

Resilience, Grit, and Other Lies

Academic Libraries and the Myth of Resiliency

Angela Galvan | @dropvase

Jacob Berg | @jacobsberg

Eamon Tewell | @eamontewell

Think-Pair-Share Activity

1. Think: When have you been asked to do more with less, cope with change, or be resilient at your job?
2. Pair with the person next to you and describe this situation to them.
3. Share your thoughts with the group by reporting back on your discussion.

What is Resilience?

- Commonly conceived of metaphorically, as “bouncing back” from a catastrophic event
- Found widespread adoption in psychological and ecological fields
- Later applied to engineering, emergency preparedness, and security after 9/11
- Now present in financial industry to urban planning; self-help to libraries



“More than education, more than experience, more than training, a person’s level of resilience will determine who succeeds and who fails. That’s true in the cancer ward, it’s true in the Olympics, and it’s true in the boardroom.”

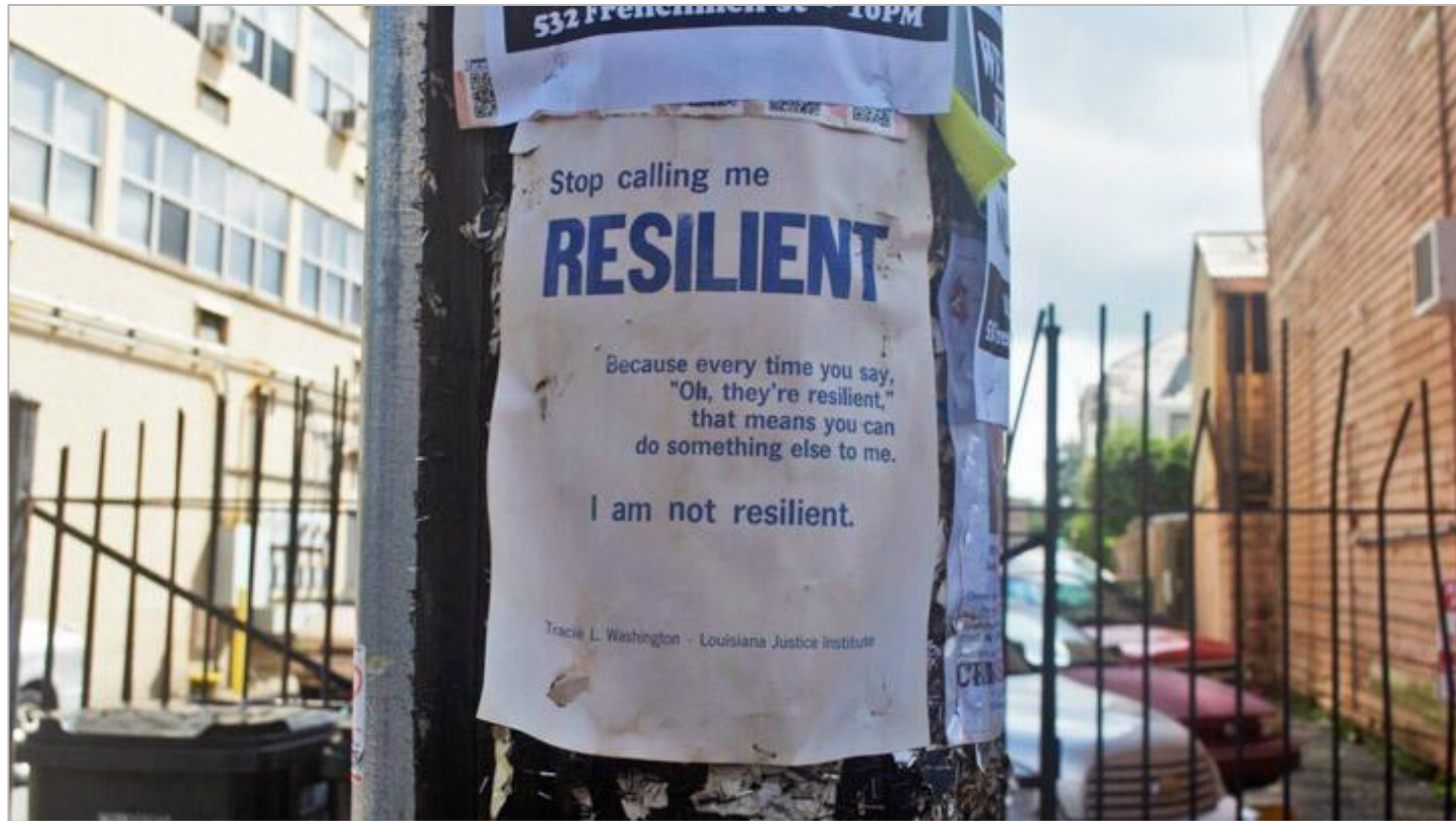
- Dean Becker, CEO of Adaptiv Learning Systems

What Does Resilience Do?

- Encourages individualization
- Naturalizes and depoliticizes social structures
- Positions insecurity as normal and to be expected
- Places additional demands for labor upon women and people of color

“When we celebrate resilience, we focus the spotlight on the people who got screwed over. The institutions that did the screwing over take the opportunity to slink off into the shadows.”

- Kung Li, *Catfish for Lunch*



“Stop calling me RESILIENT. Because every time you say, ‘Oh, they’re resilient,’ that means you can do something else to me. I am not resilient.” - Tracie Washington, Louisiana Justice Institute

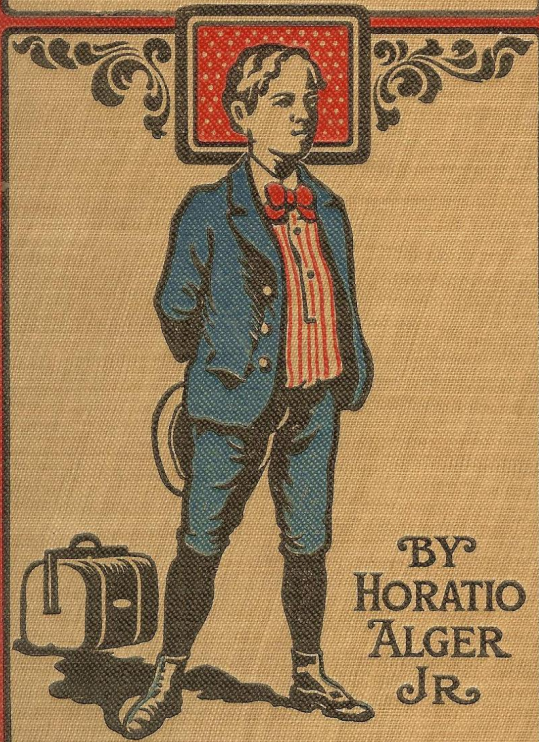
“We needed a revolution. We got resilience.”

- Alf Hornborg, Lund University

A Note on “Grit”

- Like resilience, a term that naturalizes forms of oppression
- Externally defined and applied to populations “needing” grit
- Promises people the capacity to change their lives, gives them empty rhetoric

SINK OR SWIM



BY
HORATIO
ALGER
JR

YOU'VE GOT TO
HAVE GRIT



Do You Have What It Takes to ***Succeed*** In
Your ***Business, Career, Life?***

Take This Short, Simple, Scientifically Proven Test Now and Find Out...

Take...**The Grit Test**

Resilience and Libraries

Problem

At its core, resilience offers an individual response to a structural problem.

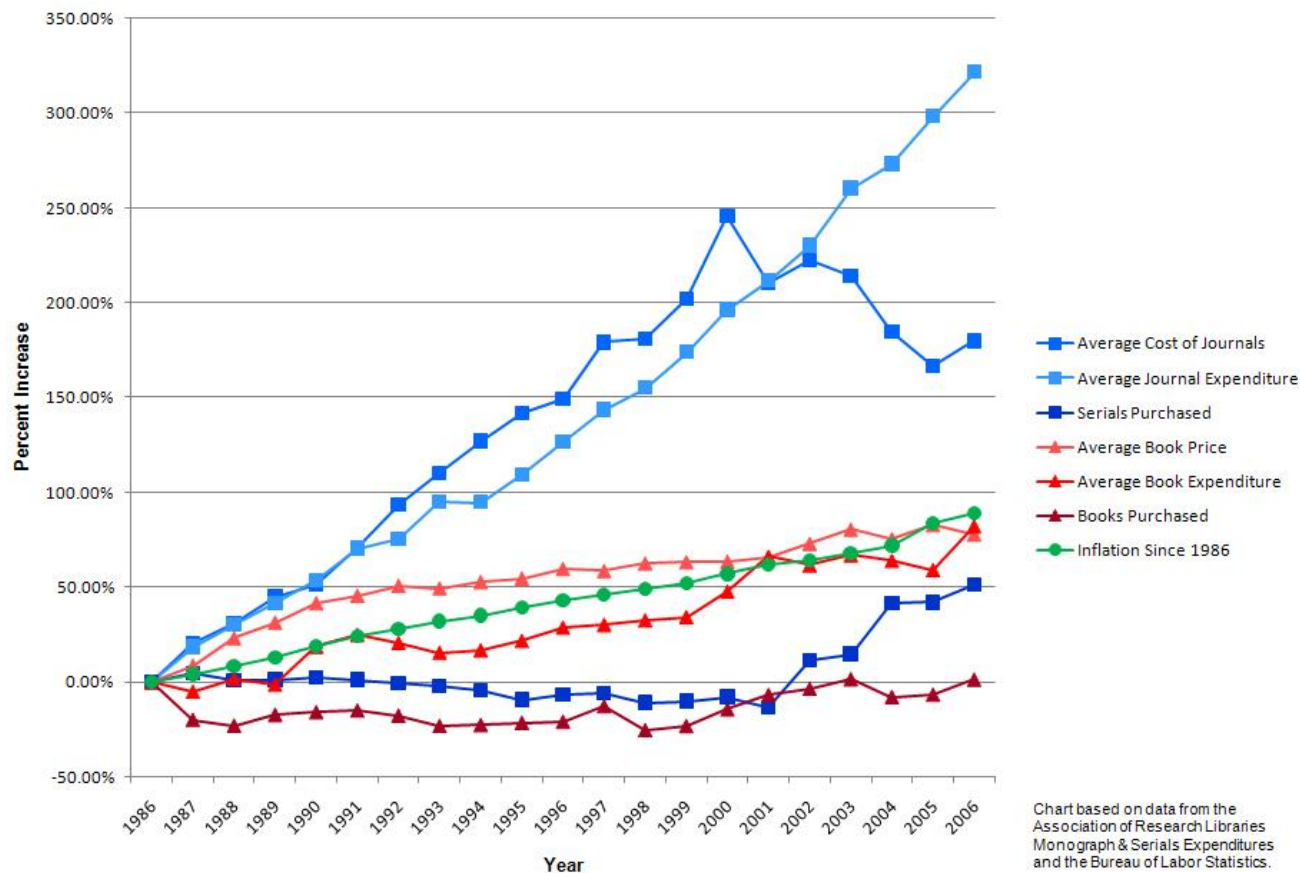
Definitions refer to the “rate” at which a community / library / system recovers from displacement.

How can we recover if we're not given the tools?





Trends in Book and Journal Spending in ARL Libraries, 1986-2006





Power under resilience

This makes everything about our work our responsibility, regardless of our level of power within a given system.

Absence of agency in this structure becomes a moral failing: you, the worker with the least power are at fault for your conditions.

Web of Science: doing us a significant frustrate

"...The important distinction is between databases that index bibliographical records and enable you to discover relevant citations on the one hand and databases that provide content (e.g. the fulltext of articles) on the other.."

<https://lib.unb.ca/news/2016/03/6657.html>

Things > People

"Until recently, UW-Madison had been the only institution among the 114 Association of Research Libraries (ARL) that provided data showing more is spent on salaries and wages than on library materials (2014-2015)...Recent efforts to increase the total spend on library materials and to reduce the total spend on salaries and wages have enabled us to transfer dollars to the Library materials budget."

<https://www.library.wisc.edu/news/2016/11/02/rethinking-libraries-through-consolidation/>



LIBRARY OF THE FUTURE
CENTER FOR THE FUTURE OF LIBRARIES

ALA ALA

Library of the Future

You are at: ALA.org » Transform » Center for the Future of Libraries » Trends » Resilience

Advisory Group

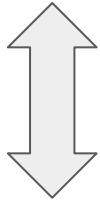
Events

Resilience

Take a look: <http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/resilience>

Resisting Resilience

Collection Development



Counter-narratives

Space to Fail



Resisting Resilience - But first, what it looks like

Center of Excellence in Foreign Affairs Resilience



Mission: Diplomacy in the 21st century demands effective, creative, and innovative foreign policy solutions. America needs an engaged, flexible, and durable work force to safeguard our national interests. Resilience, the ability to adapt in the face of adversity, is the key.

Vision: Within the next ten years, a supportive inspired and nimble work force will formulate and implement more creative and effective diplomatic solutions.

CEFAR's Four Pillars:

- Resilience Education and Training
- Research and Adaptation
- Organizational and Mission Support
- Individual Support

Resisting Resilience - But first, what it looks like

Encouraging Resilience in the Foreign Service Child (MQ500)



This evening seminar is a valued added resource for all parents in the foreign affairs community. Participants will hear from both parents of children who were raised overseas and the Third Culture Kids themselves. Discussions will address the characteristics of an internationally mobile childhood; influences on cultural identity; characteristics of families living overseas; and strategies for raising resilient children.

Participant Feedback:

Um...

"It was nice to hear my kids probably won't grow up to be miserable and depressed and regretful on everything I have done."

Resisting Resilience - But wait, there's more!

“Foster Resilience – Embrace new challenges and learn from them. Persist in the face of adversity. Take calculated risks, manage pressure, be flexible and acknowledge failures. Show empathy, strength, and encouragement to others in difficult times.”

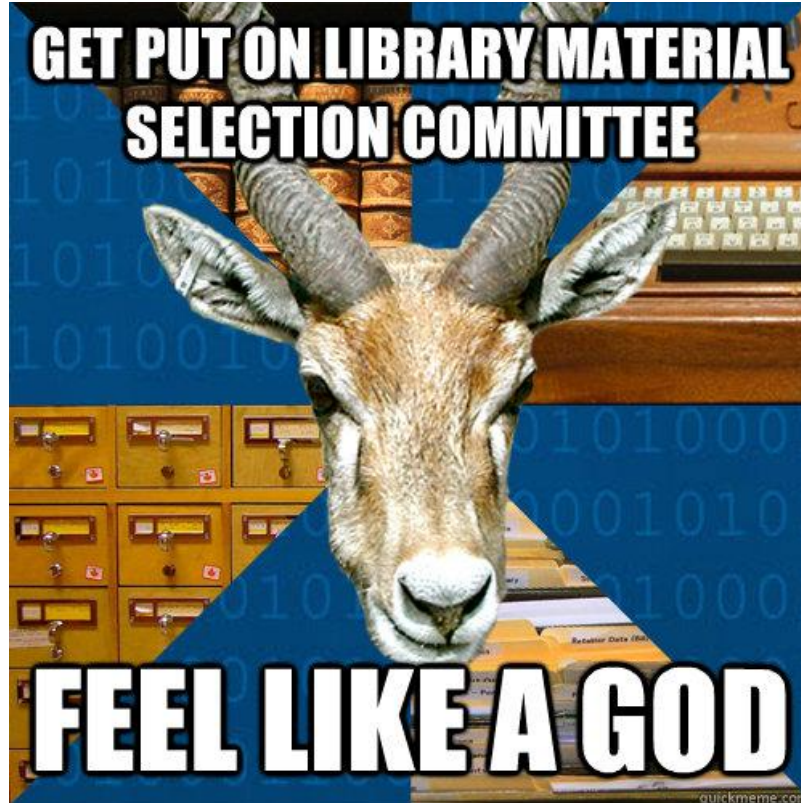
Resilience Strategies for Success Overseas (MQ502)

Pre-Deployment Preparation for High Stress Assignments (MQ940)

High Stress Assignment Outbrief (MQ950)

High Stress Assignment Outbrief – Special Session (MQ951)

Resisting Resilience - Collection Development



Resisting Resilience - Collection Development

- Bohland, J., Davoudi, S., Knox, P. and Lawrence, J. (Forthcoming, 2017). *The Resilience Machine*. More information at:
www.urbanresilienceresearch.net/2017/02/09/the-resilience-machine
- Evans, B., & Reid, J. (2014). *Resilient Life: The Art of Living Dangerously*. Polity Press.
- James, R. (2015). *Resilience & Melancholy: Pop Music, Feminism, Neoliberalism*. John Hunt Publishing.
- Tough, P. (2012). *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*. Mariner Publishing.

Resisting Resilience - Counter-narratives

What do Rihanna and Marxism have in common?



**Salomé Gemme**
@SalomeGemme

Follow

Its creepy how fond American media is of picking random people just trying to survive in poverty as model examples of a "good work ethic"

**ABC News** @ABC
Texas man walks 12 miles to work, five days a week. "I would love to have a car, but the car don't make the person."
abcn.ws/2laECHJ

RETWEETS
19,589

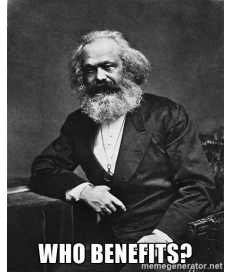
LIKES
31,548



8:08 PM - 23 Feb 2017

Resisting Resilience - Collection Development

From Bohland, et al.



- “Who are the actors and what are the institutions that deploy the resilience machine?”
- What are the social/political and moral/ethical implications of the different understandings and applications of resilience?
- What pitfalls and opportunities are embedded in and implied by various interpretations of resilience?”

Source: <http://www.urbanresilienceresearch.net/2017/02/09/the-resilience-machine/>

Resisting Resilience - Counter-narratives

Reclaiming Resilience



Erin M. M.

@tad_overdue

Following



On grit: our low income students are already
our most "gritty". #sriwm17

Resisting Resilience - Space to Fail

Can you help create a culture where people don't need to be resilient?

Or don't need to perform it.

Supervisors, please

- Encourage risk-taking

- Give staff space to fail

- Give staff time to be melancholy



Contact

Angela Galvan
SUNY Geneseo
galvan@geneseo.edu
@dropvase

Jacob Berg
US State Department
via The LAC Group
bergjs@state.gov
@jacobsberg

Eamon Tewell
LIU Brooklyn
eamon.tewell@liu.edu
@eamontewell

#ResistingResilience

Slides: tinyurl.com/ACRLresilience

March 23, 2017

Handout: tinyurl.com/ACRLresilienceHandout

Image Credits

Comics with Problems. *You've Got to Have Grit*. [Illustration]. Retrieved from www.ep.tc/problems/47/grit/grit0a.jpg

Keywords for the Age of Austerity. *New Orleans after Katrina, ca. 2005*. [Photograph]. Retrieved from theageofausterity.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/resilient.jpg

MuddyRiverAntiques. *Antique Sink or Swim Horatio Alger Book*. [Photograph]. Retrieved from img0.etsystatic.com/011/1/6705063/il_fullxfull.423350516_bokg.jpg

The Grit Test. *Banner - The Grit Test*. [Image]. Retrieved from thegrittest.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/banner-thegrittest.jpg

Yeffett, Gilead. *Broken Spring*. [Photograph]. Retrieved from gileadyeffett.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/broken-spring.jpg

Center for the Future of Libraries. *Trends*. [Image]. Retrieved from www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends.

State Department. [Image]. Retrieved from <https://www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/c73907.htm> and <https://www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/fslstraining/c48191.htm>

Information Science Antelope tumblr. *Get put on library materials committee*. [Image]. Retrieved from <http://informationscienceantelope.tumblr.com/post/27913007026/get-put-on-library-material-selection>.

Rihanna. *Side eye*. [Gif]. Retrieved from <http://giphy.com/gifs/from-song-her-5hLiSc7v1UC52>.

Salome Gemme. Tweet. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/SalomeGemme/status/834932872763084804>.

Erin Milanese. Tweet. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/tad_overdue/status/820334958615130112.

Learn2post. *Overcoming the First Hurdle*. [Gif]. Retrieved from <http://giphy.com/gifs/yTEmvTMDe6pKE>, original at <http://imgur.com/gallery/ltdKbc7>