Stretching Money to Pay the Bills
Temporal Modalities and Relational Practices of ‘Getting By’ in the Greek Economic Crisis
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This article investigates the temporalities of ‘getting by’ amidst the ripple effects of economic deterioration in Volos, Greece. Through the case of Kalypso and her family, I argue for a relational framework in the study of temporal practices, and then discuss the significant material relations of the family. Faced with less than half of their previous income, Kalypso runs a general budget pool via e-banking that allows her to coordinate the temporal constraints of periodic and everyday bills. The effect is a drifting apart of temporal experiences in the family as well as tensions about the future. Temporal agency is shown to reside in the modalities of social relations and in corresponding practices.

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Money is often defined in terms of the three functions or services that it provides. Money serves as a medium of exchange, as a store of value, and as a unit of account. Medium of exchange. Money's most important function is as a medium of exchange to facilitate transactions. Without money, all transactions would have to be conducted by barter, which involves direct exchange of one good or service for another. The difficulty with a barter system is that in order to obtain a particular good or service from a supplier, one has to possess a good or service of equal value, which the supplier Revamped pay policies should prevent a repeat of the injustice of bankers taking public money while pocketing huge pay-packets—in 2009 staff at the five biggest banks trousered $114bn. Yet many lessons have gone unlearned. Take, for example, policymakers' mistakes in the aftermath of the crisis. The state had no choice but to stand behind failing banks, but it took the ill-judged decision to all but abandon insolvent households. Perhaps 9m Americans lost their homes in the recession; unemployment rose by over 8m. While households paid down debt, consumer spending was ravaged. It has taken full