

CALL FOR PAPERS

STRUCTURING RESILIENCE

December 2nd and 3rd, 2011

Emory University School of Law, Atlanta, Georgia

This workshop is the most recent in a series examining the political and theoretical possibilities inherent in thinking about justice and state responsibility in terms of human “vulnerability.” It builds upon earlier sessions expanding our understandings of vulnerability as a constant part of the human condition that is universal, even as it may be experienced in particular and uneven ways.

“Resilience” is found in the access we have to the institutional, economic, material and other resources that give us the ability to respond to uncertainty, as well as the misfortunes and opportunities that present themselves in our lives. If vulnerability is generated and/or exacerbated by the unpredictability and asymmetrical access to resources that structure so much of our lives, then resilience, not invulnerability, is appropriately theorized as the opposite of vulnerability.

In this session we hope to explore the institutional and political conditions necessary to generate resilience, as well as the state’s role in structuring those institutions and conditions. We are also interested in how institutional and individual modes and understanding of resilience vary. Is resilience merely an ability to persevere through hardship or is it an essential strength that is a positive and desirable individual and institutional asset in of itself? How can we understand the relationships between resilience, the state and institutions that provide education, social welfare, employment and training, healthcare, legal regulations, government stability, environmental policy, family structure, and cultural recognition? Some vulnerability scholarship has identified five components of resilience - physical, human, social, ecological, environmental, and existential. How are the institutions that provide these assets structured and what norms or standards should guide those institutions? We also invite respondents to think through and beyond these categories.

Specific areas of further inquiry might include the ability or inability to structure resilience in or through: economic and employment relationships; transitional and post-conflict regimes; social welfare and regulatory processes; socioeconomic relations and transnational capitalism; public health programs; the state and/or civil society relations; and law and policy.

WORKSHOP CONTACTS:

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SUBMISSIONS PROCEDURE:

Please email a paper proposal by Monday, September 19th to Emily Hlavaty, FLT Program Coordinator:
emily.hlavaty@emory.edu

**Various resources on vulnerability and resilience can be found on the VCH Initiative website at:
web.gs.emory.edu/vulnerability/resources/Publications.html

**Decisions will be made by September 28th and working paper drafts will be due November 14th so they can be distributed prior to the Workshop.

WORKSHOP DETAILS:

The Workshop begins Friday at 4PM in room 575 of Emory Law School, followed by dinner in the Hunter Atrium. The Law School is located at 1301 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA.

Presentations and panels continue on Saturday from 9:30 AM to approximately 5PM. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- **What is resilience and what is its relationship to vulnerability?
- **What is the significance of opposing vulnerability to resilience? Of confusing invulnerability with the latter?
- **How does resilience allow us to think more complexly about the preventable components of vulnerability, as well as its universal or even desirable characteristics?
- **What are the private, public, and/or individual responsibilities in regard to fostering structures and cultures of resilience?
- **How should we think about institutional resilience – specifically, what responses are appropriate given that institutions are entities highly vulnerable to decline, capture, corruption, and misuse?
- **How does the state respond to vulnerability and manufacture, monitor, and maintain its resilience and that of its citizens?
- **How does resilience relate to transnational feminist and coalitional politics calls to respond to structural processes of disenfranchisement and privilege?
- **Are some components of resilience more situational and specific? If so, can we identify forces of resilience that are more generalizable, if not universal, in nature?
- **How does competitiveness over scarce resources structure resilience, politicize vulnerability, or influence variations in support for some structures of resilience over others?