nowhere to go, they'll give you-- refer you to a shelter like Bellevue Shelter which I think is really crazy, because the fact is these counselors down here supposed to be helping with this. We're supposed to be able to have an apartment by then. HRN will pay for this until you get on your feet but they just do what they want to do sometimes. They're like VNS. Visiting Nursing Service. Now they're real good people. They stand for who they say they are. They don't leave you out in the cold. I had them at one time.

Sancha: What happens with a lot of people who don't get permanent housing after the 30 days?

Ricky: They hit the streets.

Sancha: And then you think they go back to - -?

Ricky: They go back to what was doing-- using again.

Sancha: Okay.

Ricky: Because they can't deal with it but you think they was getting help from these people. These people let them down and they ain't got nothing else to worry. They say, "Bump it. Hey, I'm going back to doing what I'm doing" just to repeat the cycle of all over again. You go back out here, and you go back to detox. Go back to these houses or they just keep on moving saying, "It's no use to going back to these places." I'm can't-- I've never been to that point, but you know...

Ricky: If you're going to help, if you say you're going to do, be real for what you're going to do. Okay? You going-- you're saying you're going to help these people, you say, "Look, I'll try to get you, you know, permanent housing by trying to graduate," make sure that you help these people get these people get these permanent houses.

Ricky: You know? Don't wait till they graduate, then after they come out the house, they got 30 days to leave the house, and then they got nowhere to go but to go on the streets and then they go back to using again. So that's why I sometimes I believe in the system, and sometimes I don't. That's how I am. It's out of my control.

The Elusive Nature of Permanent Housing:

Sancha: Do you think this storm is going to help you speed up the process with helping you get permanent housing, or--?

Ricky: Um I can't say. Maybe, maybe not.

Ricky: If I have to do the footwork on my own, I ain't got no problem with it but the money, if my FEMA come, I'm banking then see what I can find underneath that - in that new - that range, 27 hundred. I mean, they expect me to find a property with that type of money and expect to keep it? Come on, that's one month's rent. That's more-- that's one month's rent. What you supposed to do after that, go back to the streets? I don't know but in the meantime I'll find something, even if it's a basement apartment to start out. I don't care. We'll find something even if it's a basement apartment, I don't mind. I'll start out small and work my way up. Yeah it's only 27 hundred dollars

Sancha: And you have to figure out how to pay the rest of it?

Right, right. Even FEMA say well, if you send in the rent receipt to them, they'll pay it but I don't believe that. You're a fool. You ain't going to make me believe that. Come on. You can pay my rent until I get on my feet? Come on, uh-uh it's hard for me to believe that.

When I last contacted Ricky, several month later, he still had not found permanent housing. He was transferred along with several other men to a motel in Brooklyn.

7. Summary and Conclusion

The question of the racial minorities and the urban poor's network resource disadvantage has been an enduring question among social capital and stratification scholars (Smith 2005, Royster 2003, Fernandez and Fernandez-Mateo 2006). Interestingly, more recent studies suggest that despite greater reliance of racial minorities and the poor on social connections to improve life chances (Desmond 2012 Sarkisian and Gerstel 2004; Stack 1974), they lag behind non-poor whites in reaping the instrumental benefits of social capital (Lin 2000, McDonald, Lin and Ao 2009). Scholars of social capital inequality explain that urban poor minorities belong to "deficient networks", "wrong networks" or are simply excluded from lucrative "white networks" (Smith 2005, Royster 2003, Fernandez and Fernandez-Mateo 2006). For example, a recent study by Sandra Smith (2005) provides evidence for expecting that poor occupational outcomes of urban poor Blacks, are symptomatic of a lack of trust from other black social ties which encumber job-finding assistance within minority networks (Smith 2005). Deidre Royster's analysis of interracial networks within an academic institution, suggest that even in instances where working class blacks and whites share a mutual lucrative social tie, selectivity in internship referrals yield unequal opportunity for socioeconomic mobility. While such studies are theoretically instructive of race-class inequalities in activation and mobilization of social capital within or across social groups, they tell us little about whether and how race and class relational inequalities in a multiracial neighborhood context (Campbell 1990), negatively impact the relative capacity of minorities and the poor to first create social capital (Small 2009b).

The primary focus on mature networks in routine life events that is characteristic of studies on race-class inequalities in social capital, lead to the acknowledged, yet insufficiently explored premise of unequal access to social capital across members of race and class groups. Failure to examine potential inequalities in the creation of social capital leads to the premature conclusion that a failure to activate or mobilize presumably accessed social capital explain the diminished returns to social capital among the urban poor.

The immediate aftermath of a natural disaster presents a natural experiment to understand how racialization and class reproducing mechanisms influence the creation of new social capital by observing social relations and resource or information diffusion among hurricane survivors and disaster responders. Through a qualitative comparison of organizational, resident and responder relations in three neighborhoods differing on race and socioeconomic characteristics, this dissertation also analyzed how multiple organizing mechanisms of neighborhoods combine with disaster response to influence social relations of racial minorities and whites of various socioeconomic backgrounds in this newly desegregated context. This is accomplished by examining the intervening mechanisms throughout the entire process of social capital, from creation to activation to mobilization.

Consequently I argue that, particularly in multiracial socioeconomically diverse settings, a combination of social, cultural and material privileges and constraints that routinely maintain one's relative race position and class location in urban neighborhoods, limit the relative capacity of minorities and the poor to create new social capital during

periods of crisis. Even in cases of similar proximity and frequent interactions with high resource actors, one cannot assume social relations of members of subordinate groups will solidify into social capital yielding ties as they do for those of superordinate groups. This relative disadvantage in pre-network or “networking” relations in racially and socioeconomically desegregated spaces has theoretical implications for how we study social capital inequality and how we interpret lower returns to social capital among minorities and the poor. These findings also have social implications for how we assess the fitness of desegregated spaces or neighborhoods for the urban poor, particularly in situations lead to scarce resources.

This dissertation research clarifies whether the urban poor actually create social capital as do their white non-poor counterparts. The findings suggest that disasters block access to traditional sources of social capital of both blacks and whites, by disrupting communication and transportation; displacing residents away from kin and friends; and by destroying physical resources of proximate kin, friends, and organizations which typically provide routine assistance in the absence of disaster. However the consequent racial and class organization of disaster response creates relational disadvantages for minorities and the poor, which in turn, constrains their relative access to long-term disaster information and assistance, compared to their white non-poor neighbors.

The fact that in absence of spatial segregation, whites still demonstrate a greater capacity to turn frequent relations into social capital ties than do their minority and poor neighbors, potentially explain why despite greater reliance on social connections, racial minorities lag behind whites in reaping the instrumental benefits of social capital.

Interestingly, despite more presumably favorable conditions, minorities and the poor did not produce social capital. The fact that the social interactions of non-poor white residents quickly solidified into strong affective bonds with disaster responders and, consistent with social capital theory, led to informal exchange of non-official information, point to an important mechanism of class reproduction during disasters, social capital creation privilege. While minorities seemed on the surface to be cultural isolates, this was not the case because they did interact with both out-of-town and local responders in Local NPOs particularly, within poorer neighborhoods. They socialized with other residents on street corners within their poor neighborhoods. Additionally, the apparent inability of minorities and the poor to forge social capital yielding ties with newcomers is inconsistent with the closeness they exhibited with both local and out-of-town volunteers of local NPOs. The key difference here is that in this instance minorities and the poor do not have to engage in the labor that whites engaged in to create new ties. Minorities simply benefited from already actualized crisis capital extended to the class of individuals of known vulnerability. The strength and altruism flowing from actualized social ties are not and need not be initiated by minorities and the poor. The drawback from relying of crisis capital is that it is unsustainable due to fatigue and resource depletion.

The unfortunate consequence of this differential capacity of whites to create social capital-yielding ties ultimately has consequences for how minorities and the poor fare, relative to their non-poor white neighbors after such catastrophic events. In the context of finite resources, advantages like getting at the top of the home repair waitlists

also have a direct consequence on minorities' access to public resources. These findings have implications for how we understand and theorize social capital disadvantage of subordinate social groups (Lin 2000). The findings also help explain the social reproduction of urban poverty in periods of crisis and resource scarcity. Considering the relative interactional disadvantages minorities experience in relating with others in the competitive environment of a newly desegregated context, also throws into question the benefit of white middleclass neighborhoods for minorities and the poor, when public goods are also coveted by more affluent residents. Finally the findings point to the need for responders of urban disasters, to not merely improve coordination that gets disaster aid within close to proximity to minorities yet offer little to offset emergent race and class interactional or "networking" advantages of white non-poor residents over minority poor neighbors.

Appendix A: Initial Interview Instrument and Topics

In-depth Interview Guide

Storm-Impacted Residents

- How were you impacted by the storm?
- How did you know about Red Cross/FEMA or any other group?
- How far do you live from here? How did you get here? How often do you come?
- Did you have any problems with getting to the location?
- Is there anyone you know or knows you by name in warming center?
- Do you talk with the volunteers? What do you talk about? Do the volunteers talk with others?
- Have you or anyone you know gotten help, advice or emotional support from the volunteers?
- Is this a comfortable space for you?
- In situations of natural disasters, we want to make sure everyone regardless of race, immigrant status etc. get the same help. Did you think any of these things affected you getting help?
- Do you think people from other neighborhoods had a better or worse experience getting help?
- Are you worried about long-term help? Did you see/feel that people were more helpful to each other than normal? Do you think race or immigrant status affected who helped who?
- Have you noticed groups that don't usually get along cooperate or share information or supplies?
- Do you think in society some people get more attention/help than others in general? If so, who is at the top/middle/bottom in terms of attention in general? Are things different or similar in this neighborhood?
- Now after the storm, who is at the top/middle/bottom? Why do you think so?
- Have you seen or heard anything that made you think so or do you just have a hunch about that?
- As I try to understand people's experience with finding help is there anything I have not asked?

Demographic, Spatial and Housing Characteristics

- Are you currently unemployed? What job do you do? What is the highest level of education? (HS, Some College, College Degree)? How many children who usually live in your home? What are their ages? To help me know what neighborhood you live in what are the cross-streets? Zip codes? What is your housing type? (Apartment, Single Room Occupancy, Private House, Public Housing) What floor do you occupy? (Basement, first, second) Do you rent or own?

Connections to U.S. and metropolitan area

- Migration is a big part of New York's History. In your family who migrated? (Me, Parent, Grandparent) What country? Year?
- Under what category did you/they migrate? (Farm Worker, Nurse, Teacher, Student, Other)
- Are you a Spouse or Child of a U.S. Citizen? What is your closest family link to a U.S. citizen?

Connections and attachment to devastated community

- How many years have you lived in this community? At this address? In NYC?
- Will you stay/leave area? Current dwelling? Why/why not?
- In community, how many close friends do you have? Close relatives? Neighbors you talk to?

Subjective valuation of storm-related loss (sentimental and economic)

- What hurt you the most when you realized it was gone? Tell me about the items you lost
- How was the basement used? Residence/Storage/Recreation?
- If you could place a dollar amount about how much would you say?

Displacement Experience and support

- Did anyone in the building have to leave? Y/N, Who? How many children/Adults?
- Where did you/they go? (Neighbor, relative, close friend, Hotel, Shelter, Other)
- Did you/they relocate? (another town/on same street/ Other state)
- (Why) Did you/they return? Did you (also) evacuate before the storm? Why?

Support Receipt and Racial and Class Characteristics of Activated Social Ties

- Has anyone reached out to offer financial, Emotional Support, or give Information about disaster relief or recovery?
- Specifically what help did they provide and how helpful was it? Did you first ask for this help?
- Was it someone you have known for a while or someone you met through the storm?
- Do you find the volunteers, workers managers helpful? In what way?
- How do you know this person/s? What are the personal characteristics of the person/persons? (race, gender, occupation, lives in or out of neighborhood?)

Adapted Position Generator: Racial and Class Heterogeneity of Social Network

Do you know anyone who is a _____ (Listed Profession)? Is this person is a Relative, Close Friend, Church member, Neighbor? NYC Resident, Female, New Immigrants, Black/Hispanic

Professions: Nurse, Writer, Farmer, Lawyer, Middle School Teacher, FT babysitter, Janitor, Company Personnel, CEO of a big Company, Policeman, Hairdresser, Book Keeper, Security, Production Manager, Operator, Congressman, Taxi Driver, Hotel Bell Boy, Admin Assistant in a large Company, A receptionist, A computer Programmer

Disaster Relief Volunteers and Staff

- Who comes in to the center? What are they coming for?
- What part of the city/neighborhoods people are coming from?
- What discussions if any have you had with residents?
- Are you typically approached? Or do you start the conversation?
- Do you know who comes in regularly? Are they homeowners or renters?
- What topics do you discuss with regulars?
- Do you talk with non-regulars too? What do you talk about?
- What did you learn about their experience?
- What information have you shared in the past few days?
- Who are you likely to share this information with? Why?
- Have you been able to serve everyone who comes in for help?
- What type of help do you provide?
- Do people request services or resources you cannot provide? Were they referred elsewhere?
- What do people need to do to receive help?
- Do different people want different kinds of help?
- What demographic groups are most represented from those coming in?
- Which ones seem most/least comfortable?

Community Leaders and Local Distribution site managers

- What are the events, special circumstances that led to the establishment of this site here?
- Who are the important actors and decision makers in the process?
- What changes in general coordination or service have you had to do? Why?

Appendix B: Research Ethics

Risks and Benefits

There are no risks associated with this study. Informed consent indicates participant's awareness that their identity image and name will be captured by video and can be viewed by others. The benefits of this study is that this research can be used to improve access to lifesaving resources to the participant's community and potentially spread awareness of potential problems specific to these communities' needs.

Confidentiality

Participants will provide their names, addresses and contact information for the purpose of follow-up. Their images and words will also be captured through video recording. The neighborhood block and zip code will also be recorded for the purpose of determining other socioeconomic characteristics of residents. The participants will have the choice of whether they want their names, images or just their voices to be captured and presented as evidence in presentations or writing of the results of this research project. Once data is collected, video will be edited based on preferences of participants, omitting any identify information they did not want disclosed. The raw unedited version will be stored on a password secure hard drive and destroyed within two years of data collection. For participants who opted to be audio taped in lieu of video, the audio files will be treated the same. To the extent the researcher is able to obtain funding for transcription the files stripped of identifying data as requested by participants will be transcribed by a company that offers such a service to researchers. The results will be disseminated as an abridged edited video as evidentiary quotes in scholarly articles and

writings which includes dissertation chapters, and presented in academic conferences. A policy report and video will also be disseminated to relevant agencies that respond to natural disasters. Volunteer Consent forms now state Disaster Relief & Recovery Volunteer/Staff Consent form to reflect the range of parties who were actually part of the relief and recovery efforts.

Compensation

Subjects will not be compensated for their participation in the study.

Informed Consent

I will take steps to ensure that persons invited to participate knows that participation is not contingent on receiving any type of aid. I will also ensure that I orally state this through the consent process even in the event participant shows willingness. I will give participants the option of contacting me by providing contact information and asking me not to show their image, use their name, voice or even the entire video clip as evidence in my research. I will also ask all participants to indicate on record that they are aware that they do not have to participate if they do not want to.

Deception

This Research contains no deception.

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Biography

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