
ORGANIZATIONS AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Community Disaster Recovery

Moving from Vulnerability
to Resilience



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Caleb Cage reviews
Deserai Crow and Elizabeth
Albright, *Community Disaster
Recovery: Moving from
Vulnerability to Resilience*

By Caleb Cage

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The term “resilience” has been a part of disaster research and disaster management practice for decades, with scholars and practitioners alike seeking ways to define, empirically study, and apply the concept for just as long. *Community Disaster Recovery: Moving from Vulnerability to Resilience* by Dr. Deserai A. Crow and Dr. Elizabeth A. Albright takes an affirmative step forward in both respects, by applying literature from the field of Public Policy to consider disasters, vulnerability, and resilience, while also providing community leaders with tools to evaluate and improve their own resilience as well. *Community Disaster Recovery* is built on a seminal public policy process work by John Kingdon, especially as his concepts were refined by Thomas Birkland in his books *After Disasters* and *Lessons of Disaster*. Birkland showed how disasters influence federal policy agendas and can be evaluated by how much learning is indicated through the policy processes that follow disasters. Crow and Albright build upon Birkland’s work from the local perspective by examining case studies of local response and recovery efforts of seven Colorado counties following major flooding in 2013. Through these case studies, they further show the strong connection between disasters and policymaking by showing how organizational learning can facilitate the development of community resilience, and by providing critical characteristics that contributed to resilient communities in their studies. In addition to these critical characteristics, Crow and Albright also provide specific recommendations for local administrators and emergency managers interested in building local resilience in the face of a changing climate. By producing this important study, Crow and Albright accomplish something that scholars have seldom achieved in the history of disaster studies: they have provided both valuable practical recommendations for local disaster leaders, and also fresh theoretical and empirical research on the subject of resilience.

About the Author

Caleb S. Cage served as the Chief of the Nevada Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Advisor to the Governor from 2015 to 2019. He is a graduate of the Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the Naval Postgraduate School and is currently pursuing a PhD in Political Science from the University of Nevada, Reno. His latest book is *War Narratives: Shaping Beliefs, Blurring Truths in the Middle East*. He can be reached at caleb.cage@gmail.com.

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