

Zombie Apocalypse Would Lead to New Cooperative Development

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OSU is about to unleash their annual “humans versus zombies” student event. As I understand it the participating students wear identifying arm and head bands. The humans attempt to shoot the zombies with Nerf guns and the zombies attempt to tag the humans. Fulfilling its important obligation as an institute of higher learning the university publishes useful tips. Humans are encourage to carry a backup Nerf weapon as Nerf blasters are prone to jams while zombies are reminded to wear good running shoes. The event reminded me of a blog that suggested that cooperative members might be best prepared for a Zombie Apocalypse.

The blog was drawing on a recently published book that looked at how communities come together after earthquakes, hurricanes and other disasters. The book argues that communities with more experience in cooperation are better able to resist chaos in catastrophe and work together to meet basic needs. The concept is actually somewhat similar to the situation of the pioneers on the Mayflower. As I have discussed, their need to work together to survive led to the famous “Mayflower Compact” which encompassed some aspects of the cooperative business model.

I haven’t watched enough “Night of the Living Dead” to have a good grasp of the economic needs after a Zombie Apocalypse. It seems to me that there would be urgent need for food, water, shelter and other basic services. With the financial markets in disarray the cooperative business model would be the logical choice for providing unavailable services and providing economies of scale. The principles of democratic member control, benefit in proportion to use, concern for community and cooperation with other cooperatives could be just the thing to bring order out of chaos. While the success of the cooperative business model dates back to the 1800’s and the Rochdale pioneers, it has also proven flexible. I don’t think we would be violating any core principles by changing “one member-one vote” to “one human-one vote” The zombies can form their own business models!

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