

***Paradise Not Lost:
Community Recovery in the Wake of the 2014 Isla Vista Massacre***
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Paradise Not Lost

For Isla Vista

In a place where there is seemingly eternal sunshine, it is especially fitting that those who inhabit it are able to find light in the darkest of times.

In Memory:

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Katherine Cooper
James Hong
Christopher Martinez
David Wang
Veronika Weiss

On May 23, 2014, a small college town in Southern California was rocked by what the Sherriff's Department described as "one of the most horrific crimes ever to occur in Santa Barbara County" (Santa Barbara County Sherriff's Office, 2015, p.1). After years of planning, Elliot Rodger, a 22-year-old student who had recently been enrolled at Santa Barbara City College, finally carried out what he called "the day of retribution" (Santa Barbara County Sherriff's Office, 2015, p.44). The massacre begun when he attacked three young men inside his apartment, using large hunting knives to stab each one to death as they entered the building. Then, armed with three semi-automatic pistols and over 500 rounds of ammunition, Rodger embarked on a killing spree, firing shots at the many people (mostly students) walking about the streets of Isla Vista as they were out enjoying their Friday night. Those who he could not hit by gunfire, he tried to mow down with his black BMW. By the end of the night, six UCSB students, as well as Rodger himself, had been killed. Fourteen more were injured, and countless others were traumatized after having borne witness to the rampage (Santa Barbara County Sherriff's Office, 2015).

I left UCSB less than one year before this incident took place, having begun as a transfer student at Berkeley the previous fall. Thanks to social media, I watched from afar as friends, peers and a place I once called home tried to bounce back from this calamitous tragedy. In doing so, I noticed an interesting trend: despite the opportunity for negativity the situation presented (not only was Rodger a murderer, but also an outspoken racist and misogynist), the reaction of the UCSB and Isla Vista communities seemed to be largely positive. In fact, it appeared that in the days, weeks and months following the event, many of the "problems" that the school and its neighboring town had long been grappling with began to fade. As UCSB alumni turned author Eleanor Goldfield wrote in a piece published the day after the massacre, Isla Vista is now "a paradise not lost, but changed" (Goldfield, 2014). This paper seeks to understand the phenomenon I observed emanating from Isla Vista and at UCSB in the wake of the May 23 tragedy. It asks: How do college communities respond to mass violence? How does social, organizational, and temporal context affect the ways in which individuals

perceive the effectiveness of different types of recovery efforts put forth in the aftermath of a crisis? This project aims to understand social processes and the significance behind them, investigating questions that arise such as how individuals and communities heal, recover, and redefine social meanings in the wake of violent tragedy. Using a case study of the Isla Vista massacre, this paper seeks to answer those questions in order to better understand what we can expect to come out of these events that occur much too often.

Rampage school shootings and their aftermath: thinking about crises and responses

“School shootings” have gripped public fear and fascination in the United States for many years now, and rightfully so. One study describes school shootings and campus violence as especially upsetting because they shatter the myth of the academy as a kind of safe haven (Hempmill and LaBanc, 2010, p.1). In September 2014, prompted by a string of highly publicized shootings (including the Sandy Hook Elementary massacre, the movie theater shooting in Aurora, Colorado, and the rampage that took place in Isla Vista), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released a report based on a comprehensive study of what they termed “active shootings”: shootings committed by an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area. The report’s conclusion confirmed public concern that not only are mass shootings in the United States relatively frequent, but also that their rate of occurrence has increased significantly in the last six years: compared with an average of 6.4 active shootings per year from 2000 to 2006, there were 16.4 active shootings per year from 2007 to 2013. Such statistics are indeed chilling, but reports like this contribute to a problem that author Rebecca Solnit notes in her study of communities recovering from disasters: in the event of a massive crisis, public attention tends to focus on the “bigger issue” (such as, for example, the War on Terror in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks) and thus moves away from the actual city in crisis (Solnit, 2009, p.184). Here Solnit illuminates an important point: tragedies like these often move us to seek out causes and push for prevention, and for this reason it is rare that we stop to look at how they affect the communities they occur in. Nevertheless, doing so is important—we should know what happens, what to expect, and how to best prepare for the unfortunate reality that it will happen again.

Katherine Newman, a leading scholar in the field of school shootings, stated that despite our obsession with such events, “virtually nothing in the media or scholarly literature examines what happens to the towns they devastate” (Newman, 2004, p.21). The literature review that I conducted in the early stages of developing this project played a crucial role in determining the direction of my research. Upon looking into the pre-existing literature base surrounding school shootings and other incidents of mass violence on or nearby college campuses, I found that the majority of this research tends to ask questions about what causes these types of events. While these studies are indeed important for the purposes of developing effective methods of prevention, they do not tell us what to do or expect when such tragedies do occur. For this reason, I hope that my own research will fill a gap in the existing literature by explaining the social processes and meanings that arise in the aftermath of this particular type of community trauma: how individuals make sense of responses in the aftermath of a crisis, what types of recovery efforts they find to effectively facilitate healing, and ultimately how they perceive their community’s capacity for resilience. Within the scope of this project, I define a crisis as any event resulting in social loss that risks harming the fabric of social

life, and recovery efforts as collective or individual action that arises to begin individual and community healing from the effects of the crisis. This literature review will explain both how a number of important past studies in the field of crises and crisis response informed my own project and how my research aims to build upon them by answering new questions.

What causes school shootings?

In 2004, Newman authored a ground-breaking book about school shootings. The text was the result of research for a congressionally mandated study born out of a wave of mass shootings in the 1990s. This allowed Newman to get extraordinary access to residents in communities affected by shootings, which may have been financially or ethically difficult otherwise. Consequently, the depth of Newman's research and analysis was unprecedented, and was commended in a book review for being the first work to research shootings "not with a raft of numbers... but a set of in-depth community studies" (Suttles, 2006, p.1220). Newman's research focused on two shootings that predated the notorious Columbine massacre. Her team interviewed 163 community members who were affected by the shootings at either Westside Middle School in Arkansas or Heath High School in Kentucky to explore the answers to questions about how such seemingly normal communities could have produced such violent killers. Newman studies the relationship between causal factors such as bullying, media images of masculinity, teenage depression, access to guns, and a propensity for violence. Though Newman's interviews were conducted with people from a variety of community groups, including friends and families of the victims and shooters, students, teachers, lawyers, reporters and psychologists, they were aimed mainly at determining more about the shooters and their environments, instead of focusing on how the different individuals reacted and responded to the event. Despite its unparalleled depth of research within affected communities, the study was clearly cause-based, and did not look specifically at the shooting's aftermath.

There are a number of other influential works in the field of school shootings that, like Newman's, seek to pinpoint causal factors in order to advocate for targeted solutions. Notable amongst them are Craig Anderson and Brad A. Bushman's 2001 study, Michael Kimmel and Matthew Mahler's 2003 study, and Leary, Kowalski, Smith and Phillips' 2003 study. These three articles explore the effects of influences such as video games, male gender roles, bullying and isolation in light of their potential correlation with violent tendencies in youths. Anderson and Bushman's study is the most commonly cited article related to the phrase "school shootings" on Google Scholar, with a total of 1,560 works listing it as a source. The other two studies are also highly regarded and frequently cited in other scholarly research, as each contributes a wealth of certifiable information and empirical research to many of the public's theories about risk factors that contribute to a propensity to become a "school shooter." Though these works are important for their contribution to scholarship that aims to understand why school shootings happen, they too neglect to investigate the ways in which communities respond to shootings after the fact, instead focusing on the psyche of and influencing factors upon the shooter.

What happens after school shootings?

Though not many, there are a few studies that look specifically at community response to school shootings. A 2010 study of community reactions to school shootings

in Finland most closely aligns with my own project. The research team conducted in-depth interviews with a variety of community members in two cities, Joekla and Kauhajoki, after they were affected by school shootings. However, the main research question posed by the study was what implications incidents such as these have for Finland as a Nordic welfare society, seeking to understand if the incidents were isolated and could have been prevented. Though this is a study of community response, it does not look at community healing processes, and instead aims to understand how school shootings can give rise to new questions and concerns within a community. For this reason, the study still falls short in its exploration of the responses that arise from both institutions and individuals in the wake of such crises. However, this study did give rise to another, in which one of its authors looked specifically at how the reactions of the affected individuals in Joekla and Kauhajoki were patterned by gender, in which she found that females responded in emotionally affected ways and males responded in emotionally detached ways. Nurmi's study of gender patterns somewhat relates to my study of patterns of social distance, in which I analyze how one's physical or emotional proximity to the trauma in Isla Vista affected their differing needs in the healing process. While they do leave room to understand institutionally and grassroots orchestrated responses, instead focusing on the individual level, these studies were important in shaping my understandings of emotional reactions to tragedy and informing my methodology surrounding how to conduct research in a recently traumatized community.

Most other literature that focuses exclusively on the aftermath of school shootings is limited to looking at responses from a student affairs perspective, recording administrative best practices. However, as a 2010 study explains, even this literature base is lacking: "There is a paucity of empirical evidence to guide school administrators in developing emergency preparedness and crisis response plans for school shootings. School personnel presently must rely on insights from emergency management strategies used in workplace settings and lessons learned in the aftermath of other traumatic events" (Borum et al., 2010, p.34). While useful for schools looking to inform their administrative response to such events, these student affairs based texts still largely neglect to cover another important piece of community response, the "informal" grassroots events and processes that arise in tandem with those officially endorsed by the school. Two other drawbacks to these works are that they focus on outlining short-term tangible events and services to be offered instead of looking at larger social processes and trends in healing, and tend to have preventative, instead of reactive tones.

A comprehensive 2010 study offers an overview of what schools need to address following crises, including academic disruption, media presence, healing processes, communication, and immediate needs. It extensively covers the importance of mental health promotion as both a preventative and reactive measure, and also includes recommendations on how to transition from a mourning period to a healing period (Hempmill and LaBanc, 2010, p.122). It concludes that for such campus traumas, there can be no set "one size fits all" best practices protocol, but instead a general model that is adaptive to unique situations (Hempmill and LaBanc, 2010, p.xv). This work is significant not only because of its usefulness to universities, but also because of its inclusion of a population exposure model which I draw upon in a later section regarding social distance. While the book briefly covers the importance of allowing for what it terms "campus gatherings," or informal events, it does not detail what forms they take, how they come about, and why they are important (Hempmill and LaBanc, 2010, p.91).

Another work with a centralized student affairs focus includes Dorothy Siegel's 1994 study, which discusses difficulties that a researcher faces when outreaching to institutional actors, explaining some participants' reluctance to participate in research for fear of reopening wounds or damaging the university's image (Siegel, 1994, p.xi). It also detailed how administrators serving as liaisons for student activities and groups, and collaboration between administration and student government leaders played crucial roles in bringing student and administrative response efforts together, a phenomenon that inspired my section on the importance of "bridging" factors (Siegel, 1994, pp.24, 148). The study includes a number of typical university responses to campus tragedies that informed my own expectations about UCSB's efforts (Siegel, 1994, p.105). Again, while the study was useful in gauging how academic institutions typically recover from crises, it neglected to look into explanations and descriptions of student-orchestrated response efforts.

What happens after disasters?

There may not be a wealth of literature about the aftermath of school shootings, but there is a substantial literature base surrounding the aftermath of other "disasters." In sociology, a disaster is defined as a "physical, cultural, and emotional event incurring social loss, often possessing a dramatic quality that damages the fabric of social life" (Vaughan, 1999, p.292). Under this definition, the Isla Vista massacre can be considered a human-made disaster. Disaster studies informed my expectations surrounding the implications of conducting research in a recently traumatized community and a number of my conceptual frameworks, including social distance, the importance of agency, and the balance between institutional and grassroots responses. A significant difference between disaster research and my own, however, is that these studies tend to focus on how to rebuild a community that has experienced both physical *and* social destruction. College communities in the wake of mass violence, however, face a slightly different challenge in that they usually need only focus on how to restore the intangible: social, mental and emotional damage. Communities that have experienced extensive damage to their physical infrastructure, on the other hand, have to focus much of their recovery process on how to rebuild. Another important difference between crises such as natural disasters and the Isla Vista massacre is that while natural disasters are viewed as "an act of God", the Isla Vista tragedy was an act of deliberate violence carried out by a community member. As can be expected, the two require very different mental health responses for those affected.

While there are competing theories about how disasters can affect the communities they occur in, that which aligns most closely with my observations is outlined in Rebecca Solnit's 2009 book, which the *New York Times* called "a landmark work that gives an impassioned challenge to the social meaning of disasters" (Vanderbilt, 2009). In her book, Solnit uses case studies of a number of disasters to answer the central question: "What is this feeling that crops up after disasters?" (Solnit, 2009, p.5). By "this feeling" she refers to the often largely positive community sentiments of hope, optimism, and solidarity that survivors describe feeling in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. As book reviewer Tom Vanderbilt notes, "Disasters, for Solnit, do not merely put us in view of apocalypse, but provide glimpses of utopia. They do not merely destroy, but create" (Vanderbilt, 2009). The most relevant example Solnit uses for the purposes of this project is the community response that arose in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks, because of their status as man-made

intentional acts of violence. Solnit documents the feelings of altruism, generosity, and calm exhibited by the majority of New Yorkers in the immediate aftermath of the attacks. Her study also discusses a clash between bottom-up and top-down responses to crisis, which I analyze in my own study as grassroots (“informal”) and institutional (“formal”) recovery efforts. As Solnit explains, though we might expect disasters to breed a climate of disorder, panic, and pessimism, they tend to do the opposite. My project draws upon many concepts introduced by Solnit and seeks to explain what conditions permit the type of largely positive response that her research describes, despite the terrible circumstances that prompted it.

How do communities collectively heal?

Finally, this paper draws upon studies surrounding collective trauma and collective mourning processes that arise out of such trauma. Peter Homans’ 2000 study of such processes is helpful in its definitions: though the terms grief and mourning are often used interchangeably, grief refers to “feelings of sorrow, anger, guilt and confusion which occur when one experiences the loss of an attachment figure,” while mourning refers to “the culturally constructed social response to the loss of an individual.” Grief is a painful emotion that is “looking for a cure,” while mourning is a ritual that “heals” the pain of grief (Homans, 2000, p.2). Homans argues that “mourning today is no longer a concern of society as a whole but has become a personal and family affair” (Homans, 2000, p.1). I disagree with Homans, arguing that though intensive personal healing is necessary for those who are closely affected by trauma, for others group healing within communities is also a necessary process. This is reflected in my findings regarding social distance.

Kai Erikson, who studies non-naturally occurring disasters, defines collective trauma as “a blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality” (Erikson, 1994, p.233). If the disaster people experience was caused by another human and is motivated and mean-minded, Erikson warns that collective trauma can easily become irreversible. People begin to think that the world is ruled by “a natural kind of malice that lurks everywhere” (Erikson, 1994, pp.237-41). Using Erikson’s descriptions, I argue that the Isla Vista massacre, though traumatic, did not cause irreparable damage to the social fabric of the community, instead providing an opportunity to strengthen bonds and improve previously existing problems.

The final piece of literature that I relied upon heavily in my understanding of collective trauma, resilience and recovery was Jack Saul’s 2014 text. Though it is technically intended to serve as a guide for mental health professionals working in response to large scale political violence or natural disaster, Saul’s thesis is that “recognizing and strengthening the adaptive capacities and ‘resilience’ in communities promotes collective recovery after mass trauma... adaptation following massive traumatic events requires both flexibly responding to changing circumstances over time and at the same developing a positive vision of recovery” (Saul, 2014, p.2). For this reason, his work influenced the structure of my own in looking at the conditions that support community recovery and those that weaken the community’s progress forward from the trauma. Saul defines community resilience as “a community’s capacity, hope and faith to withstand major trauma and loss, overcome adversity and to prevail, usually with increased resources, competence and connectedness.” Because he sees belief systems, organizational patterns and communication/problem solving as key to

achieving resilience, I then sought to understand if the responses to the Isla Vista massacre met these needs (Saul, 2014, p.8).

Filling the gap

Glenn Muschert authored an article in 2007 detailing the research that has been done to date surrounding school shootings. He concludes by encouraging continued research into both the causes *and the effects* of school shootings, stating that “...there has been little research examining the proximate and longer-term effects of such incidents on the communities in which they occur. In this regard, community impact studies might be warranted to uncover the effect of school shootings in a variety of settings, including urban, suburban and rural communities.” My research project will investigate this direction described by Muschert, the specific setting explored being a college community. My project aims to build upon all of these works through the in-depth study of a single campus massacre in order to analyze patterns, processes and meanings of what Saul refers to as “post traumatic growth” (positive changes resulting from struggling with adversity) on both individual and institutional levels (Saul, 2014, p.9).

The overarching research question within this paper asks: How does context affect the ways in which individuals perceive the effectiveness of recovery efforts in the aftermath of rampage school violence? Within my findings, I have produced three sub-questions that look at social, organizational, and temporal context, respectively. First, how does an individual’s socio-emotional proximity to a crisis affect their perceptions of recovery efforts’ effectiveness? Second, how do formal and informal recovery efforts complement (or fail to complement) one another in order to meet the perceived needs of affected individuals? Finally, how does the accumulation of crises within a community over time affect perceptions of recovery effort effectiveness?

Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach that includes an online survey and in-depth interviews within the context of a single case study of the Isla Vista community in the wake of the massacre that took place there this past May. Because my project focuses on an underexplored and highly emotionally sensitive topic in an attempt to understand social meaning, qualitative methods such as in-depth interviewing offered the best means to understand how people perceived events and experiences. This section explains the specific methods I chose to conduct my research, and details the way in which I carried out implementation of the survey and interviews. Included is a section on methodological drawbacks, the main focus of which is to outline my efforts to conduct the study ethically in light of its heavy reliance on human subjects. I chose my methods of inquiry based on what would allow me to collect data by the most unbiased, representative and accurate means possible, given the time constraints of the project.

The area of study

Located within Santa Barbara County and directly adjacent to the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB)’s campus, Isla Vista (“IV”) is an unincorporated community with a population of 23,096 but a total land area of only 1.85 square miles (Census, 2014). In fact, at 62.5 people per acre, Isla Vista has one of the highest concentrations of residents in California (Rosenfeld, 2011). The literally and figuratively tight-knit beachside community consists of 60% UCSB students (Santa Barbara County

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Sherriff's Office, 2013). A significant portion of the remaining population is made up of Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) students, with at least 1,200 but potentially as many as 5,000 living there (Brugger, 2014). The total estimated number of students living in Isla Vista in 2011 was as high as 13,000, and it has likely increased since (Rosenfeld, 2011).

From my own personal experience as a resident there, I can confirm Isla Vista to be where almost all UCSB students live. In Isla Vista, aside from the odd professor or two, it is genuinely rare to come across anyone over the age of 25. The four block by four block town is almost entirely student-run, and because of that, the young people living there maintain a real sense of ownership over it. Because it only takes about fifteen steps to cross from the border of campus into IV, the town is just as much, if not more so, the area of study relevant to my project as UCSB. Not only were the murders committed on May 23 all carried out in Isla Vista, it is also the place where all of my subjects, and most of the affected population I am studying, live and identify as their home. However, as my project emphasizes, UCSB and Isla Vista are indeed two separate places and communities, and will be noted as such throughout this paper.

UCSB is part of the ten-campus University of California system, located near the city of Goleta within the larger Santa Barbara County. The campus is known for having its own beach, and thus has a predominant surf culture that many of its students identify with strongly. The undergraduate student population is predominantly white (41-percent), with another 25-percent identifying as Asian/Pacific Islander and 25-percent as Chicano/Latino (University of California, Santa Barbara, 2014). The larger Santa Barbara County demographic is also generally known to be populated by mainly white, middle-class residents. It is notable that for such individuals, rampage shootings and other mass violence may seem like an unlikely event, but, nevertheless, white middle-class youths are the most likely population both to commit and experience school shootings.

The overarching method that I used to gather research for my project was a singular case study of the rampage that resulted in the deaths of six UCSB students in Isla Vista this past spring. Isla Vista will provide a more comprehensive study context than the just the UCSB campus because the massacre did not affect UCSB students alone, but also Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) students (one of whom was the shooter himself). Isla Vista residents, not UCSB students, were clearly Rodger's target. He did not discriminate between students from the two colleges, but instead aimed to harm anyone who was young, attractive, and happier than he was. This case was also chosen because of my own personal connection to the school. As a transfer student from UCSB, I am still connected to many members and groups in the community, and thus was able to access individuals and resources there more easily than I would have been able to at another school. I am also able to add to the accounts of what Isla Vista felt like to a UCSB student before the events occurred, and to more clearly recognize changes in the community environment. The UCSB case study is somewhat different from typical school rampage shootings in that it: a) affected a college community, which is more "open" in terms of security than a high school or middle school; b) involved young adults, rather than high school or middle school aged youth; and c) unfolded off campus, but in a community that is contiguous with the campus, raising questions about how to organize responses in light of the unique geographic implications. This combination of factors creates some complexities that other rampage shooting cases may not have, raising questions about the transferability of my findings to other cases.

However, the unique case of the UCSB shootings may provide a vantage point and perspective that other, more typical cases may not, thus offering the opportunity for generating new knowledge about responses in the aftermath of rampage shootings and social crises, more generally. Due to feasibility concerns and issues of access to community members willing to discuss a sensitive subject with an “outsider,” I did not conduct multiple case studies, which may have made my findings more robust in their validity. A second drawback to this approach is that my personal connection to the community and its members may have resulted in bias to portray positively my alma mater and its students as I analyze and interpret the data I collect. To try to avoid this, I employed methods as I carried out my case study that were as accurate, representative, and neutral as possible, allowing little room for discretion or influence from my own beliefs and opinions.

The survey and interviews

The first qualitative method I employed to gather data for the project was an online survey created using the web tool SurveyMonkey, an online survey generator that meets the American Association for Public Opinion Research’s recommendations for secure transmission, informed consent, and database and server security. The introductory page of the survey included an outline of its objective and other considerations for participants. The purpose of the survey was mainly to help myself gauge community climate and student sentiment about the event in order to appropriately adjust my interview protocol. As a result, I was less concerned about the potential for bias that was posed by using Facebook as a platform to get respondents. Though it was only accessible by my Facebook friends and their respective networks, it was still a helpful tool for me as a researcher, and offered a number of other advantages. One such benefit was the true anonymity it offered: without it, I would have only been able to interact with participants who were comfortable doing in-person interviews. Remaining nameless to the researcher allowed people to share things they might not have been comfortable saying otherwise. Another benefit was that the survey was how I began my snowball sample for the interviews: respondents who were interested had the option of leaving their contact information at the end of the survey so that I could follow up with them for an interview (4 of the 24 total chose to do so).

The second method of inquiry I used accounts for the bulk of my findings, because I made a more concerted effort to control methodological drawbacks for the interviews than I did for the online survey. Conducting in-depth interviews was also the best way to gain a full understanding of community members’ experiences because of the opportunity it lent for participants to talk freely in response to open-ended questions. Using 4 respondents from the survey and others from snowball canvassing that I conducted via social media requests and personal connections, I conducted a total of 22 in-depth interviews: 14 with undergraduate students, 2 with graduate students instructors (GSI’s) employed by UCSB to aid professors in teaching undergraduate courses, and 6 UCSB employees from 4 different administrative units. The sample was not random, but instead purposive, as I intentionally sought out individuals that differed by age, gender, race, major, year in school, extracurricular involvement, community role, and social distance in relation to the May tragedy. The purposive sample is important because of my interest in people who may have experienced or perceived the aftermath of the crisis differently due to relative social distance and community role. All interview subjects orally consented to the project after being

informed of its objective and other relevant considerations. The questions asked of each participant differed slightly according to their experience of the event and their role in the community, but generally aimed to gain an understanding of student and school responses to the tragedy, as well as individual perceptions of those responses.

A number of research issues arose from my choice to use interviews as my primary method of inquiry. The first problem I came across was how to reach out to UCSB employees. A number of researchers who have studied communities affected by school shootings have noted that institutional actors tend to be hesitant to comment on such events for fear of reopening old wounds or somehow tarnishing the school's reputation. One study explains that though the school systems were likely to decline to comment, staff members were more willing to speak to researchers on their own (Newman, 2004, p.320). This guided me to seek out interview participants who were willing to share their experience as individuals, instead of speaking officially on behalf of an institution, organization or department. I was also careful in my outreach process to mitigate staff concerns by explaining the objective of my project fully in all e-mails requesting interviews.

The biggest issue in conducting interviews was an ethical one: when asking participants to recount memories of such an emotionally traumatizing event, it is the responsibility of the researcher to be prepared in case the experience is a triggering one. I circumvented this problem as best I could not only by remaining emotionally sensitive and supportive throughout the interviews, but also by distributing contact information for professional counseling services to all of my interview subjects at the end of our meetings. Another issue was confidentiality: a number of participants (particularly staff members) expressed concern about being identifiable in the larger context of this paper. Consequently, all subjects will remain anonymous, and instead be referred to as "Student Interview 1," "Staff Interview 1," and so on. However, I was required to name assailants, victims, and the university because the specificity of the circumstances make them easily identifiable even without names.

Other methodological considerations

As mentioned in my literature review, past studies of communities affected by school shootings and other similar crises significantly informed my methodology. For example, I kept in mind Nurmi's observation that "while some [people] wanted to process emotions and experiences related to the shootings, others wanted to give their opinions about why the shootings happened or the way in which the incidents were managed by the authorities... Many stated that they wanted to be of help in the research on school shootings" (Nurmi, 2014, p.450). Newman's comprehensive study was especially useful. She notes certain drawbacks to be aware of, such as inadequate or inconsistent memory by interviewees (potentially heightened by the traumatic circumstances), vested interests (such as the institutional concern for public reputation or pending lawsuits), and the purpose of research influencing answers. Newman highlights these issues and solves them by contextualizing all answers (*how* they know *what*), triangulating among various respondents (weighing evidence based on relative bias), and allowing for interpretative analysis (subjects can project their interpretation on the event, doesn't have to be "truth") (Newman, 2004, p.326). This is an important point: there are competing sets of social meanings held by subjects. While one person found an event to be effective, another may have found it to be ineffective—neither is

necessarily incorrect. In my project, I am careful to keep this in mind, instead looking at perceptions as they vary across individuals and groups.

Finally, my personal connection to the school and experience with the massacre is a small but important factor in my project. Again, though I was not there at the time of the murders, I still felt strongly affected by them as I watched my friends and a place I had once called home grieve collectively in response to such a gruesomely tragic event. My personal connection to the case study does lend itself to opportunities for bias, but it also gave me as a researcher the ability to further hone my expectations and my understanding. When studying a community, it is crucial for a researcher to have some understanding of the place and the people they are focusing on. I already had that sense of familiarity with this community, and therefore was able to access and relate to my subjects more easily than another researcher might have been able to within the parameters of this project. It should also be noted that in carrying out this research, I facilitated a kind of healing process for myself: observing how my peers came together in a time of need to create positive change and social solidarity amongst one another was cathartic for myself as I too recovered from and looked for light within this unfortunate and unnecessary tragedy.

Findings

The three sub-questions that my findings aim to answer developed inductively. After collecting and analyzing my field data, I found that my research subjects' perceptions of recovery efforts were patterned by social, organizational, and temporal context. The following sections are broken up by those three contextual features, presenting how individuals' subjective perception of recovery effort effectiveness is a reflection of them, ultimately concluding that context and meaning matter significantly within crisis response. My findings show that there is no "one size fits all" template for community recovery, but instead that meeting individual and community needs can only be only accomplished through targeted, narrowly tailored recovery efforts.

A note on discourse

My very first interview subject significantly altered the way I viewed my project. A close friend of one of Rodgers' roommates who was stabbed to death, he aptly noted that the rampage should not be referred to simply as a school shooting. In response to a question asking how he was personally affected by the event, he explained:

"I think there was a lot of inappropriateness in the way people responded. Some people were saying, 'Oh it's an against women issue' or 'It's a gun issue' but my friend was killed with a knife, and he's not a woman either. He got killed just because he was rooming with a guy who was completely insane. ... I don't think it had anything to do with a bunch of the issues that people brought up afterwards, including that one guy who was the father of one of the kids who got shot. And he was talking about like, 'This has to do with politicians blah blah blah' and talking about guns and stuff but I don't really think that was the issue at hand, because half the people died with guns and half didn't die with guns. The first three people didn't die with guns."

–Student #1

After speaking with Student #1, I was careful to shift the discourse I used in both my writing and my interactions with community members away from one of "school

shootings,” instead using more general terms to refer to the May 23 tragedy. All six administrators and both of the graduate student instructors I spoke with used similarly broad terms, but twelve of the fourteen the students I spoke with referred to the event as a shooting, with the exception of those two who were close to the students who were killed by knife. Because the drive-by shootings and vehicular assaults were committed in public and directly affected a larger population, many community members associated more with this piece of the murders, as is reflected in the following sections detailing my findings.

Community resilience

A 2009 study describes community resilience in response to disasters as encompassing three capacities: resistance, recovery, and creativity. In the first capacity, communities may resist change, counteracting the impact of challenges by adjustments and adaptations, withstanding disruption before undergoing significant lasting change. In the second, a community may change for a period in response to challenges but return to its previous state when the challenges have been resolved. In the third, a community may be transformed by adversity, developing new ways of functioning and new directions by creating new institutions and practices that carry its values forward (Kirmeyer et al., 2009, p.72). My findings reflect that context affects the ways in which individuals perceived the community’s capacity for resilience in the wake of the crisis, resulting in a multitude of opinions about and understandings of the recovery efforts.

Like Solnit, I found that when interviewing crisis survivors, I observed a significant amount of positive reminiscing about how people came together to support one another while the social walls that ordinarily separate us in daily life broke down (Solnit, 2009, pp.4-5). One 9/11 survivor told Solnit, “If you want to make us stronger, attack and we will unite” (Solnit, 2009, p.189). I found similar sentiments being expressed among Isla Vistans:

“As a freshman ..., seeing how everyone came together was really awesome. And it kind of solidified that I was supposed to be at UCSB, even though all this stuff was happening. I was having a hard time adjusting here but then seeing how much support everyone was giving everybody was amazing. It sounds cliché but it’s true; everyone was coming together and really standing by the community so that made me feel really good about UCSB and being here. This year’s been awesome. I’ve loved every second of it.”

–Student #12

“In the immediate aftermath, I really felt a sea change in people’s attitudes, in the level of kindness, and forgiveness, and patience, and you know, people were looking each other in the eye, even just passing on the sidewalk, you could go out into IV and... there was a gentleness that came out of it.”

–Administrator #5

“It won’t be forgotten but it won’t define the campus, it’s not who we are. It’s just going to bring us closer together and help us in the end.”

–Student #4

“I remember when the shooting happened, my dad asked me, ‘Are you going to go back?’ And I’m like, ‘Of course.’ I love UCSB and that hasn’t changed. If anything it’s stronger.”

–Student #8

Where did this strength, community solidarity, respectfulness, and kindness come from? In the aftermath of a crisis, we might expect individuals to express sentiments of pessimism, anxiety or even anger. However, I argue that the Isla Vista and UCSB communities put forth a collective response that aimed to meet the various individual and community needs that arose from the violence in order to dispel most opportunities for negativity, instead providing a multitude of opportunities for social healing that ultimately enabled the community to recover and even prosper despite the circumstances.

Within this project, I refer to the many events, movements, services, memorials and other processes that arose in direct response to the Isla Vista massacre as “recovery efforts.” Such efforts can and did have a variety of aims, including but not limited to: addressing psychological trauma, memorializing the victims whose lives were lost, building community solidarity, minimizing disruption in daily life, and preventing and preparing for potential future crises. In general, however, a recovery effort is any individual or collective action with the intention to begin individual and community healing from the effects of the violence. The Isla Vista tragedy was extraordinarily generative on individual, local and national levels, but my project aims to specifically record and understand those recovery efforts that came directly out of the Isla Vista and UCSB communities. While it would be impossible to record even just those responses entirely because of the sheer quantity of literature, projects, videos, memorials and so on that were created by individuals affected by the crisis in the period following May 23, I have provided an inventory of all those recovery efforts that I was able to record within my research investigation (Appendix A). Due to their high rates of visibility, attendance, and/or publicity, some recovery efforts were discussed more often by interview subjects than others. These include social media movements and memorial services that were offered in the immediate aftermath of the crisis, such as the institutionally endorsed UCSB Memorial Service at Harder Stadium, the grassroots-organized Memorial Paddle Out, and the student government-organized Candlelight Vigil.

Social distance

A number of researchers studying school shootings and other incidents of college violence recognize that responses to such crises are not the same across the board, but instead are tied to one’s relative social distance to the trauma. Hempmill and LaBanc’s 2010 text offers a “population exposure model” with the underlying principle that those most greatly affected by a crisis are those who were most directly exposed to the trauma. It discusses how “multiple constituencies may require intervention beyond those directly affected by a traumatic event, and considering the collective needs of the campus community will be important as plans for intervention emerge” (Hempmill and LaBanc, 2010, p.85). Social distance became an important piece of my project when I realized that meanings and perceptions in the wake of a crisis might be patterned by someone’s physical or emotional proximity to the trauma. An example of an interview participant that I identify as socially close might be an individual who sustained an injury in the violence that night, someone who had a close social relationship with a

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victim who may have passed away or someone who bore first hand witness to the trauma. Conversely, an example of a participant that I identify as socially distant could be a student who was out of town for the weekend and didn't know anyone who was directly involved in the events of the night or the response efforts afterward.

This section asks: how does an individual's socio-emotional proximity to a crisis affect their perceptions of recovery effort effectiveness? In order to answer this question, I asked each interview participant questions about how they were affected by the event, if they knew anyone who was directly affected and what recovery efforts they found to be most helpful to them personally in terms of promoting healing. My findings reflect that the ways in which people make sense of their social, psychological and emotional needs in the wake of the tragedy and the relative meanings they draw from different types of recovery efforts was indeed influenced by their social distance. The socially close and the socially distant have unique needs that arise following such crises, and recovery efforts need to be targeted to meet both types.

I identify those recovery efforts aiming to offer individualized healing as necessary for the socially close. For individuals who have been significantly affected by the trauma in some way, large-scale events intended for the entire community might be too emotionally difficult to aid in the recovery process alone. Instead, these recovery efforts need to be used in combination with more intensive, focused recovery efforts like grief counseling, other forms of individualized treatment, and memorializing opportunities with others affected by the same loss. This is not to say that for the socially close, recovery efforts intended for a broad audience are not helpful and important, but instead that they must be used in tandem with more personalized responses. For the socially distant, what a crisis like the Isla Vista massacre puts most at risk are sentiments about community safety, solidarity, strength and security. Thus, the most important recovery efforts for this population, which included the majority of UCSB and Isla Vista community members, are those community building efforts which aim to restore confidence and optimism about the community's capacity for resilience. When a community faces a crisis, it is imperative that the recovery efforts that are put forth in response aim to meet the needs of both these groups.

I interviewed five student subjects that I categorized as socially close to the May 23 tragedy, including one victim of an injury sustained in the violence, one witness who used his EMT skills to act as a first responder for a gunshot victim, and three individuals who were very close friends with victims who lost their lives. In speaking with them, I found that each had unique perspectives on the aftermath of the crisis as a result of their especially close proximity to the trauma. Student #7, who survived a series of gunshot wounds inflicted during the massacre, was the most socially close individual in my sample. For him, the most prominent aspect of the aftermath was a practical one. In response to a question asking to describe his experience of that night, he discussed how the financial implications of the violence weighed on him.

“They did leave me with a \$250,000 bill, which isn't funny, because I don't have the money to cover that. I'm working with the Isla Vista Victims Unit to try to cover that, and I think a lot of people chipped in money to help support us, so they gave me about three grand. It's not amazing but it's whatever, it's something. That's probably the worst side effect of whatever happened, is I'm stuck with the bill and no one's really liable because he's dead and he's an adult, so I can't sue his parents, I can't sue

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anything. That's the hardest part. The community's there for the immediate thing, but the residual effects of what happened, that's on me."

–Student #7

For those who were directly affected by the violence, factors like physical incapacitation during the community's prime recovery period and financial struggles and lawsuits in the months following make it difficult to actively take part in the collective healing process. Though he mentioned trying to attend the Memorial Paddle Out and his gratitude for the community's support, Student #7 was most concerned about the actual event and the obstacles that remained for him personally in its aftermath. It wasn't until speaking with him that I realized that those who were actually injured are unlikely to be able to attend memorial services and other events immediately after the event, implying that they are intended more so for those community members who are left behind.

Student #4, the EMT who witnessed the rampage and responded to a gunshot victim, was the only individual who shared with me that he took advantage of the university's grief counseling services. Interestingly, however, he responded to a question about what recovery efforts he found to be most helpful by explaining a method he came up with on his own.

"So I actually typed up my story because that was my way of recovering. I just wanted to record everything that happened, because I was so upset that I felt I could do so much more, and once I wrote it out I realized that I did what I could, what I had the means of doing."

–Student #4

Writing as an emotional outlet also became an important means of healing for Student #14, who lost two of her sorority sisters and close friends in the violence. A team of administrators, graduate students and undergraduate interns are currently working to put together a collection that archives all of the physical memorials given to the school and scattered around Isla Vista in the aftermath of the tragedy. Student #14 decided to get involved in the archival process and to write her capstone paper about the event, her unique place within it, and the collection's important role in the community's healing process.

Student #1 and Student #9 were both close friends with and had once been roommates of one of the young men who was stabbed to death inside Rodger's apartment. When prompted to share what was most helpful to them in the recovery process, they explained that though they attended large-scale memorials in the days following, remembering their friend with others who had experienced the same loss was most powerful to them.

"After [the UCSB Campus-Wide Memorial], me and [a friend] and two others went to speak with his parents and ... that ... I'm glad I did that. I don't know how to explain it, but I'm really glad I did that. That was probably the best thing I did in terms of the way it made me feel a little bit better about the situation."

–Student #1

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“We went to the beach one day and we just said some nice things. There were maybe 30-50 of us, and we threw some flowers in the ocean and lit some candles. His parents found out about that and invited us all to where we used to live freshman year and we gathered in the cafeteria and we all just talked about our friend and his life... that was the most poignant and visceral thing that we did. ... I think... I think for trauma like this, people need to do it on their own, grieve in their own way. That’s what you would do for a family member.”

–Student #9

Finally, it is important to note that for the socially close, focusing on the aftermath of the crisis was difficult—they tended to want to talk about what went wrong and how the event could have been avoided. When asked if they had any final comments they wished to share with me, each of the five individuals made statements about prevention.

“Just that it would never happen again. Take information from my lesson... just maybe a higher consciousness and higher gun control. I’m for guns but I agree with cracking down on how many are out there and who can have them. I know it’s not your project, but that’s all I can see when I look at this.”

–Student #7

I interviewed nine student subjects that I categorized as socially distant from the May 23 tragedy. These individuals ranged from those who were out of town for the weekend of the tragedy to those who were in Isla Vista but didn’t personally know anyone who was directly affected by the violence. While there was variation amongst these individuals in what recovery efforts they took part in, the general trend was that they made use of large-scale events and processes such as the UCSB Campus-Wide Memorial, the Candlelight Vigil, the Memorial Paddle Out, and the message boards and physical vigils created to memorialize lost victims. As Student #14, who also conducted research surrounding the aftermath of the Isla Vista massacre, noted, events like the vigil that were attended by thousands gave the socially distant an opportunity to process and understand the recently incurred losses.

“A lot of people who weren’t directly affected were able to understand what was going on and participate and just mourn collectively. That was necessary and good that we did that.”

–Student #14

Phrases like “coming together” and comments about seeing the sheer number of people who attended and participated in the recovery efforts in the days and weeks following the crisis reaffirming feelings of community strength and solidarity arose in every interview. Recovery efforts aimed at a broad audience were recognized as being “necessary” by both students and administrators.

“It’s not like everybody wants to see a counselor. People do things in a different way.”

–Administrator #5

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Katherine Newman's 2004 study of communities affected by school shootings offers an analogy comparing the aftermath of shootings to an earthquake, with many concentric circles around the epicenter representing the different rates at which people heal. She explores how social distance and the different emotional needs that arise from it sometimes put those at the epicenter of the trauma in direct tension with groups who were only peripherally affected, explaining that questions about who "had the right to claim true victim status" arose (Newman, 2004, p.207). In response to a question asking in what ways the May 23 tragedy was continually invoked by the school and the students, one interview participant, a transfer student who arrived at UCSB the fall after the event occurred, explained her own experience of this phenomenon:

"It's kind of weird to have not been here. Because I feel like it's slightly a respect thing. Like if you weren't here, you don't know what it was like. I think that that creates a huge issue in that there's a huge turnaround time here, students come in and out, so you lose the grieving process and you lose the overall spirit of coming together because people who weren't here wanted to be respectful of those who were, and not 'pretend' they had some sort of role in it, even though we actually do."

–Student #6

Student #6's recognition of how those who were especially socially distant from the event might feel excluded from the recovery process is an important one. It suggests that social distance has the potential to alienate certain groups, ultimately hindering collective healing within the community. One normative implication of this phenomenon might be that communities facing crises need to ensure that they offer recovery efforts that are clearly intended to address a broad audience, even those who might not have been closely affected by the event.

When recovery efforts fail to recognize the importance of and address needs according to social distance, they risk being perceived as less effective by individuals. An example of this failure has already been shown in the portion of this section addressing the importance of discourse: Student #1, who was very socially close with one of the young men who was stabbed and killed inside Rodger's apartment, discussed his discomfort by the larger response effort's tendency to label the event "a shooting." For him, the university's decision to allow Richard Martinez, the father of victim Christopher Martinez, to speak at the UCSB Campus-Wide Memorial about the importance of gun control was offensive to the memory of his lost friend.

Another example of how social distance influences perceptions of recovery effort effectiveness comes from Student #12, who was out of town the weekend of May 23 and didn't personally know any of the victims. Her only involvement in the response was attending the UCSB Campus-Wide Memorial. She explains her decision not to take part in other recovery efforts:

"I know that a lot of the Housing and Residential staff events that week, they programmed just to kind of talk it out, and there was another candlelight thing, and I think we had chalk boards and stuff... but I didn't really go to those. It just... having to talk about it over and over again and having all these people from outside of UCSB contacting me, making sure I was okay, constantly having to tell the story over and over again, it was just kind of overwhelming and I didn't want it to bring me down."

–Student #12

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Student #12 exemplifies the socially distant, for whom constant reminders of the event were upsetting and undesired. It is important for the university and the community to be aware of social distance within the larger response period, trying to meet the varying needs that arise and striking an appropriate balance between remembrance and moving forward.

A number of UCSB staff members spoke about the administrative efforts to accomplish this. The I <3 UCSB Campaign and Pledge that the school put forth in the fall of 2014 is one such example of a recovery effort aimed at a broad audience.

“This year, we were very deliberate with new students and families. We said ‘You’re coming to a place that’s not the same as when you applied’, and I think we’ve done a good job of acculturating them. I don’t know how long we’ll be able to do that, but right now it’s something people can relate to. So I hope we can preserve that.”

–Administrator #1

“We did the I heart UCSB pins, and this pledge we developed, and the GauchoStrong wristbands that everyone got at Orientation, so that students coming in would really understand. Because there was a big fear that new students would have this huge disconnect with the rest of the student body.”

–Administrator #4

Due to concerns about the high turnover rate of students at UCSB and residents in Isla Vista as classes graduate and move away resulting in a loss of the community solidarity that arose in the wake of the tragedy, the administration actively tried to acclimate new students to the still-recovering community. The I <3 UCSB Campaign played an important role in orientations over the summer, with the aim of explaining what it means to be a Gaucho and why students should be proud of their identity as such.

In conclusion, all of these examples reflect the way in which social context plays a critical role in understanding how individuals make meaning of and perceive the social processes that arise in the wake of crises. Social distance is directly related to the unique needs that arise for affected populations, and recovery efforts must be tailored to the audience they are intended to serve. In the following section, I will explore two contrasting channels of recovery efforts, moving from a micro level to a meso level in looking at how organizational context affects perceptions of recovery effort effectiveness.

Formal and informal recovery efforts

The second sub-question that arose as I carried out my fieldwork was one about organizational context: how do formal and informal recovery efforts complement (or fail to complement) one another in order to meet the perceived needs of affected individuals? I found that perceptions of recovery efforts were also patterned by the way in which they were organized: events, processes, services and movements put forth officially by UCSB as an institution were understood differently than those that came about in a spontaneous, grassroots way as unaffiliated individuals created them in an effort to promote collective healing. As university-endorsed “formal” efforts like the UCSB Campus-Wide Memorial, the I <3 UCSB Campaign, grief counseling, and other

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administrative efforts were enacted in response to the tragedy, a number of “informal” recovery efforts arose alongside them. These are far too numerous to outline here, but a few notable examples include entirely student-run and organized efforts like the Memorial Paddle Out, protests against the media presence in Isla Vista, the Isla Vista Self Governance Initiative, the #GauchoStraight social media campaign and countless other projects, memorials, videos and movements.

In speaking with administrators, I learned that the university actually has a philosophy of intentionally leaving room for such informal efforts, silently encouraging students to take an active role in the response process.

“Our philosophy in this situation is one where we really believe that in situations like this, where there’s a high degree of emotion around a loss, that it’s important to let the students have input... not just have input, but really take the lead in some ways. Obviously this was of such a magnitude that the university needed to do something, but we felt it was really important that if the students wanted to do a paddle out, or wanted to do a candlelight vigil, that they really do that and organize it and that that is the way that people heal, is to do something, to make something happen.”

–Administrator #5

“There were all the informal sidewalk memorials for instance. And those, you know, they probably don’t meet all the codes, but it was kind of like, let’s be flexible. Those were really productive for people. And I think they helped us communicate outward, too. It was about flexibility.”

–Administrator #1

In creating an inventory of recovery efforts, I found that not all responses could be clearly labeled as formal or informal. There were a number of ways in which the gap between the two channels was bridged, and recovery efforts all along the spectrum from completely formal to completely informal. Administrators approached events differently, according to their place along this spectrum. As one explained, at the UCSB Campus-Wide Memorial (officially endorsed), university counselors took an active presence, wearing orange vests that read “COUNSELOR” on the back. At the Candlelight Vigil (semi-formal, organized by student government), counselors blended into the crowd subtly. Finally, because of its status as a “student thing,” counselors did not attend the Memorial Paddle Out at all.

The gap between the administration and the students was not the only room for disconnect in the response efforts. There also existed a more literal, geographic gap between Isla Vista and UCSB’s campus. A number of interview subjects touched on this “disconnect” between the affected population as both students and residents, and the campus as having a purely academic and institutional feel to it.

“It was for some of my students a real disconnect, where in IV there were all these flowers and memorials and chalk writing, but when they walked on campus they didn’t see any physical signs of what had happened so it ended up feeling like they alone were struggling with some bad dream, some bad personal thing. There was this stark contrast where campus didn’t reflect what was going on in the community of IV.”

–Administrator #8

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In response to her perception of this disconnect, Administrator #8, a graduate student instructor, took the initiative to construct an on-campus memorial. The message board at the Arbor, within the heart of campus, is still in place today to memorialize the students who were lost and to commemorate the “Gaucho Pride” that emerged from the event’s aftermath.

The best example of a recovery effort that served as a bridge not only between the formal and the informal, but also between campus and Isla Vista, is the student government-organized Candlelight Vigil, which was held the evening of May 24, only 24 short hours after the violence struck. The group of individuals who planned the vigil consisted mainly of those individuals who were active in student government, but also included administrators and unaffiliated students and community members who simply wished to help. The event not only bridged the gap between the students and the administration because of its status as an Associated Student Body (ASB) event (since one of the central purposes of the student governing body is to facilitate the relationship between the students and the administration), but also literally bridged another important gap: the physical one between campus and Isla Vista. Starting with a gathering in the heart of campus, the vigil included a procession into Isla Vista and concluded in a local park, with hours of testimonials and memories shared of the fallen Gauchos. Within a larger anecdote about her experience of that weekend, one administrator who had close relationships with many students involved in ASB explained the process of how the vigil came to be:

“We processed and planned and fought—and I say fought because they said ‘This isn’t about administration and they shouldn’t have any part in this.’ I said, ‘I’m in administration. I’m an Alum. Don’t shut me out. And I’m the one who can make sure you can do this.’ The other thing is that they wanted to not be on campus, and I said ‘I think we should start on campus.’ So I was able to influence them starting on Storke Tower Plaza, and it ended up being really simple and very powerful.”

–Administrator #3

Despite its difficult planning process, the vigil was universally perceived as a huge success, with not one of my interview subjects having negative comments to share about it, and all who attended it agreeing that it was the most helpful event for the community. Comments about it include “phenomenal,” “most respectful crowd I’ve ever seen,” “absolutely amazing,” “never experienced anything that powerful,” “the most powerful thing,” “most helpful by far,” and “it brought us all together.”

There were other important factors that bridged the gap between the two channels. For example, graduate student instructors (GSI’s) who are both students and administrators served as a significant piece in the aftermath because of their role that Administrator #7, a GSI, described as “the first line of defense” between the students and the administration. Because of this, she took an active role in ensuring that graduate student instructors were properly trained by counselors in how to communicate and interact with students in the immediate aftermath of the crisis. On this note, individual administrators became an important bridging factor between students and the larger administration. While they might be tied by protocol against acting in an official capacity without university approval, they could nonetheless offer support to students with whom they had relationships with as individuals. One student fondly remembered that though the university didn’t have enough jurisdiction over Isla Vista to support

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students who were fighting off unwanted attention from news crews, an administrator whom he had worked with previously stopped by and offered his support for the cause and a hand to lend if it was needed. Finally, social media acted as a significant bridge between the formal and informal channels, as it broke down barriers between the administration, students, and the outside world, enabling people to communicate quickly in a universally owned virtual space.

Solnit observes that following disasters, there tends to be a negative view of institutional responses because they signal the end of grassroots responses (Solnit, 2009, p.8). She also cites the appearance of spontaneously organized groups of responders as a suggestion that the official response efforts were inadequate (Solnit, 2009, p.200). Though there were some negative perceptions of UCSB's institutional response, it was not due to its overshadowing of the "informal" responses. There was also no mention among my subjects of needing to orchestrate informal responses to "make up for" something lacking in the institutional response. Instead, I argue that the two channels of responses offered different modes of healing to students, both of which were necessary to promote a full sense of community recovery. UCSB-endorsed events did not stamp out, but instead co-existed alongside unendorsed events. The biggest problem that institutional responses faced was the perception of them as being more symbolic than substantive, existing only to communicate legitimacy outward instead of to actually accomplish anything. In response to a question about the event's presence in her own experience at UCSB, one student who transferred in the fall of 2014 explained that the sheer number of times the tragedy was invoked began to make her perceive the school's stance as symbolic.

"I had to go through a lot of orientations and stuff like that and it was brought up in every single one, to the point that it almost became overkill. I learned about it at original orientation and there's been 3 different occasions, like the Gaucho FYT's, which was completely revamped after it happened to make it more informational. I think that that's kind of been the school's thought on going into it and moving forward, but like I said I do feel like it's almost just catch up, and in a way trying to just show students like 'No, we are here!' and I don't know. It feels a little inauthentic. Almost something they have to do."

–Student #6

When asked about the responses they took part in, a number of students criticized the UCSB Campus-Wide Memorial, arguably the school's most prominent recovery effort simply because of its 20,000 attendees. Three explicitly said that the event hadn't been helpful to them, feeling that it was too "political" or side-stepped the underlying issues that caused the massacre.

"The memorial was so political, to say the least. Everyone had their agenda. It was just very-it didn't feel genuine. All the speakers got up there and it felt like they were kind of reciting the things you would say at any sort of tribute or ceremony or funeral or whatever. That really threw me off. ... But you got to do it. The college has to respond somehow."

–Student #11

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“I did go to the big memorial. I didn’t find it to be helpful, no. ... No one took the opportunity to say something meaningful.”

–Student #10

“It just seemed like UCSB ... they did promote an atmosphere of healing in the community, I definitely think they did that, but I don’t think they were outspoken enough about how deeply psychotic this person was. They didn’t really take a strong stance against that.”

–Student #1

Despite these negative perceptions, there is a clear benefit that arose from the fact that the school either had to or chose to limit its recovery efforts: it gave students the opportunity to fill the gaps they perceived in the aftermath of the crisis themselves. Informal responses were not only a powerful way to heal for those who create them, but were also generally perceived as especially meaningful. As one student who created a video that he sent in solidarity to another university recently affected by a school shooting explained:

“I think it’s interesting to see how far the school gets involved. ... The things the students can do are so different. That was a point that [my advisor] made too, was that if it was coming from me or the community, it wasn’t for anything. If you’re doing it from the school people might think they told me to do it or it was an assignment, but if you’re doing it yourself or you’re doing it for free, it means a lot more.”

–Student #5

In this way, students are able to do what the school can’t, filling yet another possible gap that might have otherwise hindered the community’s recovery. For example, when asked what (if anything) might have been done differently by either the students or the school in the period following the massacre, five students cited the overwhelming media presence in Isla Vista as TV crews tried to capture crime scenes, victim sites and the heartbroken community. Comments about the media presence include “it’s not what we needed” and frustration that it “diverted attention away from the actual loss.” A recent graduate living in Isla Vista who was actively involved in protests against the media explained what motivated him:

“I had just kind of accepted, like, ‘This is what the news is supposed to do’, but then I was like, ‘No, this isn’t HOW they’re supposed to do it.’”

–Student #13

He continued, discussing the question of whether the university had the power to push back against the media alongside the sixty students involved in the protests. The quotes below, by him and another student, show how this particular recovery effort was again a way for students to do what the school couldn’t (or wouldn’t):

“I think that the greater administration ... they might have been able to do a lot more to help us, but we just made up our own way to deal with them.”

–Student #13

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“The media was an issue. I wish the campus had jumped in on that. What jurisdiction do they have in Isla Vista though? Students reacted to that instead though, definitely, and that was good.”

–Student #14

While students and others may have perceived either entire recovery efforts or pieces within them to be politically motivated, without concern for students or otherwise “symbolic,” what I found in speaking with individual administrators and UCSB employees was that extremely high levels of emotion and care had been put into the formal response channel. When recovery measures can be easily lumped into a single channel emanating from an institution, they become much easier to criticize as politically motivated. One interview subject, a UC employee who acted as a first responder the night of the tragedy, shared with me a sentiment that not only will I never forget, but also one that all administrators likely shared that night. With tears silently running down his face as he recounted for me his genuine feelings of heartbreak, he said:

“It was just such an emotional and difficult night for us. I was just thinking about my son at home, and couldn’t get the parents of the victims out of my head. People sometimes don’t realize how hard it was; we felt like we watched our own children die. We’re here to protect the students, the kids, the community, and to have a death... it was just so shattering.”

–Administrator #6

Had students been able to see reactions like this one, it is likely they would have felt more compassion emanating from the institution in its response efforts. One implication my findings have about organizational context is that institutions can resolve some of the “disconnect” that might be perceived by increasing transparency about the school’s response process. For example, three of the students complained that the university “didn’t do anything” to combat the disturbing media presence in the days following the violence. However, in speaking with one administrator, I was told that part of her role in all of the events that came about in those initial days after the tragedy was to intercept TV crews who might be harassing students—they just didn’t know it. Administrator #8 also discussed this problem:

“There were administrators working really, really hard behind the scenes, all in their own nighttime and weekends and free time, trying to respond and do amazing work around the tragedy, but it was kind of invisible to all the undergraduate students, because we’re supposed to keep a strong face and carry on and let the students feel like a source of normalcy is returning.” –Administrator #8

Similarly to social context, organizational context influences perceptions of recovery effort effectiveness in the wake of a crisis. I conclude that UCSB could have been more transparent about the care, concern and tireless effort that its employees put into the administrative response process, striking a better balance between “keeping a strong face” and exposing the emotional and practical realities of coping with a crisis. Nevertheless, the university’s decision to leave room for student-driven activity in the aftermath of the tragedy was ultimately positive, resulting in a vast number of recovery

efforts that wouldn't have been possible as officially endorsed measures and were incredibly powerful and appreciated by those who needed them.

The accumulation of crises

The final piece of my findings focuses on temporal context at the macro level: how does the accumulation of crises within a community over time affect perceptions of recovery effort effectiveness? Like my other threads, this sub-question arose inductively, as I found that none of my interview subjects were able to talk about Isla Vista after the May 23 massacre without citing one or more of the other three major crises that preceded it during the 2013-2014 school year. The first crisis at UCSB was a meningitis outbreak in late fall that landed a small number of students either in the hospital or under quarantine. A few months later, a series of brutally violent sexual assaults were committed in Isla Vista, leaving students on edge and causing an increase in surveillance around the community. Shortly after the attacks, the third crisis hit: UCSB's annual spring break-style day party called "Deltopia" concluded with a full-fledged riot that resulted in a vast amount of property damage, a record-breaking number of citations, and serious injuries sustained by police officers and students alike. Following the Deltopia unrest, tensions between students, police, the administration, and the media were at an all-time high for the year. Though one might assume that the continued occurrence of crises like these would break community solidarity as they accumulate over time, I found that the three crises which struck the UCSB community before the May 23 tragedy ultimately strengthened the community's capacity for resilience and ability to respond in a swift, effective, and positively perceived manner. This section focuses on how individuals and organizations used the knowledge and experience of previous crises to reflect on, make sense of, or inform their response to the May 23 massacre.

As crisis after crisis forced Isla Vista into the harsh light of the public eye, UCSB faced increasing scrutiny for its party-school reputation. Instead of resulting in a backlash, negative perceptions of the community from outsiders inspired students to outwardly display shows of love and pride for their school and the town they call home. In response to a question about how the four crises as a whole affected the community, students discussed how they strengthened feelings of community solidarity and broke down previously existing barriers between individuals.

"Last year in general was chaos, the whole school was reeling, and it was all a learning experience that we need to unite and be one not only as UCSB Students but also as Isla Vistans." –Student #14

"By the end of the year, I remember I would sit down at lunch and someone would see me and come up to me and say 'Hey how are you doing?' The most genuine thing in the world. The support... everyone knew you were going through something in life. Because everyone was going through the same thing."
–Student #10

The series of crises was also beneficial in strengthening community resilience on a formal level, as the university's response efforts to differing crises were perceived as having improved over time. Administrators explained responding to the first crisis, meningitis, as "exhausting," activating an emergency response protocol that hadn't been

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used in years. One student I interviewed was directly affected by the meningitis outbreak, having to be temporarily quarantined after being in close physical contact with the first infected individual, a close friend of hers. The two quotes below juxtapose the university's perception of the response to meningitis with a socially close individual's perception of it, respectively.

"I think we did a good job of making [meningitis] fun and lighthearted because we didn't want students to freak out. The biggest response we saw was people saying, 'Oh I don't want to get it because it hurts, it's a painful vaccine.' There was definitely people who were impacted, their circle was more impacted, but since it was a small group of students, it didn't affect the whole community. I think that one was pretty contained."

–Administrator #4

"I think they should have taken [meningitis] more seriously. They did have kids get vaccines, but everyone thought it was a joke. ... I just wish they treated it differently. If you look at it now, no one talks about it. Everyone's just moved on. I don't know how they could change individuals to take it more seriously but that's what needed to happen. ... The shooting was this huge response. The school went into recovery mode, but that didn't happen for us. Meningitis was this small casual thing. I wish somehow the school had found out that people were suffering and reached out. I would have wanted to talk to someone during that. Getting calls from national news and being quarantined, I didn't know how to cope with that. But nobody asked me. The shooting though, people were being reached out to left and right."

–Student #8

These differing perceptions of the institutional response to the first crisis shed light on how the school was only just beginning to learn to cope with an emergency when the meningitis outbreak occurred. They also show how perceptions of the school's response to the first crisis differed strongly from those of the response to the final crisis (the May 23 tragedy). When asked about whether there was a relationship between responses to the four crises that occurred during the 2013-2014 school year, multiple administrators commented on how what they learned from earlier crises informed their response to the next.

"The meningitis clinic, having to set up that entire thing and having to educate our students and deal with the panic and parents and all that, we actually activated our emergency operation team ... and we worked really closely with colleagues in Administrative Services to make that clinic happen. ... So we came right off of that and right into the sexual assaults, and then Deltopia which was a really difficult thing for the campus, and then we moved right into the May tragedy, but I think part of our ability to do what we did in May on such a short time frame and in such tragic circumstances really was because we had been very successful in a longer period of time building trust among these administrative colleagues ... we developed this level of trust that we didn't not have before, but we hadn't worked that closely before. ... I think our response in May was more successful because of the way that we worked together in really, from November through April. ... I tie them together in a positive way; I

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think we were in some ways fortunate that we had had these things happen that brought us all together. It served us really well.”

–Administrator #5

Though each of the four crises that occurred at UCSB during the 2013-2014 school year were individually devastating events, they offered the university the valuable opportunity to become familiar with, improve, and perfect their ability to respond to emergencies so that when the final and most traumatic crisis occurred, the school was as best prepared as it had been all year to respond quickly and effectively. However, some problems did arise as a result of the administration’s tendency to group the events together as somehow being caused by the “party-happy” climate in Isla Vista. Though students and individual administrators alike expressed recognition that such crises, especially the May 23 tragedy, could have occurred anywhere, there were a number of communications between the administration and the students that seemed to imply otherwise. In response to a question about what either the school or the students could have done differently in the aftermath of the massacre, a student and a graduate student instructor both commented on this phenomenon.

“Other higher up people... I wish in their letters it wasn’t so much blaming IV but understanding. I think a lot of their speeches and letters were like, ‘After last year, you guys need to make the change.’ And it was like, ‘You can make an effort to fix this relationship too. Not just blame it on the community.’”

–Student #14

*“Some of the higher level administrators felt really concerned about the whole perception nationally that UCSB and Isla Vista were getting, and there was a lot of pressure to kind of control this unruly area of Isla Vista. ... There were some correspondences between administration that were sent out to all students, undergrad and grad students that really suggested the students were at fault. ... Some [students] purposefully invited friends and planned bigger parties and intended to be incredibly unruly as kind of a ‘F*** you, we’re going to show you we can do whatever we want.’ There were those large towers put up with cameras videotaping people in the wake of the sexual assaults, and people felt like the campus was just using the sexual assaults as a way to kind of do this ‘big brother is watching you’ thing to videotape everyone for Deltopia, but pretending it was because of this other thing.”*

–Administrator #8

As more crises arose, so did pressure for the university to increase the formal response efforts to quell public relations concerns, as well as those for the safety of students and Isla Vista residents. Consequently, the administration began to tie together crises that weren’t technically related, using reprimanding tones and seemingly punishment-oriented practices and ultimately offending students who felt unjustly blamed. In this way, despite its overall beneficial effect, the accumulation of crises did provide an opportunity for tension between students and the school that may have hindered the community’s ability to recover from the tumultuous year.

Again, though most stated their understanding of the May 23 tragedy as a random act of violence that in no way was related to or caused by Isla Vista’s culture, it was still looked at by students and administrators alike as a much-needed turning point

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for the community. Interview subjects explained a number of both tangible and intangible changes that were spurred in the wake of the tragedy, citing both general changes in attitude as well as concrete actions and projects that aimed to produce positive change. Below, a student and an administrator comment on this in response to a question about how the crises affected the community:

“It’s good that people finally had the wake up call that something needs to change. On different levels. Behaviorally and structurally and government-wise, on all the different facets people finally are understanding that we can’t continue going the way we’re going. It really got people united to fix it. It’s sustained now. Obviously it’s falling apart a little bit. Every week a couple people peel off, but it’s still going.”

–Student #2

“It has renewed or invigorated the attention of the Chancellor and the trustees of the campus and the faculty of the campus to tend to life in Isla Vista and student life in Isla Vista in a way that, with a tenacity that hadn’t necessarily been there as broadly. There’s a lot more attention focused on Isla Vista, which almost is a little counter-intuitive because this tragedy didn’t arise, Isla Vista didn’t create the tragedy. But people became acutely aware of the concentration of students in Isla Vista and the potential of our community and the quality of our community and why to a) protect students as much as we can and b) strive toward that really positive level of community without tragedy. There’s a lot of ongoing work from virtually all constituents.”

–Administrator #1

As these individuals note, much has changed in Isla Vista since the tragedy (and the three preceding crises) struck. First, a number of interview subjects commented on how things simply *felt* different in the aftermath of the difficult year, discussing how “conversations that were difficult to have are easier to have now,” “the community has really pulled together, really connected,” “people look out for one another now,” and “people perceive Isla Vista and UCSB as friendlier places.” However, the changes that came about in response to these crises went farther than just improving the kindness and care in daily interactions. One such example is the Isla Vista Self Governance Initiative. The project began when a number of students active in the community decided to advocate for Isla Vista to have its own self-governance and self-determination. One student involved in the creation of the campaign discussed how it arose in response to the crises the community faced in the 2013-2013 school year:

“It was the riot a little bit, the riot had created some need. But the shooting is really what solidified it. A lot of people really care more now about improving IV, and the partying image is in question a lot, and people are looking at things differently. They’re not sticking to the ingrained things they like about IV; they want to actually move forward and start adjusting it to be better in the future. I had never seen people actually caring about IV ... but after the shooting, everybody cared about how everybody else was doing and how the whole town was thriving, so that was the biggest change after the shooting which was that it got people to care a lot. Which sucks, that it took the shooting to happen, but people really started to have a strong opinion about what was going on in IV and wanted to be directly involved in fixing it.

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... So many people are so interested in moving IV forward so that we don't have another shooting and we don't have another riot and it's a safe place to live and we don't have to worry about getting shot."

–Student #2

Another of the most significant recovery efforts that came about in response to the crises was the school's decision to expand policing measures. As one UCSB employee explained, because of the crises (the riots in particular), the UC recognized a need to increase police presence in Isla Vista from having an average of two officers out in the field on a weekend night to an average of about fifteen to twenty. He noted that there has been a significant decrease in crime, citations, and arrests since the change. A number of students responded to a question about how the massacre changed Isla Vista by discussing the increase in policing.

"I actually enjoy it. It makes me feel more safe having more cops around. ... They started putting up surveillance cameras and stuff. I have no problem with that, because it makes me feel more safe. But at the same time I don't want to feel like I'm in a police state on lockdown. There's a happy medium there. ... Police presence is more accepted now than it was previously, but ... they're trying to crack down on the party scene here, but it wasn't necessarily the partying that caused it."

–Student #4

"On the weekends it's usually a big party environment, so policing has been more strict. But not negatively, not like the Deltopia riots backlash, more just for safety reasons."

–Student #9

As reflected here, students maintain some serious concerns about safety. Four students commented on the university's increased use of its emergency electronic communications system, which sends students texts about possibly dangerous situations either in Isla Vista or on campus. An administrator confirmed that the service had been used much more since the crisis in May in an effort to open the lines of communication between the school, the police, and the students. However, this increased transparency may have a negative effect: now that students are more aware of potential threats (even though crime is actually lower), they are more concerned for their safety.

"A lot of people are afraid now. I talked to a person who got shot too, and she doesn't want to go out anymore. People are really scared, people are... girls especially don't walk home alone, so it definitely shocked everybody and made everybody... things are different. There is a higher regard for caution, safety. That's embedded in their brains now. You can't unlive this."

–Student #7

"I'll be honest though, I don't feel as safe anymore. I get really freaked out sometimes. I walk past the crime scenes and it's like, 'Am I going to get attacked?' A car passes by and I freak out. I guess that'll go away with time."

–Student #8

Because all fourteen students that I spoke with commented in some way about how the events negatively affected their perceptions of their personal safety in Isla Vista, I find safety to be the factor which has the most potential to weaken a community's ability to recover from violent crime. A normative implication of this finding is that communities who face such crimes should channel more effort into addressing these specific concerns. Overall, I argue that communities facing crises are best able to combat their negative effects if they rely on practices and lessons learned from past incidents they may have faced.

Weaving the three threads together: social, organizational, and temporal context

Together, my findings about social distance, the interplay between formal and informal responses, and the accumulation of crises implicate the importance of context in understanding perceptions of recovery effort effectiveness in the wake of college crises. While they are important to understand individually, social, organizational, and temporal context also relate to one another in important ways. The best example of a recovery effort in which these three threads intertwine to affect perceptions of its effectiveness is the UCSB Come Together Concert, which featured a free performance by UCSB Alumni-turned musician Jack Johnson in the fall of 2014. The event tried to meet the needs of both the socially close and the socially distant, bridge the gap between formal and informal, and address all four crises at once. Though well-intentioned, the result was ultimately a confusion in tone that rendered the event generally unsuccessful in promoting collective recovery.

When one recovery process tries to meet the needs of both the socially close and the socially distant, it can send mixed messages that renders it ineffective for one or both groups. The Come Together concert was supposed to kick off the new year on a positive note, while also acclimating new students to the idea of continued memorialization of those Gauchos lost the previous spring. For the socially distant, and for students new to UCSB in particular, the concert was received positively, praised as a fun, light-hearted, feel-good introduction to the school. But as some students and administrators explained, the concert was borderline offensive for the socially close due to its uneven balance between memorialization, moving forward, and celebrating the new year.

The Come Together concert was also an attempt to bridge the formal and informal channels of response. The event was organized mainly by students within ASB, but had input from many of the institutional actors involved in previous recovery efforts that had taken place the previous spring. While it was technically student-run, administrators had a strong place in the program, with a speech delivered by the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs as the introduction to the evening. The speech had an institutional tone, discussing the larger reputation of UCSB and Isla Vista in the public eye, which many took to be distastefully politically motivated. In this way, the attempt to include administrative involvement in an otherwise informal event brought in the problems associated with the formal response channel, including room for speculation of ulterior motives.

Finally, the concert tried to include previous crises in the event's purpose, declaring it an opportunity to "come together" after an especially difficult year. While the other events were important in creating community solidarity, the way in which they were addressed at the concert implied that they were important because they had been

preventable, not because they had supported the community's ability to come together. Again, the speech was the most problematic factor. A graduate student who is conducting research about how the community responded in the aftermath of the May tragedy and who has spoken with a number of undergraduates about their perceptions of the recovery efforts explains why the event was, overall, not successful in promoting recovery for all sectors of the affected population:

"I was offended that at this event, it's called 'Come Together' and they had just read the names of the six victims and were supposedly memorializing and paying a tribute to them and their lives ... a lot of people felt like it was just this weird mixture of memorializing those who were killed and injured, and then the Vice Chancellor giving this speech that's kind of reprimanding, and then suddenly the concert with Jack Johnson that's super celebratory, and... I'm not trying to criticize ASB in doing this, I'm just trying to say that perhaps so many people had different ideas about what they'd like to see that the compromise became cut into three pieces and do them all at once. A lot of people who were close to the victims didn't feel like it was really well thought out or really a proper memorialization type of event. ... The Tri Delta sorority where they're really close to the victims-two of their own were killed and [another] was injured and survived- they really want it to be about their sisters and have it be a much more somber memorial type of event. But other people who were coming in as freshmen and weren't even there in May or didn't really have that much of a connection and hadn't been around, they're like, 'Cool! Free concert with Jack Johnson! Let's celebrate how much we like Isla Vista!' That automatically is going to create a tension between how much is it on memorialization and how much is it on celebrating the whole community coming together. And that's a thread throughout all of the different memorial events that have occurred actually."

–Administrator #8

This recovery effort serves as an example of how social, organizational, and temporal context all need to be taken carefully into account when organizing a response that aims to address the needs of all individuals and groups as they try to cope with a crisis. Together, these three threads highlight the importance of attention being paid to the specific circumstances and needs of individual communities as they attempt to maintain resilience in the face of adversity.

Conclusion

In short, there is no "one size fits all" solution for responding to communal crises. Instead, recovery efforts must be narrowly tailored to fit the specific needs of individuals and groups according to social, organizational, and temporal context. When communities face a crisis, they must be aware of social distance, try to bridge the gap between formal and informal response channels, and use knowledge from past crises to build, not break, community solidarity. Recovery efforts that effectively account for these important factors meet the needs that arise within various affected populations as they attempt to bounce back from the trauma, ultimately promoting collective healing.

This paper aims to fill a gap in literature in the field of research school shootings and also the larger topic of disaster studies to explain how perceptions are strongly influenced by context. It shows what communities facing trauma might expect to arise in their aftermath, as well as what works and what doesn't in terms of recovery efforts.

The Isla Vista massacre, though a unique case, could relate to other theories of collective healing in explaining the importance of looking at multiple levels (micro, meso, and macro) in order to understand the meanings and perceptions that people attach to different responses. However, this study had its limitations, and could still be built upon to further understand perceptions in the aftermath of crises. For example, future research might look into the question of the role of law in the wake of trauma. Though a civil lawsuit against the Sheriff's department was recently filed by the families of some of the victims killed or injured in the Isla Vista massacre, it was not within the scope of this project's parameters to be able to investigate such a legally sensitive subject. Nevertheless, the legal route of response is an important one, and research should aim to understand how it works with (or against) the social processes that this paper seeks to understand.

Additionally, it is my hope that the findings of this project might inform future policy regarding crisis response, both in schools and other communities facing disasters. Again, recovery efforts put forth by both formal and informal channels must be aware of the context in which they are taking place if they are to effectively meet the needs of the affected community; monolithic responses risk being perceived negatively and possibly creating resistance among those who experience them. One administrator that I spoke with made a comment that aptly summarizes the purpose of projects like my own, saying, "We realize we can't prevent random acts of violence, but we know that they're occurring, so we can and should have meaningful conversations about similar patterns of response that are necessary in the wake of these tragedies." Finally, a number of other interview subjects mentioned more specific measures that, in retrospect, might have been taken to better promote collective healing in Isla Vista. These included more transparency about and better communication from the formal channel of response, as well as the creation of a specific department within the administration that deals exclusively with matters related to crisis response.

It is my hope that this paper has effectively shed light on one of the darkest subjects that society is currently being forced to grapple with. In the unfortunate reality that another community must someday cope with a situation like that which was presented in Isla Vista last spring, may this study serve as a roadmap towards understanding how it might cope, recover, and heal.

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Fiat Lux

Translation: “Let There Be Light”
Official Motto of the University of California

Appendix A: Recovery Effort Inventory

Events

- Memorial Paddle Out
- UCSB Memorial Service
- Candlelight Vigil
- Greek-Only Memorial Service
- Dog Therapy Days
- Open Forum at Anisq’oyo Park
- UCSB Come Together Concert
- Not One More Rally
- GauchoStrong Pride Day
- Community Potluck
- Open Public Safety Meeting
- Community Healing Gathering
- 1000 Cranes of Love for IV Deli
- Quiet Evening Out for First Responders
- Santa Barbara Gun Buyback
- Alumni Events
- Other UC Campus Memorials
- Event in Solidarity with Seattle Pacific
- Goleta Community Dialogue and Reflection in Response

Projects

- IVStrong Anthology
- Boys and Guns
- IV Love Fundraiser
- Victims of Isla Vista Fund
- IV MAD (Moms and Dads)
- Isla Vista Self Governance

Memorial Sites

- Victim Sites
- Arbor Message Board
- Pardall Message Boards

CAPS

- Grief Counseling

- Pathways to Healing
- #SaySomething
- Funding Grant

Administrative

- Increased policing and surveillance
- Financial Aid Advising
- Academic Advising
- Academic Adjustments
- I <3 UCSB Pledge
- I <3 UCSB Campaign
- Love Letter to Students
- “Cheat Sheets” for staff in contact with public
- Graduation Adjustments
 - Remembrance focus (Joe Biden Video)
 - Increased safety precautions
 - Blue and gold ribbons
 - Moment of silence
 - Memorial scholarships
 - Posthumous degrees

Social Media

- #NotOneMore
- #IVStrong
- #GauchoStrong
- #YesAllWomen
- UCSB Confession Posts
- Personal Statuses
- Profile Photo Changes
- Humans of UCSB
- Isla Vista: A Week of Solidarity and Healing

Media Submissions

- “Still Working on That”

Paradise Not Lost

- “I Remember Isla Vista and I am Asking”
- “Paradise Not Lost”
- “The Right to Grieve Untelevised”

Memorial Videos

- “From Our Coast to Yours: An Open Love Letter from Isla Vista to FSU”

- “Stay Happy Isla Vista”
- Joe Biden Addresses Class of 2014

Future Efforts

- Memorial Benches in Isla Vista
- Memorial Collection
- Anniversary – In Progress

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