

Hurricane Katrina slams into Gulf Coast

Article from the *New York Times* August 30, 2005
by JOSEPH B. TREASTER AND KATE ZERNIKE

Prologue. Introducing the Lower 9th Ward

IRA GLASS –
One of my coworkers here at This American Life, Robyn, was visiting New Orleans two years ago on a family vacation. And they had never been to New Orleans before. And they took one of those bus tours of the city—you know, where it would show you the sights and the French Quarter. And then there was some, you know, look at this telephone pole. You can see the mark for how high the water got during Hurricane Katrina. The tour guide was an older black man, a local. She said he was really good. And there's this one moment during the tour that really stuck out. It was late in the tour. They're driving to the Lower Ninth Ward.

Robyn Semien –
And as we were coming toward it, our tour bus guide says, so look. We used to go down into this area, the Lower Ninth Ward. It was really badly hit in the storm. You know that. But we stopped going down there because we learned that the people there just really—they didn't like the tours. They don't like the tours. They don't want people to come in and look at them and stare at them and look at how bad it is. And so we're not going to go in there. And it stuck with me. I just believed that he was saying

something that meant something to him. It seemed like he was saying something sincere, like we don't do this, and we're not doing it for the right reason. And so I'll show you some other stuff. But this is off-limits.

Ira Glass –
The tour guide may have been sincere. But in addition, it's illegal for tour buses to go into the Lower Ninth Ward. The city council made it illegal starting in 2006, because buses were in the way of cleanup crews. But the rule was widely ignored till 2012, when homeowners went to the city council to finally get it enforced.

Gwen Adams –
It really made me angry. I felt as if you're looking at me through an eye that says, oh, look, there's another little animal in the zoo.

Ira Glass –
Gwen Adams is one of the homeowners who went to the city council about the bus tours. Kim Ford's another homeowner.

Kim Ford –
I'm not saying that they will come in here to gawk at people, no. I don't think there's anything mean spirited about it at all. I think they have a genuine interest to want to know how are the people doing,

NEW ORLEANS –
Hurricane Katrina pounded the Gulf Coast with devastating force at daybreak on Monday, sparing New Orleans the catastrophic hit that had been feared but inundating parts of the city and heaping damage on neighboring Mississippi, where it killed dozens, ripped away roofs and left coastal roads impassable.

Officials said that according to preliminary reports, there were at least 55 deaths, with 50 alone in Harrison County, Miss., which includes Gulfport

and Biloxi. Emergency workers feared that they would find more dead among people who had been trapped in their homes and in collapsed buildings.

Jim Pollard, a spokesman for the Harrison County emergency operations center, said many of the dead were found in an apartment complex in Biloxi. Seven others were found in the Industrial Seaway. Packing 145-mile-an-hour winds as it made landfall, the storm left more than a million people in three states

without power and submerged highways even hundreds of miles from its center.

The storm was potent enough to rank as one of the most punishing hurricanes ever to hit the United States. Insurance experts said that damage could exceed \$9 billion, which would make it one of the costliest storms on record.

In New Orleans, most of the levees held, but one was damaged. Floodwaters rose to rooftops in one neighborhood, and in many areas emergency

workers pulled residents from roofs. The hurricane's howling winds stripped 15-foot sections off the roof of the Superdome, where as many as 10,000 evacuees took shelter.

Some of the worst damage reports came from east of New Orleans with an estimated 40,000 homes reported flooded in St. Bernard Parish. In Gulfport, the storm left three of five hospitals without working emergency rooms, beachfront homes wrecked and major stretches of the coastal highway flooded and unpassable.

"It came on Mississippi like a ton of bricks," Gov. Haley Barbour said at a midday news conference "It's a terrible storm."

President Bush promised extensive assistance for hurricane victims, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency was expected to be working in the area for months, assessing damage to properties and allocating what is likely to be billions of dollars in aid to homeowners and businesses.

In Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi, the governors declared search and rescue their top priority, but they said high waters and strong winds were keeping them from that task, particularly in the hardest-hit areas.



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS – Doll house toys found in the home of a Katrina victim is mirrors of the feelings and devastation of the survivors from the hurricane.

what's going on with them. I get that. But guess what? That's not the way you do that.

Ira Glass –

It was just so impersonal, people say. That's part of what felt so weird.

JAMAL PRESTON –

Back when I was in school, like, every day I look outside, there's like a tour bus coming through. And there's like 50, 60 people on the bus—the big, air-conditioned, super comfortable ones. You would never see who was on the buses, because they wouldn't get off. They just come through, and then leave.

Like they're coming through just for the sake of, like, oh, look at how terrible—sympathy, aw.

But your sympathy is because something bad happened to people. Your sympathy is not based on the people that you actually met in the neighborhood that had to deal with it. It's a whole different level

IRA GLASS –

The 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina is this month. You probably heard that. There's been a ton of coverage—remembering what happened, and stories about the rebuilding. But the Lower Ninth, this place that the bus tour will not take you into, is a special case, because this is the part of the city that was not supposed to come back. You remember this, right after the storm? City officials said, forget it. Don't let anybody back there. The mayor's planning commission wanted to turn it to green space, basically a public park.

IRA GLASS –

Investigative reporter Gary Rivlin did a nice summary of those stumbling blocks recently. The Lower Ninth was the last neighborhood in the city to get electricity and drinking water. Residents were allowed back months after they were allowed into other neighborhoods. FEMA trailers were slower to arrive here. Only one school was reopened, and that only happened after teachers and parents cut the

padlock on the building and marched on the superintendent's office.

Meanwhile, money allocated for homeowners to rebuild their houses—\$10 billion of assistance for Katrina victims throughout Louisiana was distributed by the state in a way that discriminated against black homeowners. That's what a federal judge ruled in 2010. And it's black homeowners who are in the Lower Ninth. Because of all this, most people did not come back.

The population of the ward is a little less than half of what it was before the storm. So half the homes are back. And they're bunched up at the bottom end of the ward, the high ground near the Mississippi, with bit patches of nothing in the top half, where Mr. Irvin lives.

HENRY IRVIN –

They started working on that house. This house has been totally repaired. This house, they haven't done anything on it.

IRA GLASS –

I'd seen pictures of the Lower Ninth Ward—probably you have, too. But they didn't prepare me for what it's like to drive around the north half of the ward, the part above North Claiborne Street. It's like wilderness. But it's a very orderly wilderness—a grid of streets laid out like a town waiting for developers who never showed up—which, you know, it is—tall grass filling the space between lots.

HENRY IRVIN –

So there was a grocery store here on this corner one time.

IRA GLASS –

Now it's just a foundation there.

HENRY IRVIN –

It's just a foundation, that's all. This used to be a school right here. It's just an empty piece of land.

IRA GLASS –

Outside the Lower Ninth, in the rest of the city, the population is 90% back to what it was before the storm. Who you meet when you travel around the Lower Ninth are just some very willful

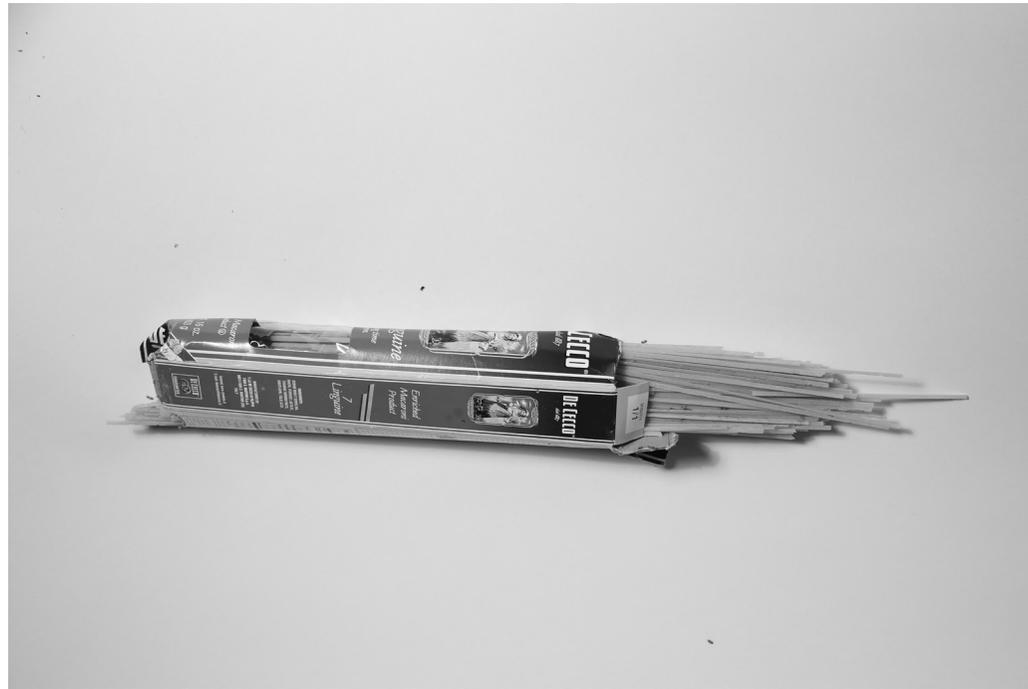


PHOTO CREDITS TO SARA REMI FIELDS – The economy was highly impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Gas prices spiked, the stock market crashed and every thing become had to come by including food.

The governors sent out the police and the National Guard after reports of looting, and officials in some parts of Louisiana said they would impose a curfew.

Hurricane Katrina was downgraded from Category 5 -- the most dangerous storm -- to Category 4 as it hit land in eastern Louisiana just after 6 a.m., and in New Orleans officials said the storm's slight shift to the east had spared them somewhat. The city is below sea level, and there had been predictions that the historic French Quarter would be under 18 or 20 feet of water. Still, no one was finding much comfort here, with 100 m.p.h. winds and water surges of up to 15 feet. Officials said early in the day that more than 20 buildings had been toppled.

"I can't say that we've escaped the worst," Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco said. "I think there is still damage that can be inflicted on the city. We don't even know what the worst is."

Preliminary damage estimates from the hurricane -- which raked across southern Florida last week as a Category 1 storm

before reaching the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico and making its run at the Gulf Coast -- ranged from \$9 billion to \$16 billion. Only Hurricane Andrew, which ripped through parts of Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi in August 1992, was costlier -- with nearly \$21 billion in insured losses.

Beyond the property damage caused by flooding and the high winds, Hurricane Katrina also dealt a blow to the oil industry and the lucrative casinos that have been the economic engine for the region. Both oil production on offshore platforms and gambling in the string of casinos that dot the Mississippi Gulf Coast shut down on Sunday as the storm approached.

Since Friday, oil output in the Gulf of Mexico has been cut by 3.1 million barrels. Closing the casinos cost Mississippi \$400,000 to \$500,000 a day in lost tax revenue alone, and Mr. Barbour said officials had not yet been able to determine the extent of damage to the casinos.

The storm pounded New Orleans for eight hours straight. Flooding overwhelmed levees

built to protect the city from the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain, sending muddy water swirling into the narrow streets downtown. On the southern shore of the lake, entire neighborhoods of one-story homes were flooded to the rooflines, with nearby off-ramps for Interstate 10 looking like boat ramps amid the waves.

Along the lake were snapped telephone poles, trees blocking roads and live wires scattered over the roads. In one cabin, a family was cooking a chicken dinner over charcoal briquettes on a hibachi. They had lost power like everyone else in the area.

Windows were blown off condominiums, hotels, office buildings and Charity Hospital, sending shards of glass into the winds. Fires broke out despite torrential rain, some ignited, the authorities said, by residents who lighted candles after the electricity went out. The storm knocked out telephone and cellular service across swaths of the gulf region, and officials in New Orleans said parts of the city could remain without power for weeks.

Two nuclear plants near the path of Hurricane Katrina appear to have weathered the storm without major damage, and a third shut down on Saturday, in anticipation of the hurricane, according to Entergy Nuclear, which owns all three. The extent of damage to the plant that shut down, Waterford, 20 miles west of New Orleans, was still unknown late Monday afternoon because the wind was blowing too hard to go out and look, said Diane Park, a spokeswoman.

The more sparsely populated parishes east of New Orleans, meanwhile, got hit much harder than anyone had expected.

Ms. Blanco said Plaquemines, Orleans, St. Bernard, Jefferson and St. Tammany Parishes had been "devastated by high winds and floodwaters." In St. Bernard, the emergency center was submerged, and officials estimated that 40,000 homes, too, were flooded.

Officials estimated 80 percent of New Orleans residents had obeyed the order to evacuate. But in areas that had been expecting less damage, officials were worried -- and annoyed -- that large numbers of people tried to ride out the storm.

In Plaquemines and Terrebonne Parishes, south and west of the city, officials said they were particularly concerned about commercial fisherman who had decided to remain on their boats.

In Mississippi, Mr. Barbour said many people suffered from what he called "hurricane fatigue," deciding not to evacuate this time after having done so in the past only to be spared.

"We pray that those people are O.K.," he said. "But we don't know."

In Diamondhead, Miss., Don Haller and his 17-year-old son, Don Jr., were left clinging to the remains of their house

people who've dealt with some of the worst destruction in the city and who are dealing with a lot of ghosts. It's still not clear exactly how many people in New Orleans died in Katrina. The official count is about 1,000, a third of those by drowning. More of those were in the Lower Ninth than any other neighborhood. Today, we're going to take you on a walking tour of the Lower Ninth. We're going to make four stops. And at each stop, we're going to do what the bus tour cannot do. We're going to meet some people. And think about this for a second. This is the neighborhood that the city did not want to exist.

First Stop. Northwest Corner of St. Claude and Gordon Street

IRA GLASS—

OK, so like I said, this is going to be a walking tour. And our first stop is going to be the northeast corner of St. Claude Avenue and Gordon Street. So face the street. Just to orient you real fast, the Lower Ninth is basically a rectangle with water on three sides of the rectangle. So as you stand here facing the street, the Mississippi is a few blocks in front of you. The bayou is a little ways behind you. And the Industrial Canal's to your right a bunch of blocks.

It's all pretty close. The Lower Ninth is just 20 blocks wide—just a little over a mile. And if you turn around now and you face this building on the corner, what you see is a two-story building. And the first story is faded brick. And those bricks were damaged during Katrina by rescue boats that knocked into it. A Wildlife and Fisheries guy told the current owner of this building 50 people were rescued from the balcony on the second floor.

So back in the day, locals will tell you that this was a medical clinic. These days, it's a cafe—well, more than a cafe. You see the hand lettered sign out front that



PHOTO CREDITS TO SARA REMI FIELDS — Children's items and traditional family keepsakes were found in some of the homes. "My biggest concern is the loss of life," said State Senator Walter J. Boasso. "We have a lot of people down there hiding in their attics, and I don't know if we will get to them fast enough."

lists red bean and rice special, ribs, computer service, VA benefits, seafood. And the guy that we're here to talk to is one of those people who has thrown his whole life now into trying to push the Lower Ninth into the future, Kirk Washington. Everybody just calls him Washington. Robyn spent a bunch of time with him.

Robyn Semien—
Washington is the least retired person I've ever met, thanks to Katrina. He opened this cafe.

Kirk Washington
Ah, it's hot in the cafe, baby.
Robyn Semien
Every day but Sunday, when the cafe's closed, he's here.
Washington's a retired postal worker. He didn't know anything about running a cafe. After Katrina, he just saw that there was no place to send a fax or photocopy anything or look stuff up online, which you need to do with construction permits and home inspectors and FEMA and the city. So he thought, I'll build that.

when a 23-foot surge of water hit it, flexing the roof like a deck of cards.

They had decided against evacuating, Mr. Haller said, judging the storm "just a lot of rain."

"We rode the house," Mr. Haller said, emerging from the waters here, his son carrying their dachshund, Kuddles.

Mr. Barbour said casinos along the coast near Biloxi and Gulfport had been hit by surges of more than 20 feet. But casino workers could not reach them to survey the damage, he said, because U.S. 90 had "essentially been destroyed."

Along the coast in Mobile, Ala., 150 miles east of New Orleans, thousands of evacuees from Mississippi and Louisiana were filling shelters and the hotels that had remained open. The lowest-lying areas of Mobile and Baldwin Counties

in Alabama were evacuated on Sunday night. By noon, areas south of Interstate 10 were already flooding, and the storm surge was pushing the water toward the city of Mobile and Mobile Bay as the hurricane progressed.

Downtown Mobile, which is right on the bay, was severely flooded by Monday afternoon, the water pushing down the main streets around the county courthouse and lapping at the sandbagged doors and windows at the Mobile Museum. Water all but covered a number of street signs and parking meters, and large, heavy planters and some newspaper boxes floated down the streets.

The main hotels in the city were just a block or two from the worst flooding, causing concerns that they, too, would be flooded, at least in the main floors. And as power and phone lines went down, evacuees were getting restless.

Paul Weir said he had not left his home in Meraux, La., just outside New Orleans, during a storm since Hurricane Betsy in 1965, and left on Sunday morning only after hearing that Hurricane Katrina was a Category 5. He drove with his wife, daughter and four friends to Mobile; with roads clogged with other residents fleeing, what is normally a three-hour drive took 12.

"If I was home, I would've went on a roof for two days just like everybody else," said Susan Weir, Mr. Weir's wife, said. "I'd rather be in that situation than here, honestly. This is expensive and I've only got a credit card with a \$2,000 limit."

At the Ramada Hotel in downtown Mobile, Edith Frieson sat anxiously in a soggy room wondering why her husband had not returned. "He left maybe three hours ago to go down and see if he could check the house," said Mrs. Frieson, who lives on Dauphin Island, a narrow barrier island south of Mobile. The island was already flooding on Sunday afternoon.

Like most storms, Hurricane Katrina weakened as it came onshore, and by Monday evening the National Hurricane Center had downgraded it to a tropical storm. The center of the storm had moved its heavy rains toward Jackson, Miss.

But state officials said the hurricane had been an unusually large one, causing a wide swath of damage, and they expected to be dealing with damage for days if not weeks.

In Louisiana, Ms. Blanco pleaded with residents who had evacuated not to rush back.

"The roads are flooded, the power is out, the phones are down and there is no food

or water, and many trees are down," she said.

"Wherever you live, it is still too dangerous for people to return home," she continued. "If you evacuated and you're in a shelter, if you're with friends and family, please, please stay there. Stay safe."

Michael D. Brown, the director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, reminded people that most injuries from hurricanes occurred after the storm had passed.

"Be careful," Mr. Brown said, standing next to the governor at a news conference. "Don't get in that water. Watch for downed power lines. If you're going to use a chainsaw, know how to use a chainsaw. If you're going to have a generator, know how to exercise and operate the generator. Be very, very careful. The storm is not over."

Stocks Climb as Storm Diminishes

Article from the
Washington Post
August 30, 2005
by ASSOCIATED
PRESS

NEW YORK—
Wall Street rallied Monday after Hurricane Katrina weakened, easing concerns about refinery outages along the Gulf of Mexico and pulling oil prices back from record highs.

Stocks opened lower but quickly rebounded as crude oil futures cooled after surging past \$70 a barrel in early trading on news that the storm

Then he kept going with other things they needed—food, a game room with pool tables, a small clothing store, a recording studio. One day, I watched him help a resident apply for a home loan, rack a pool table for some kids, cook burgers and sandwiches for six people, and fax someone's proof of employment, all in under an hour. He also rents rooms to people for cheap—he owns two houses—so folks can afford to get back on their feet. He does all this for one reason

Kirk Washington
To benefit the neighborhood, to bring the neighborhood back, you know.

Robyn Semien
Washington's lived in the Lower Ninth Ward since the late '70s. He bought his house in the '80s, bought the property next door to it too, fixed them both up. He stayed during Katrina because he's one of those people who always stays during a hurricane. An estimated 2,000 people in the Lower Ninth Ward decided to stay. 10 years later he thinks all the time about that decision to stay.

Kirk Washington
I've been all over the world. I've been all through Vietnam, everywhere. When that hurricane hit, I had never been that scared before in my whole life—my whole life. I've been through a whole lot of things, scary, scary things, but that was as scared as I've ever been in my whole life.

Robyn Semien
Here's how Washington survived the storm. Sunday the 28th, the mayor orders the mandatory evacuation. That night, Washington is at home with three of his neighbors—the Taylors from next door and Isaac from across the street. They plan on riding out the storm together. Early morning on the 29th the hurricane hits, winds over a hundred miles per hour. Washington calls the flying debris shrapnel, because it would kill you. At his house, the group isn't

sure what to do.

Kirk Washington
I said, this is going to be dangerous, man. I said, y'all could stay if y'all want. But if y'all want to go, I think y'all should go and buckle down.

Robyn Semien
Everyone goes home. The levees fail. The entire Lower Ninth Ward floods.

Kirk Washington
All I could hear was this, when that water came. I could hear little babies howling and screaming. I could hear ladies hollering and screaming. I heard my neighbor hollering and screaming. The air was full of noise, people that was in dire need for someone to help them. I mean, people was really drowning. They were drowning. And, you know, there was nothing you could do. That was the hardest part about things. What can you do? I mean, you can't go out there, the wind is still—you still have shrapnel flying all through the air. The water's rising so fast that, hey, you know, how are you going to negotiate the water?

Yeah, I could swim. But guess what? I don't want to take no chances getting into the water. It was one thing that nobody should want to experience in their whole life. It got to the point that our neighbors, we started coming out to survey what was going on. Well, one of my neighbors drowned.

Robyn Semien
One of your friends who was in your house earlier that night?

Kirk Washington
Yes.

Robyn Semien
That was Isaac. His full name was Isaac Castle. He was 58.

Kirk Washington
You feel you was a failure, you know what I'm saying? Because you could help, but you didn't. But it's the thing inside you that says, well, man, I could've did more than what I did. And it just kind of

Markets Shrug Off Katrina

Article from the *Washington Post* August 29, 2005

by JERRY KNIGHT

Hurricane Katrina blew energy prices to record levels today, but Wall Street dodged the devastation as traders bid up stocks of companies expected to profit from the multi-billion-dollar reconstruction job.

Crude oil topped \$70 a barrel before the storm surge retreated, leaving raw petroleum up \$1.07 a barrel at \$67.20.

Natural gas, heating oil and gasoline all closed at new highs with analysts predicting that even under "best case scenarios" gasoline prices at

the pump are on their way to \$3 a gallon for regular.

The storm not only shut down oil and gas production platforms in the Gulf of Mexico, it blew through more than half a dozen coastal refineries, cutting the nation's capacity to turn crude into fuel.

Katrina could blow Delta Airlines into bankruptcy, analysts predicted. The struggling airline is taking a double whammy. The storm is ripping through the heart of Delta's territory, canceling

hundreds of flights and driving up jet fuel prices -- which are already so high that few airlines can fly profitably.

Delta's stock fell along with shares of property and casualty insurance companies, which are facing billions of dollars in insurance claims.

But there were big gains in the stocks of companies that build and repair petroleum production and refining facilities, including Halliburton, Schlumberger and BJ Services. Shares of Home Depot and Lowes also

advanced and traders touted the shares of Gillette, which makes batteries as well as razor blades.

Stock prices rallied later in the session as Katrina's energy waned and the storm was downgraded to a Category 1 hurricane.

The Dow Jones industrial average climbed 66 points to 10,463.05. The Nasdaq Composite index gained 17 points to 2,137.65. The Standard & Poor's 500 stock index closed up seven points at 1,212.28.

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shut down a significant portion of U.S. refining capacity.

The Dow Jones industrial average climbed 65.76, or 0.63 percent, to close at 10,463.05.

The broader stock indicators also moved higher. The Standard & Poor's 500-stock index gained 7.18, or 0.6 percent, to 1212.28, and the Nasdaq composite index rose 16.88, or 0.80 percent, to 2137.65.

Much of Wall Street's advance came late in the day, when the hurricane eventually diminished to a Category 1 storm. With Katrina passing through the heart of the United States' oil and gas infrastructure, the market weighed a spike in energy prices against the potential for long-term production outages. The storm forced the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port -- the nation's largest import terminal -- to evacuate workers and stop unloading ships over the weekend.

"Clearly it's going to have some impact on the market if there is damage" that will keep the port



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS -- Remains from homes of the victims of Katrina

closed, said John Caldwell, chief investment strategist for McDonald Financial Group. Energy stocks surged early and settled slightly higher. And companies that sell building materials climbed as investors figured that lots of lumber and supplies will be needed to repair storm damage. Insurance stocks, however, took a hit after early projections pegged storm losses between \$9 billion and

\$16 billion, which would rank Katrina among the nation's most costly storms.

Exxon Mobil gained as much as 83 cents in morning trading and settled up a penny, at \$58.42. Chevron rose 13 cents, to \$59.51. BP rose 23 cents, to \$66.35. Offshore drilling contractor Halliburton rose 54 cents, to \$57.80.

American Stock Exchange

index rose 3.09, to 1620.45.

NYSE: 1.59 billion shares, up from 1.54 billion on Friday. Advancers outnumbered decliners 7 to 4.

Nasdaq: 1.27 billion shares, down from 1.28 billion. Advancers outnumbered decliners 10 to 7.

Crude oil for October delivery: \$67.20, up \$1.07.

gets to you a little bit, because this person is gone, you know. And I didn't do anything about it. But I thought he was going to be safe. He couldn't swim. He couldn't swim.

Robyn Semien
Washington got picked up by a Wildlife and Fisheries boat and made his way to Baton Rouge. Two days after Katrina, he got himself to a Dodge dealership, figuring no matter what, he's going to need a car. And that's where, standing alone in a used car lot, exhausted, he started to feel something for the first time in days.

Kirk Washington
Of all the destruction and all the death and all the hollering and screaming, is just hit me. I mean, it was just like a whole three-story building just crushing me, like a tornado going around in my head. It was just like, wow, all these things have happened, and I'm just blinking my eyes and just seeing all of them at one time. It was just like a nightmare. I came to reality like, man, man, look. Did I go through all this? I'm really alive and this really did happen. You know what I'm saying? Everything that happened, everything that happened, this is real. This is real. It just hit me. It just hit me.

Robyn Semien
What happened? You started crying?

Kirk Washington
Yeah. That was it. People, they was standing, watching. And they couldn't deal with it, so they went in the room. And they talk and talk and talk. And one of the guys came, after he saw me. I quieted down some.

Robyn Semien
The salesman?

Kirk Washington
Yeah. He said, man, I have a car for you. He said, you could get it right now. We're not going to charge you too much. So I pay in cash for the car. And I got on the highway. It was just one thing

after another.

Robyn Semien
He bought a white truck, drove it to Corpus Christi, Texas, and back home three weeks after the storm, during a time when most people weren't allowed back into the Lower Ninth Ward. Washington says his veterans ID card worked as a pass. And he rebuilt both his houses, one piece of sheet rock and one birchwood panel at a time. I spent a lot of time talking with Washington on three different days. And he never bragged or complained about anything. But I wanted to know what he lost in the storm, which is how I learned about the cars.

Kirk Washington
I lost a Mercedes Benz. I lost a Jaguar. I lost a BMW. I lost a Ford F-150.

Robyn Semien
He told me he got them right after he retired. He took his savings and bought them at auction, a car a year for four years. He got the last one just a year before the storm. He loved driving around in those cars. It was indulgent, after a life of saving money and working at the post office.

Kirk Washington
I don't talk about it that much. But when I get in my car, I'm sick as a dog, because I don't have these cars. I really don't want another one of those cars, because it's going to remind me, and I feel that I'm going to be more sicker than what I am.

Robyn Semien
You'll be more upset?

Kirk Washington
Yeah. Sick, sick to my stomach, like this thing in your stomach—nerves, probably.

Robyn Semien
Your stomach hurts a lot?

Kirk Washington
It just has that little funny feeling. And when I get that funny feeling, I know it's something that's triggering it, and it's coming from

The Domesticated President

Article from the *Washington Post* August 30, 2005

by DAN FROOMKIN

Remember domestic policy?

After a month dominated by news about the Iraq war, President Bush yesterday weighed in on a handful of domestic issues. But changing the topic doesn't necessarily mean a break from controversy.

Bush was speaking to invitation-only audiences in Arizona and Southern California, ostensibly pitching the advantage of the new Medicare prescription-drug benefit that has been greeted skeptically by many seniors.

But Bush's speechwriters also threw in some brief comments on some of the hot-button domestic issues on the White House's agenda as Congress returns to Washington after Labor Day.

Peter Baker writes in *The Washington Post*: "President Bush flew into the heart of the nation's volatile debate over illegal immigration

Monday and defended his administration's efforts to control the nearby border with Mexico after a surge of criticism from across the political spectrum.

"Two weeks after the Democratic governors of Arizona and New Mexico declared states of emergency along the border, Bush used a Medicare speech here to promise residents an increasingly robust federal campaign that will deploy more agents and provide more detention space to stop those trying to sneak into the country."

Baker also notes that Bush was not able to escape the war protests entirely.

"Hundreds of protesters lined his motorcade routes in Arizona and California, holding up signs such as 'Bush the Lying Turd' and 'Chicken George,' a reference to his refusal to meet again with

Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a soldier killed in Iraq who set up camp near his Texas ranch demanding an audience. A competing crowd gathered in California waving flags and signs such as 'Support Our President.'"

Peter Wallsten and Mark Z. Barabak write in the *Los Angeles Times*: "With increasingly fierce debates over border security exposing divisions in the Republican Party, President Bush on Monday endorsed a policy of strict border enforcement.

"His comments during appearances in California and Arizona were an apparent response to some state officials and conservatives in his own party who say the administration has failed to adequately address human trafficking from Mexico into the United States. . . .

"The president did not mention the emergency

declarations, signed two weeks ago by Democratic Govs. Janet Napolitano of Arizona and Bill Richardson of New Mexico, that require the federal government to spend millions more combating human trafficking and, at the same time, paint the Bush administration as weak on immigration. Nor did he mention his own proposal for addressing the immigration crisis, one that is strongly opposed by many conservatives within his party: a guest worker program that would allow millions of undocumented immigrants to work and live in the United States legally.

"Instead, Bush offered language apparently designed to appease [his] growing chorus of critics. . . . He did not, as he had in the past, discuss the benefits of immigration or the value that immigrants bring to the U.S. economy."

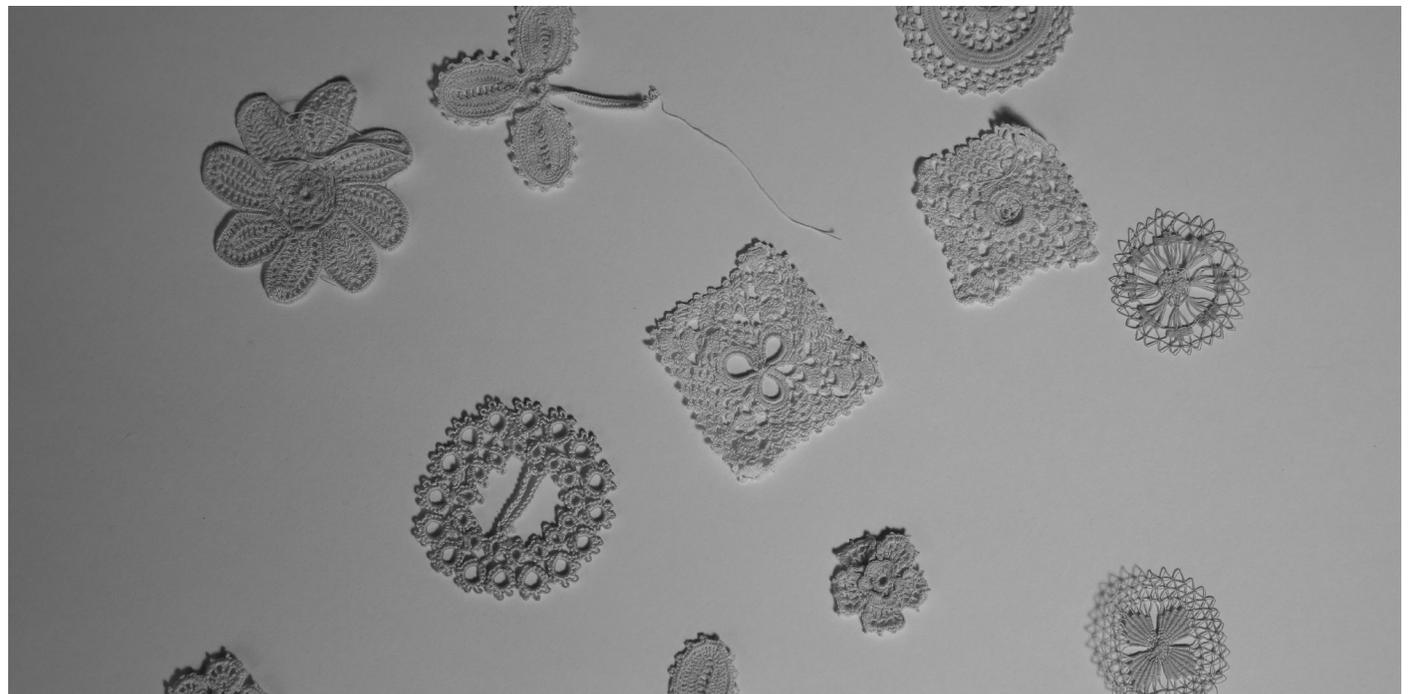


PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS – Dollies found preserved in home after Hurricane Katrina. Representative of the domesticity of the home

my mind. It's coming from my head.

Robyn Semien

Here's the tangle for Washington. He's throwing all this energy into rebuilding and making everything new again. But all the new stuff that he has now, like his new bathroom and his new house, his new business, everything new reminds him of what was old, daily. Brushing his teeth with running water reminds him of when, after the storm, he couldn't do that. Turning on a light reminds him how for a while after the storm, he didn't have electricity. It doesn't stop, no matter how he tries to keep busy.

Kirk Washington

I need things to do so that I won't get caught up in this mind thing, you know what I'm saying. So in order for me not to, I have to occupy my mind with something. I have to, because if I don't, my mind is going to play tricks on me. Do you daydream?

Robyn Semien

Sometimes.

Kirk Washington

OK. I hate daydreaming. Do you have nightmares?

Robyn Semien

Sometimes.

Kirk Washington

You see that? "Sometimes." It's constant. Do you have illusions of things while you're driving? Like you're driving your car, and you think that you driving this Mercedes Benz or this Jaguar? You see what I'm saying? I mean, I can't hide from it. It's real. I know it's there. I know what the symptoms are. I know it's impossible for me to treat it. It's impossible, because daily things are going to bring me to it. Talking to you right now is bringing me to it. I walk out the front of my house, and I look over at that door, I see my friend. I see Isaac. Then I have to let it go. Let it go. I come down this street. When I'm looking down from the bridge up there, I'm seeing nothing but the top of

houses all water. And I'm riding down the same street.

I mean, what? It's constant. It's something that—the hurricane was just five years ago.

Robyn Semien

10 years.

Kirk Washington

10 years ago. Look at that. It's there. It's still there. It's just there.

Robyn Semien

Washington points to people in his cafe. They're mostly storm survivors. He says, talk to them. They're suffering, too. He tells me about a customer, a woman who lost her home in the storm, has completely rebuilt it, but won't move back in. Washington doesn't think she ever will. She's afraid, he says. You can see it in her eyes when she talks about the house. I tell him I think I know what he means. I can see fear in his eyes, too. He laughs and says, no, you can't see it. You have to have gone through it to understand.

Guard Units Shift From Combat to Flood Duty

Article from the *Washington Post*

August 30, 2005

by JOHN M. BRODER

State National Guard units, already strained by long overseas deployments, joined federal, state and private organizations yesterday in a broad effort to provide relief in areas thrashed and flooded by Hurricane Katrina.

The American Red Cross said it was undertaking one of the largest emergency operations in its history, and federal disaster-relief teams descended on stricken areas across the Gulf Coast. Private volunteer groups prepared to deliver hot meals to hundreds of thousands of residents made refugees by the storm and the flooding it caused.

Even before the storm hit the coast, the Federal Emergency Management Agency had positioned 23 disaster medical assistance teams and seven search and rescue teams around the region.

FEMA also sent two teams of veterinarians to provide care to any injured pets or other animals.

Tens of thousands more may be called as the extent of the damage becomes clear, officials said.

National Guard officials said many of the troops mobilized for storm duty had recently

returned from overseas combat zones.

Mississippi called up 850 National Guard troops, and Alabama mobilized more than 1,500. Officials said nearly 100,000 additional members of the Guard from the Southeast were available on short notice.

"We are prepared to respond to any natural disaster and to support the war on terrorism," Colonel Horton said. "We just have to deal with both missions."

The National Guard units were joined by thousands of volunteers and public workers in one of the largest emergency mobilization efforts in recent years.

The American Red Cross said it had opened 239 shelters by last night and sent 166 emergency response vehicles and thousands of volunteers to the stricken area.

Along with the Red Cross, relief agencies moved in mobile kitchens and had prepared more than a half million hot meals for evacuees by last night, officials said.

If necessary, FEMA has 500 truckloads of ice, 500 of water and 350 of meals available to distribute over the next 10 days, an official said.

Mark Smith, the chief information officer for the Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, urged the hundreds of thousands of people who fled southeastern Louisiana ahead of the storm to stay where they were.

Mr. Smith said late yesterday that power and communications had been cut off in much of the affected region and that state officials had not had a chance to assess damage or to rescue people trapped in more remote areas of the state.



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS – Variety of doll house toys found after the storm.



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS – Tools used to start repairing homes.

Our Aura of Security, Shattered like Glass

Article from the *Washington Post*

August 31, 2005

by PHILIP KENNICOTT

When a force as terrible as Hurricane Katrina rearranges the world, we grasp for the less-than-cataclysmic things we can see to understand the thoroughly cataclysmic things we can't. A house falling off its foundation makes more sense, in a photograph, than a blank patch of concrete where a demolished house once stood. A boat on its side, in the middle of a street, suggests destruction in a way that a clot of timber that was once a boat does not.

For a while, on Monday, one of the more arresting images from New Orleans was the Hyatt Regency Hotel, its windows blasted out, curtains flapping

in the wind, pink insulation exposed to the elements. Compared with other damage, whole neighborhoods flooded to the rooftops, a breached levee that was sluicing water into the already sodden city, the windows of the Hyatt are a minor loss. But for anyone who has spent too much time in hotels, who has lived in the strange bubble world of the business traveler, the windows of the Hyatt were a marker for a more fundamental vulnerability.

For \$150 a night, the large name-brand hotel offers the illusion of safety, the assurance that you are not set down among foreign people, strange

customs, incomprehensible languages. Hotels do not try to pretend that they can give the illusion of home, a familiarity dense with personal meanings. They offer instead a neutral familiarity, rooms that never change from continent to continent, the same soap, the same towels, the same cable channels. The art is comfortably anodyne, the food tasteless but digestible.

And the windows? When we enter the hotel room, that wall of glass seems so inviting, as if we might sit in the lone chair by the lone table and stare out at the world, safely held at bay by impregnable transparent panels. But we don't. The

rubberized inner curtain is soon drawn, the room sunk into inky darkness or artificial light, and the world we've come to visit safely blotted out, no sights, no sounds, no smells.

As the storm subsided and camera crews made their way into the disaster zone, it was clear that a wall of windows in a luxury hotel was only one minor line of security breached by the storm. Everywhere the visible and unseen barriers that divide our world were being redefined, or ruptured. Men with axes broke through roofs to provide escape for those who had sought refuge in their attics. A levee that held Lake Pontchartrain at bay was broken. The hurricane had shifted the line that divides land and water decidedly in favor of the latter.

Invisible lines were crossed as well. Oil passed the \$70-a-barrel mark. The president drew a line on the end of his vacation, deciding to return to Washington today to oversee disaster relief efforts. And looters crossed that tenuous but essential line that divides the civilized from the selfish.

The country itself had a new line in it, a line dividing those scathed by the storm and the rest of us, who watched it, with sadness, fascination and the usual guilt of voyeurs. There's been a convention in the theater world to think of the division between audience and spectacle as a fourth wall, a wall that the playwright tries to eliminate through the force of his drama. But as images poured forth of hungry, exhausted, terrified and soaked survivors, anyone with any sense was happy for any kind of barrier that kept this drama, this devastation at bay.

Disasters never really teach us anything new, just the same old lessons pounded home once again with renewed

force. We are frail. Our world is a compromise made with forces that can, and will, scatter it from time to time. Our homes, which we often treat as trophies of our ambition or investments for our future, ultimately matter to us because they are the structured memory of our lives.

Disaster reveals human nature, or so says the cliché. So often it seems that the good and the bad in human nature cancel themselves out. Some people send aid while others loot. Some people go forward, others despair. Volunteers pour in, and so do the swindlers, the disaster opportunists who prey on anyone desperate for a new roof.

It is a strength and a failing of Americans that they are incapable of imagining their own world in ruins. We look at our fertile and familiar land and find it inconceivable that it might be devastated by war, plagued by locusts, riddled by famine. Disasters elsewhere, on other continents with different victims, seem the natural course of the world. Disasters here mess with the very nature of reality. It's an illusion of invulnerability and an astonishingly persistent one.

With hotels like the Hyatt, we have extended this illusory zone of security around the world. Katrina did far worse damage, by orders of magnitude, than some shattered glass at the Hyatt. But it was the image of a hotel -- a refuge against the world -- that first suggested the degree to which Katrina would bring a foreign world, of chaos and frailty, into the comfort zone of American security.

Gas Could Top \$3 This Weekend

Article from the *Washington Post* August 30, 2005

by NELL HENDERSON

MOBILE, ALA. — Joe Stevens fills his 1,500-gallon gasoline tank after waiting about an hour in line at a gas station in Mobile, Ala.

Oil prices surged yesterday and gasoline prices were poised to top \$3 a gallon by Labor Day weekend as oil companies and federal officials began assessing Hurricane Katrina's damage to the heart of the nation's energy production.

The powerful storm left the regional economy largely paralyzed yesterday across a swath of coastal territory in the Gulf of Mexico.

Nearly 3 million households, businesses and other customers were without power in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, the Energy Department said. Telephone service remained erratic. Transportation of goods and people continued to be blocked by closed airports and seaports, flooded roads, and train tracks littered with

debris. Hurricane Katrina, recently downgraded to a tropical depression, could cause severe damage to the local and national economy if it seriously disrupts energy production for a sustained period, analysts said. The extent of the destruction was still unclear yesterday, as oil companies were having difficulty assessing the damage in an environment of power outages, impassable roads and disrupted communications.

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The storm's effect on the nation's energy supply "is really the key to the impact on the economy," said Nigel Gault, U.S. economist at Global Insight Inc., a forecasting and research firm. "It is too early to tell. . . . We know what's shut down, but we don't know when it's coming back."

Katrina hit the Gulf states at a time when the regional economy has been thriving on rising energy prices and the national economy has been

growing at a smart clip. U.S. energy company executives have reported soaring profit this year while complaining of labor and equipment shortages.

While the local economy will take a severe short-term hit, economists said the area will probably get a boost over the next year as insurance and federal money pours in to finance the reconstruction of homes, offices, roads, bridges, ports and other infrastructure. Workers from states with softer economies will probably flock to the area for the construction jobs. That occurred after four hurricanes last year in Florida, after the 1994 Northridge earthquake in Los Angeles and after Florida's Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

Such longer-term prospects were of little solace yesterday, as emergency workers continued to rescue and comfort the many families who suffered devastating losses of life and home.

Nationally, the clearest immediate economic impact was on oil prices, which climbed as the Energy Department reported that 95 percent of daily oil production in the Gulf of Mexico remained shut down by Katrina. More than a third of the nation's domestically produced oil normally comes from the Gulf.

U.S. benchmark crude oil priced for October delivery rose more than \$3 a barrel to trade as high as \$70.90 on the New York Mercantile Exchange before closing at \$69.81.

Wholesale gasoline prices surged to levels that, if sustained, will translate to more than \$3 a gallon at the pump within days, after typical retail markups are added, analysts said.

Stock prices fell as investors anticipated that higher energy costs will dampen consumer spending and corporate profit.



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS — The rise of gas means that every penny counts. The hurricane made it difficult for people to access their bank accounts and be able to pay for refuge or shelter

Katrina Could Cost Insurers \$25 Billion

Article from the *Washington Post* August 30, 2005

by ALBERT B. CRENSHAW

Rick Shaw, center, and son Gregory shore up the wall of a rental house he owns in Baton Rouge, La., after a tree crashed through the roof Monday.

As Hurricane Katrina ground its way north from the Gulf Coast late yesterday, estimates of insured losses ranged from \$10 billion to \$25 billion, which would amount to the largest loss from a single event since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Damage estimates generated by computer models had ranged as high as \$30 billion, but some were based on the possibility that Katrina would hit as a Category 5 storm. Instead it weakened as it neared shore, and passed east of New Orleans as a Category 4. Later in the day, it was downgraded to 1. Nonetheless, it was clear that damage was severe and extensive, and Katrina is likely to end up as one of the most expensive storms ever for insurers.

Fitch Ratings said that it probably will be the largest loss from a single event since Sept. 11. Two hurricane modeling

firms released preliminary but similar estimates of the insured losses from Katrina, Fitch noted, ranging from \$10 billion to \$25 billion.

Only very general estimates were available because adjusters had not yet been able to begin gathering claims information.

"We are standing by, and as soon as we can safely, and with the approval of local authorities, get surveyors in there to look at the damage, we will do that," said Dick Luedke of State Farm, the largest homeowners' insurer in Mississippi and Louisiana.

"We have special catastrophic claims representatives, who have been in this situation many, many times, ready to go to work," Luedke said, adding that they will be deployed as soon as the company has information on where they are most needed.

Insurers paid out more than \$20 billion in claims from four hurricanes that hit Florida last year. The worst single event on record was Hurricane Andrew, which struck Florida in 1992, inflicting \$21.5 billion in damage (adjusted to current dollars), according to the Insurance Information

Institute, an industry organization.

"Total losses -- insured losses plus uninsured losses -- are often double the insured loss, and . . . flood losses are generally not covered by homeowners' policies," said Donald Thorpe of Fitch Analysts on Wall Street and elsewhere agreed that primary insurers have spread their risks among reinsurers, so it did not appear that major carriers faced financial damage they could not handle.

Even so, insurance company stocks went down yesterday, with Allstate dropping 77

cents, to \$57.18; St. Paul Travelers falling 47 cents, to \$44.27; and Hartford Financial Services Group dropping \$1.08, to \$73.63.

And if flood losses, as opposed to wind damage, are extensive, the federal government's National Flood Insurance Program could again be forced to borrow from the Treasury.

The program, administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, provides the bulk of the nation's flood insurance, and it took a beating last year. Though it receives no taxpayer funds, using premium income from property owners

Relief Crews From Region Set Out to Help

Article from the *Washington Post*

August 30, 2005

by MICHAEL LARIS

PASCAGOULA, MISS.—Volunteers and professional disaster workers from the Washington region began the launch yesterday of what will be a far-reaching relief effort to help Gulf Coast victims of Hurricane Katrina.

They tried to contact their hurricane-buffed colleagues in Louisiana and Mississippi, readied canine search teams and headed south in mobile canteens.

In Fairfax County, a 34-person rescue team that includes structural engineers and hazardous materials experts prepared for deployment after being alerted by federal officials. A similar team from Montgomery County,

complete with watercraft and high-tech search cameras and audio equipment, also was getting ready to leave.

It was a day heavy with news monitoring and arrangement making, marked by the anxieties and uncertainties inherent in such a massive effort to equip relief workers and direct them to the hardest hit areas.

"I know I'm a small part of a large operation," said Julie Wright, executive director of the Alexandria chapter of the American Red Cross, speaking by cell phone yesterday from an emergency food delivery truck on her way to a staging area in Little Rock. She expected she might be

rerouted once higher-level Red Cross executives decided where she and her team of volunteers would be most useful. "It's a huge logistical effort," she said.

William R. McLaughlin, a Federal Emergency Management Agency employee from Manchester, N.H., was killed Sunday afternoon on Interstate 81 south of Roanoke when a tire blew out on a truck he was driving toward the area Katrina was slated to hit. His truck ran off the road and rolled over, according to Virginia State Police Sgt. Robert Carpentieri.

McLaughlin was in a truck convoy with fellow members of the Mobile Emergency Response Support detachment out of Maynard, Mass. The group sets up satellite communications and other high-tech support for relief efforts, according to Cindy Taylor, a spokeswoman.

State and federal officials said they did not know the cause of

the tire blowout.

Michael D. Brown, undersecretary of homeland security for emergency preparedness and response and head of FEMA, issued a statement thanking McLaughlin for "his selfless work serving disaster victims across the nation."

Local religious groups were seeking donations and setting up channels to deliver aid.

Jerry Collins, director of disaster response at Alexandria-based Catholic Charities USA, spent yesterday making hourly attempts to reach some of his group's administrative workers, who were inside New Orleans's Superdome with about 10,000 others who did not leave the city.

"We're waiting to hear from our people on the ground. Our efforts go to long-term recovery," Collins said.

Executives at Adventist Community Services, a

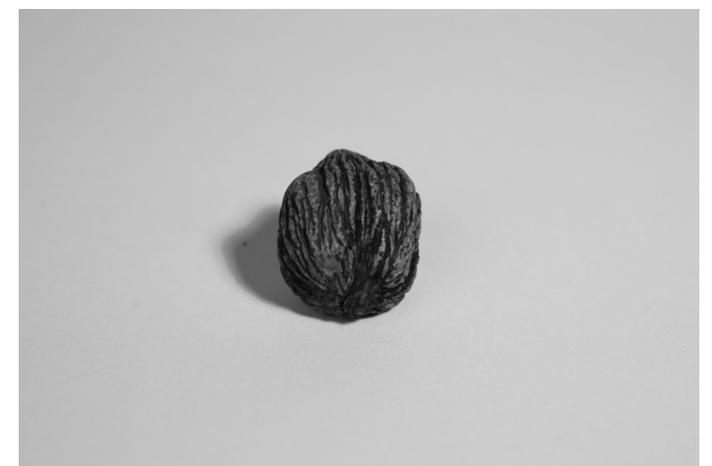


PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS — Peach pit found is a metaphor for the hope and renewal that New Orleans is seeking.



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS — Official boy scout uniform. Many of the guards who helped with storm relief were a boy scouts growing up and their involvement encouraged them to join the armed forces.

Second Stop. Lizardi and Burgundy - Mercedes Bar

IRA GLASS—

We're on a walking tour of the Lower Ninth this hour. Kirk Washington's house is all the way on the bottom of the Lower Ninth, right near the Mississippi. That's higher ground. That's the part of the Lower Ninth that survived the most. Houses are jammed together here, and most of them are occupied. And just a two-minute walk from Washington's house, five blocks away, there's a bar that Kim Ford, who you heard at the top of the show, brought one of our producers, Zoe Chace to. She was like, go to this bar. It's the best.

Zoe Chace

Call out the street name. Tell America.

Kim Gordon

America, this is Lizardi and Burgundy. And this place is a staple in the Lower Ninth Ward, Mercedes Bar. Everybody in the Lower Ninth Ward knows this place.

Ira Glass

Mercedes Bar is one of the few bars they have here now. One local told us it was nine bars before Katrina. It's just two now. This is the second stop on our tour. As you face the building, you can see that it is neatly painted white with green trim around the windows, little New Orleans fleur-de-lis in gold and black. It looks well taken care of, which is not true of the street in front of it, you will notice if you turn that way. So many streets in the Lower Ninth are just awful, and this is one of them. Lots of potholes, and they're big potholes.

Kim Gordon

And if you pull in there, you're going down in a hole. The streets are horrible. A little bit of rain, and it's water everywhere. You can't even park here.

Ira Glass

The owner of the bar, Mercedes Gibson, says that the holes in the

street are costing her customers and they're costing her money. And it's hard to pay the light bill at this point. Zoe spent some time with her and her customers.

Zoe Chace

The holes in the streets are a real problem for Mercedes, because neither she nor her customers are young.

Mercedes Gibson

Well, I describe it as a friendly bar and settle-aged people. I don't fool with youngsters.

Zoe Chace

"Settle-aged people," like the bartender, Mercedes' daughter, Sharon. She polls the bar for me real quick to prove how dire the Lizardi Street parking situation really is.

Sharon

How far did you all have to park to get here?

Woman

Block away.

Man

A block and a half.

Man

Two. I parked two blocks away.

Sharon

Are y'all young people, or senior citizens?

Man

I'm a senior citizen.

Man

I don't know about the rest of them, but I'm young.

Man

I'm almost 70 years old.

Man

And I'm 71 young.

Sharon

Are y'all happy about walking a block and a half to get here?

Man

CONTIUED FROM PAGE A7

to pay claims, it has authority to borrow from the Treasury and was forced to do so after the active hurricane season of 2004.

Hurricane Ivan alone generated more than 27,000 flood damage claims valued at \$1.3 billion last year, according to a FEMA spokesman. The program has 383,000 policies in force in Louisiana, with total coverage of \$56.1 billion. However, relatively few have taken advantage of the coverage in Alabama and Mississippi, which apparently bore the brunt of the storm. Slightly more than 40,000 policies are in force in each

state, with exposure for the agency of \$6.2 billion in Alabama and \$5.4 billion in Mississippi. By contrast, residents of a single county in Florida -- Broward -- have bought 408,677 policies with coverage totaling \$74.4 billion.

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religious charity in Silver Spring, helped organize a network of warehouses yesterday to supply Gulf Coast residents whose homes were damaged or destroyed by violent wind and rain.

"We have 51 local disaster-

response units, and that helps tremendously," said Executive Director Sung Kwon. "It's a very stressful time, individually and in the community by and large, and at a time like this we really come together . . . and individuals look out beyond themselves. Even though this is very tragic, we do experience a positive outcome out of disaster," he added.

Red Cross volunteer Dan Rogers, a retired executive from AT&T, left Manassas on Sunday, driving toward the Little Rock staging area. He and other volunteers are hauling hot and cold chests for food and beverages. Rogers, who became interested

in volunteer work after teaching CPR decades ago in Pittsburgh, said he's ready to help faraway neighbors facing devastation.

They will hand out mops, brooms and meals.

"We'll go down the road and look for people who are trying to clean up their mess and ring a bell and serve them food," Rogers said.

Staff writers Jacqueline L. Salmon and Elizabeth Williamson contributed to this report.

Another Storm Casualty: Oil Prices

Article from the *Washington Post*
August 30, 2005

by JAD MOUAWAD & SIMON ROMEROAUG

The region that produces and refines a major portion of the nation's oil and natural gas was largely shut down by Hurricane Katrina yesterday, further tightening strained energy markets and sending prices to new highs.

As oil companies evacuated offshore operations throughout the Gulf of Mexico, oil production in that region was reduced by 92 percent and gas output was cut by 83 percent.

The latest interruptions in oil supplies are likely to send retail gasoline prices even higher than the current average of \$2.60 a gallon. They have prompted the Bush administration to say it would release emergency oil stocks from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve if needed.

"We are still in the soap-opera phase where everyone is still wondering what is going

on," said Dan Pickering, the president of Pickering Energy Partners, a Houston-based energy research firm. "The next 24 to 48 hours, as the companies get out to see if there has been any damage, are really going to determine how significant this is."

Halfway through the hurricane season, the storm hit at an especially bad time for consumers, who have seen gasoline prices climb to their highest level in a generation, and adds to worries that oil prices might be hurting the American economy.

Hurricane Katrina could result in insured damages of more than \$9 billion, making it perhaps the costliest storm since Hurricane Andrew in 1992, according to Risk Management Solutions, which assesses catastrophes and is based in Newark, Calif. The storm disrupted maritime



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS — As market prices increase, it is harder for the survivors to get affordable food

traffic and trade, as well as caused losses at port and shipping facilities.

Crude oil prices on the New York Mercantile Exchange closed at \$67.20 a barrel yesterday, up 1.6 percent, after touching a high of \$70.80 a barrel in earlier electronic trading.

Natural gas futures soared 11 percent after operations at a major hub in Louisiana were temporarily halted. They closed at \$10.85 a thousand

cubic feet, after reaching a high of \$12.07. Disruptions at refineries also pushed futures for gasoline and heating oil to record highs on Nymex. Gasoline contracts closed up 6.9 percent at \$2.06 a gallon while heating oil gained 3.9 percent, to \$1.91 a gallon.

Producers are currently pumping as much oil as they can and have little spare capacity left to make up for any shortages. While that leaves no margin for major disruptions from hurricanes and other

Delivering News Of the Storm That Stopped the Presses

Article from the *Washington Post* September 1, 2005

by PAUL FARHI & TERESA WILTZ

Among the many cruelties delivered by Hurricane Katrina, there was this: The people most in need of information about the storm were the least likely to be able to see, hear or read about it.

Journalists from the two hardest-hit areas -- New Orleans and the adjacent Gulf Coast of Mississippi -- have labored to describe the unfolding catastrophe. They have worked around demolished newsrooms and production facilities, primitive-to-nonexistent communications lines, and personal losses to produce pictures and words about the storm's aftermath.

But hardly anyone who could really use that news got it.

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With electricity wiped out in the affected areas, receiving local broadcast or cable TV signals was nearly impossible. Only New Orleans radio station WWL-AM reportedly stayed on the air. Printing a newspaper in New Orleans was a cosmic absurdity: Even if the Times-Picayune, New Orleans's largest daily, hadn't had its presses disabled by rising floodwaters, delivering a printed paper would have been an act of madness, given the state of roads and bridges in the paper's circulation area.

The Times-Picayune left a dozen reporters and photographers behind as a cadre of employees jumped into circulation trucks and scattered to points north and southwest of town on Monday. Two small teams of the paper's editors set up shop in the

offices of the Houma Courier, some 40 miles outside New Orleans, and yesterday at the Baton Rouge Advocate, 75 miles north of town.

In an e-mail sent to friends and colleagues yesterday, the Times-Picayune's managing editor for news, Dan Shea, wrote: "I stayed with the paper and witnessed the extraordinary death of a city."

The editors put together Internet-only editions of the paper, including a first-day report Monday that carried a stark, single-word headline: "Catastrophic." The editions were a source of pride to the dwindling staff -- but a pride tempered by the knowledge that many of the paper's 260,000 subscribers never saw it. "This is mostly for people who have evacuated the city and are trying to keep up with what's going on," said suburban editor Kim Chatelain yesterday as he was about to decamp from Houma to Baton Rouge. "Unless you have a generator, you have no idea what we're reporting."

The Sun-Herald, the daily in Biloxi, Miss., produced an eight-page paper on Tuesday and 24-page papers yesterday and today by using the printing presses of the Columbus (Ga.) Ledger-Enquirer, 315 miles away. Distributors fought backed-up traffic and long gas lines to truck the papers back to Biloxi, a coastal town that suffered extensive damage but less flooding than New Orleans.

Once in town, newspaper delivery people were greeted like relief workers, said Pam

Siddal, the Ledger-Enquirer's publisher. "People were coming out the woodwork for a paper; they were absolutely desperate," she said yesterday. "Some people lost everything. We're their one source of information."

Information poured from locally produced blogs and Web sites -- though WWL-TV in New Orleans was knocked off the air Monday, it kept up a steady video stream on its homepage -- but the Internet was a frustration, too. Almost everything on it was inaccessible to thousands of people struggling to secure such basic needs as shelter, food and water.

On Tuesday, the Web turned into a town hall. Overnight, Web sites and blogs sprang up to provide a forum for the worried to speak their mind, for Samaritans to offer evacuees a place to stay, and for survivors to bear witness.

"Of course it's true what people tell you when they want to cheer you up," wrote Lance Lindley of Belle Chasse, La., on the MSNBC blog. "What matters is that your family is safe. The insurance will cover your property (or will it?). But some things, like 40 years worth of family photographs, kids' blue ribbons from school, grandmother's jewelry and a fully restored classic Porsche stupidly left in the carport can never be replaced."

Others used their blogs to provide news updates, request rescues for the stranded, and post pictures of the missing. Some used it to snipe at New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin:

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disasters, most analysts cautioned that it would be days before a full assessment of the damage to pipelines, refineries and offshore platforms was completed.

The Gulf of Mexico, which produces 27 percent of the nation's oil and a fifth of its natural gas, is dotted with nearly 4,000 platforms linked by 33,000 miles of underwater pipelines. Over the weekend, oil companies withdrew their workers from 615 platforms and 96 drilling rigs in the gulf.

Oil production was reduced by about 1.4 million barrels yesterday and gas production by 8.3 billion cubic feet, according to the Minerals Management Service, a unit of the Department of the Interior. Since Friday, oil output has been cut by a total of 3.1 million barrels. Along the coast, at least nine refineries were closed in anticipation of the storm. These have a total refining capacity of about two million barrels a day, or 10 percent of the nation's refining output.

Oil companies now have to wait until heavy winds and rain die down before they can dispatch helicopters to survey their deepwater facilities and get an idea of the destruction. That is unlikely to happen before today at the earliest. But in one of the earliest indications of the damage from the storm, Royal Dutch Shell said that tracking devices onboard two offshore drilling rigs showed that they had shifted out of location yesterday. The rigs are contracted to Shell and owned by two companies, Nobel and Transocean. Shell, the company with the largest operations in the Gulf of Mexico, also said yesterday that it would dispatch an aircraft to review the status of its assets in the area.

Valero, the nation's largest independent refiner, indicated

that it might be two weeks before it could restart its St. Charles refinery in Louisiana. The refinery was under three feet of water and sustained "minor damage" to its cooling tower, the company said.

Hurricane Katrina is the most severe storm to affect the oil industry since Hurricane Ivan tore through the gulf last September. That storm destroyed seven offshore platforms and cut 7 percent of the region's yearly oil production and 4 percent of its total gas output. It also caused huge damage to the underwater pipeline network, requiring as much as six months to repair.

The ability of refineries to resume production quickly will be another factor likely to weigh on oil markets this week. The largest refinery shut by the storm has a capacity of 493,500 barrels of oil a day and is run by Exxon Mobil in Baton Rouge.

"The crunch is on refineries," said Roger Diwan, a managing director at PFC Energy, an oil consultancy in Washington. "Restarting a refinery is a very delicate operation. These things can blow up. They are complicated, old and cranky."

"If refineries don't start by Wednesday or Thursday, the stock draw is going to be dramatic," he said. "Already, gasoline stocks are low. This will further tighten the market."

The storm forced the temporary closing of crucial oil terminals, including the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port, the largest oil-importing port in the United States. The shutdown, which also stopped pipeline deliveries of oil from the port, could prevent about a tenth of the nation's oil imports from reaching refineries.

To make up for any shortfall in supplies, the Department

of Energy said yesterday that it would consider lending crude oil from the nation's emergency stockpiles if refiners asked for it. So far, no such call has been made.

Last year, after Hurricane Ivan disrupted production, the Energy Department agreed to lend more than five million barrels to refiners from the strategic reserve, which currently stocks 700 million barrels.

President Bush alluded to the energy situation today during a appearance in El Mirage, Ariz., where he was speaking on Medicare.

"You just got to understand that the situation we got ourselves into, dependency on foreign sources of oil, took a while to get there, and it's going to take a while to become less dependent," Mr. Bush said.

Senate Democrats have pressed the president to use the reserve to help bring prices down.

"If there was ever a time for the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to be tapped, it would be now," said Senator Charles E. Schumer of New York.

In response to the storm -- and rising prices -- Saudi Arabia's oil minister, Ali al-Naimi, said his country, the world's top oil producer, would make sure no one would run out of oil.

"Saudi Arabia stands ready to increase crude oil production immediately to 11 million barrels per day and sustain that level to replace any shortages in the crude oil market," Mr. al-Naimi said in a statement carried by the Saudi Press Agency. "We continue to be in close contact with all our customers, especially, those in the U.S., to assist them with any shortfall in oil supplies."

Refineries might prove more resilient in recovering from

No!

Zoe Chace
So I sit with the settle-aged at a long table in the middle of the bar.

Zoe Chace
Are you running away?

Man
Uh-uh. No. Have a seat.

Zoe Chace
OK. I ask about the storm, and it's like it just happened. The switch clicks right off the potholes and onto scenes from 10 years ago. Jean Gibson is nursing Crown Royal and water. She's a young-looking 60-year-old. During the storm, she was with her first husband and two grandkids. They evacuated to Houston first and stayed in a hotel for a while.

J
ean Gibson
I was in one, but they put me out.

Man
Why?

Zoe Chace
Why?

Jean Gibson
Because our money ran out.

Zoe Chace
Their credit card hit the limit. When she went to the ATM, she found out that her bank back in New Orleans was out. The ATMs couldn't connect. She was stuck in Texas with no money. So she did something she never thought she'd have to do.

Jean Gibson
And that was to beg, to sit on a curb with a one- and a two-year-old in Dallas with nowhere to go. And I sat on the curb, because they needed Pampers, they needed food. And I sit at that Kmart parking lot. And I sat on that curb, and I begged every car that came out that parking lot.

Zoe Chace
Keep this in mind. Jean was a middle class lady, a homeowner living comfortably. Before Katrina, she says, one paycheck paid

all her bills for the month. She worked for the city. She ran the benefits department for all the city workers.

Jean Gibson
I mean I wore \$95 blouses to work. I had Coach pocketbooks. And my husband was an extremely sharp dresser. Oh, he was a sharp dresser—good-looking, sharp-dressing man. He wore \$75 belts. That was nothing for us.

Zoe Chace
This is the person who found herself begging for help in a parking lot, saying things like—

Jean Gibson
If you could just give me some Pampers. Just some pampers, and food for the children. You don't have to give me nothing, just some food for the children. And a white guy in a black pickup truck, he said, miss, you from New Orleans? And I said, yes sir. I said, my children are hungry. And they're still in the same diapers for three days. I would take the diaper and scrape the diaper and put it back on them, because I had no choice.

And the man, he took me in Kmart and bought me a box of Pampers and some of them macaronis. But I had nowhere to cook the noodles. So I took them, I opened them, and I put that little sauce in them, and they ate dried noodles.

Jean Gibson
Then we stayed there overnight in the car, kids hollering. They're hungry. I just kept washing my underwear in the gas station bathroom and putting them back on wet. The man at the Exxon Station told me, miss, because you're from New Orleans, I'm going to let you keep coming in here everyday and wash your underwear.

Zoe Chace
That's the least you could do, you know?

Jean Gibson
I was trying to sneak in there, because I didn't want the people to know I'm going to wash my

CONTINUE FROM PAGE A9
"Mayor Nagin tends to talk through his hat and doesn't necessarily have the facts to back up what he's saying. The man doesn't seem to have much of a 'filter.'"

More than anything, however, the Net provided a vast electronic bulletin board for those looking for lost loved ones, posting phone numbers and e-mail addresses, and making urgent pleas. In an echo of Sept. 11, 2001, each posting was a snapshot of lives torn asunder, of families pulled apart and of wide-eyed nights.

"PLEASE FIND GEORGE SIMS, SR," pleaded Zahira Sims on the Times-Picayune's site. "PLEASE HELP ME FIND MY DADDY." A "worried mother in Illinois" wrote to say she had mapped her son's address and was convinced that his home, close to a golf course, was submerged. She feared the worst: "He cannot swim," she fretted.

On Craigslist, a worried nephew posted: "Jeff Jackson, Jr. - 91 Year Old Black Creole Gentleman. I am inquiring into the whereabouts of my uncle, Jeff Jackson, Jr. who

lives at 3600 North Derbigny Street, New Orleans LA 70117. I believe the address is in the 9th Ward. Family members in the NOLA area tried to evacuate him prior to the hurricane, but he refused to leave."

It was hard not to feel the anxiety on neworleansrefugees.blogspot.com, where C.F. Reynolds of Fort Walton Beach, Fla., wrote: "My niece, Raina Whitman, lives on Chateau Blvd. in Kenner about a mile from Lake Pontchartrain. Haven't heard from her since Monday morning. The water was up almost to her door at that time. Our family needs to hear something!!"

There are survivors posting reassurances that they made it out alive: "gone from my lovely city and safe in san francisco." "Im in England," while another posted the obvious to a group of friends: "no Fri lunch."

For the most part, it was a one-sided conversation, with those who'd made it out or those who lived out of town doing the talking. Those who remained in the hard-hit areas remained silent.

CONTINUE FROM PAGE A9
the storm than other energy infrastructure, like undersea pipelines or floating oil and natural gas platforms, according to some refining experts.

"This was a big and severe storm and it hit where a substantial portion of our production and refining capacity is concentrated," said Edward H. Murphy, the general downstream sector manager for the American Petroleum Institute, an industry trade group. "Refineries are built to withstand storms."

Almost all refineries in the Gulf Coast area were designed for protection from very high winds, according to S. Frank Culberson, chief executive of the Rimkus Consulting Group, a forensic consulting company that examines energy installations after they are hit by natural disasters.

"Usually the refineries fare pretty well, as long as they batten down the hatches and wait it out," Mr. Culberson said. "There might be damage to some storage or marginal operations, but the main refining units should remain shut down only temporarily."

Some airlines were also concerned about the rising premium they have to pay for jet fuel. Airports in a swath from Atlanta to Dulles outside Washington depend, at least in part, on one refinery in Memphis. Some analysts said that with the Louisiana terminal closed and imports curtailed, the refinery might run out of crude oil stocks within the next couple of days.

Even part of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve in Louisiana was shut down, with workers in New Orleans evacuated and operations in Bayou Choctaw, where 72 million barrels of oil are stored near Baton Rouge, closed and evacuated. Other locations of the reserve, in Texas and Louisiana, remained in operation yesterday, the Department of Energy said.

Oil refinery officials, meanwhile, remained cautious yesterday as they waited for an opportunity to send employees back to Louisiana to assess the effects of the storm. Mindy West, a spokeswoman for Murphy Oil of El Dorado, Ark., which operates a refinery in Meraux, La., with normal capacity to process 125,000 barrels of oil a day, said that today would be the earliest the company could examine the refinery.

Adam E. Sieminski, the chief energy economist at Deutsche Bank in New York, said: "The real story is not going to be known until workers can get back on the platforms and assess the damage. Are the platforms still there? Have they been damaged? Are the pipelines still there? Have they moved?"



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS - Pile of clothing that one of the evacuees took with them. Most things that were left in New Orleans were destroyed or ruined from the storm.

drawers.

Zoe Chace

Think about what that must be like, to have your life change so abruptly, no transition. And I wanted to know, did she feel like she was suddenly a different person? No, she says. That's not what happens. She says you get very practical. It's just how do you solve the next problem?

Jean Gibson

All you think about is, what am I going to do? Well, I'm just going to beg.

Zoe Chace

Had you ever begged before?

Jean Gibson

Oh, god, no.

Zoe Chace

Did you go up to people's cars?

Jean Gibson

Yes. Yes. I had the one-year-old in my arm, and the other one, I was holding his hand. And as people passed, I would even bang on their window.

Zoe Chace

Really?

Jean Gibson

Yes. And ask them, can you please help me? Please help me and my babies. Because of the way I looked, they must have thought I was a crackhead or something, you know, using the babies. And let me tell you, the reason I thought that was because I used to think that.

Zoe Chace

Jean moved around Texas for a month. Then she got a call, five weeks after she left. Come back to your job in the city of New Orleans. And she thought, maybe things are finally going to be OK.

Jean Gibson

I never really thought I lost my life. That sounds crazy. I mean, I thought I was going to come sweep my house out with a broom. You know, I knew the streets would probably have some dirt in it.

Left behind, New Orleans' black middle class wonders: What recovery?

Article from the *New York Times* August 29, 2015

by **ABBY PHILIP**

NEW ORLEANS — On one side of what's left of the Grand Theater is graffiti, broken glass and boarded-up windows. On the other, there's a massive mural that says: "We got work to do."

In the 10 years since Hurricane Katrina, East New Orleans has seen 83 percent of its residents return, but rumors following the storm has given the area a bad reputation among businesses.

Around the corner, dollar stores, fast-food joints and mostly empty strip malls have sprouted in the vast commercial lots cleared by Hurricane Katrina. There are no coffee shops, no full-service restaurants. A grocery store and the hospital only recently returned.

This is New Orleans East, once the "promised land" for the city's black middle class. Ten years after the storm, its prosperous, professional residents have come back in large numbers, but their neighborhood has been forgotten, they say, left out of the city's broader economic revival.

"We've been red-lined," said Stella Jones, 72, a retired doctor who lives in an immaculately restored five-bedroom home. "They say the city is back, but we're not part of the city."

The failure of the East to return to its pre-storm standard of living has puzzled residents, especially given the billions of dollars in economic development and hurricane

recovery funds that have rained down on the region. Unlike the poorer Lower Ninth Ward, where barely a third of residents have been able to return, the East has drawn back about 83 percent of residents. And while the East was heavily damaged by catastrophic flooding, so was Lakeview, a mostly white community whose bustling main street is now lined with restaurants, bars and coffee shops.

Residents blame the slow recovery on a variety of factors, including a controversial proposal under former mayor Ray Nagin (D) to forget about rebuilding parts of the East and the Lower Ninth and turn them instead into green space.

"That plan slowed down the momentum and created a specter of doubt around whether these neighborhoods would be rebuilt," said Marc H. Morial, another former mayor who is now president of the National Urban League. "It also sent a signal to many of the retailers: Don't come back."

The sun sets on a parking lot where a mall once stood in New Orleans East. The shopping center was destroyed by Katrina and torn down after the storm. (Jabin Botsford/The Washington Post)

But the East's failure to attract investment also highlights a broader disparity in post-Katrina New Orleans, where blacks have fallen steadily behind. In a report released this past week, the Urban League found that black unemployment in the city is

double that of whites and the gap between black and white incomes has widened since the storm.

"There is a false impression that somehow New Orleans East is a neighborhood of criminals and thugs," Morial said. People "don't realize that New Orleans East is a neighborhood of homeowners."

In the East, the streets are lined with single-family ranchers and massive two-story houses that harken back to a time when it served as an escape for white residents fleeing the city's urban core.

"It was billed as the suburb within the city," said Richard Campanella, a professor at Tulane University who studies residential settlement patterns in New Orleans.

Black families began arriving in the 1960s, settling first in neighborhoods designated for "colored people" and later in the historically white communities. Beverly Wright, 67, who lives a few doors from Jones, was 14 years old when her family moved to the East in 1962.

Jones said her father was a "Mississippi man" who believed in owning property. He worked two or three "side hustles," day and night, to move his family up the economic ladder.

"When we moved there, I thought we were rich," said Wright, a sociology professor at Dillard University. "We

moved way out to where the buses didn't go."

Now, the buses do come out to the East, to serve a growing population of working-class and poor residents who moved here after the storm. They wait without benches at bus stops along roadways that were never designed for pedestrians or mass-transit commuters.

The influx of lower-income blacks has produced a more racially homogenous neighborhood (but for a small, vibrant population of Vietnamese residents) and one that is much less prosperous. The median household income in the East has dropped sharply from about \$45,000 in 2000 to \$35,000 in 2012. The number of families living in poverty, meanwhile, has shot up by a third.

Residents complain that they have to leave their community to meet many of their most basic needs. For nine years after the storm, there was no hospital. There are still no retail options and virtually none of the kinds of restaurants that have made New Orleans a destination for foodies.

"I thought I was living a good life. I was living in mediocrity," said Critty Hymes-Blacknell, 65, who left the East for Texas two years ago. "You settle for mediocrity, and you don't have to live like that."

Hymes-Blacknell, an African American woman who was born and raised in New Orleans, had spent 28 years building a thriving obstetrics and gynecology practice of

affluent patients in the East. After the storm, it was all gone.

"I recommended to anyone with illnesses not to come back to the East because it didn't have a hospital," she said. Concerns about the area's deterioration transcend physical comfort. People worry that property values will fall, undercutting decades of effort to build up the black middle class, in large part by encouraging home ownership.

That mission was spearheaded by Liberty Bank, one of the first minority-owned banks in the South, which is based in New Orleans East. Beginning in the 1970s, the bank doled out small loans and later mortgages to working-class blacks who might not have qualified at other financial institutions in that era.

Before Katrina, when the East had lost many non-black residents and was rapidly losing its commercial sector, the bank worked to bring large chain restaurants to the neighborhood. Liberty's president, Alden J. McDonald Jr., also invested personally in the Grand Theater. Neither project succeeded. The restaurants never came. And, after losing money, the Grand closed during Katrina and never reopened. In an interview, McDonald said he understands the business calculus that makes recruiting private investment to the community an uphill battle.

New Orleans East suffered a large amount of flooding due to Katrina, and while many people have moved back to the area, there has not been a

Zoe Chace
Driving into New Orleans, early October. It was pitch black, no lights, just a few big military spotlights like a movie set, a movie set of a war zone—soldiers everywhere, the hotels with the windows blown out, the streets coated in mud and white dirt, and so empty.

Jean Gibson
And I said, Lord, have mercy, look at my city. And it hit me, yeah. It did hit me. But when I came across this canal, I knew there was no humanly way possible that this Ninth Ward could ever come back. The people that you knew, I don't see nobody that I know. People who know you, you know them, know your mama, know your daddy, know your brothers, know where you live, know y'all had a black dog one time—I'm talking about those people. I'm talking about people you did your first communion with, and the people that would tell your mama you did something wrong. You will never see them again. So who am I? I don't know.

Zoe Chace
She just didn't know until she got home to New Orleans that there is no chance of being who she was before. Jean's house is completely rebuilt. Like other houses here I've seen, it kind of looks like a Pottery Barn showroom—not lived in for very long; new matching furniture; nice, though, spacious. She's still working for the city. She has a new husband now. The husband she made it through the storm with, he died in 2007. Now she's married to the son of Mercy D., Mercedes, the bar owner. And she has this new big, big family to go with him. They gather at Mercedes Bar almost every day.

Zoe Chace
And so it's like, yeah, you have a new life. But it looks like a good life. Is it a good life?

Jean Gibson
Looks are deceiving. You make do with what you have. And you try every day to get that other

life back—yes, every day. But it's not coming back. But that's OK. Tomorrow coming. I ought to be able to get some little piece of it. And there's tomorrow coming. It doesn't come back.

Bush Mobilizes Huge Recovery Effort

Article from the *Washington Post* September 1, 2005

by JOSH WHITE

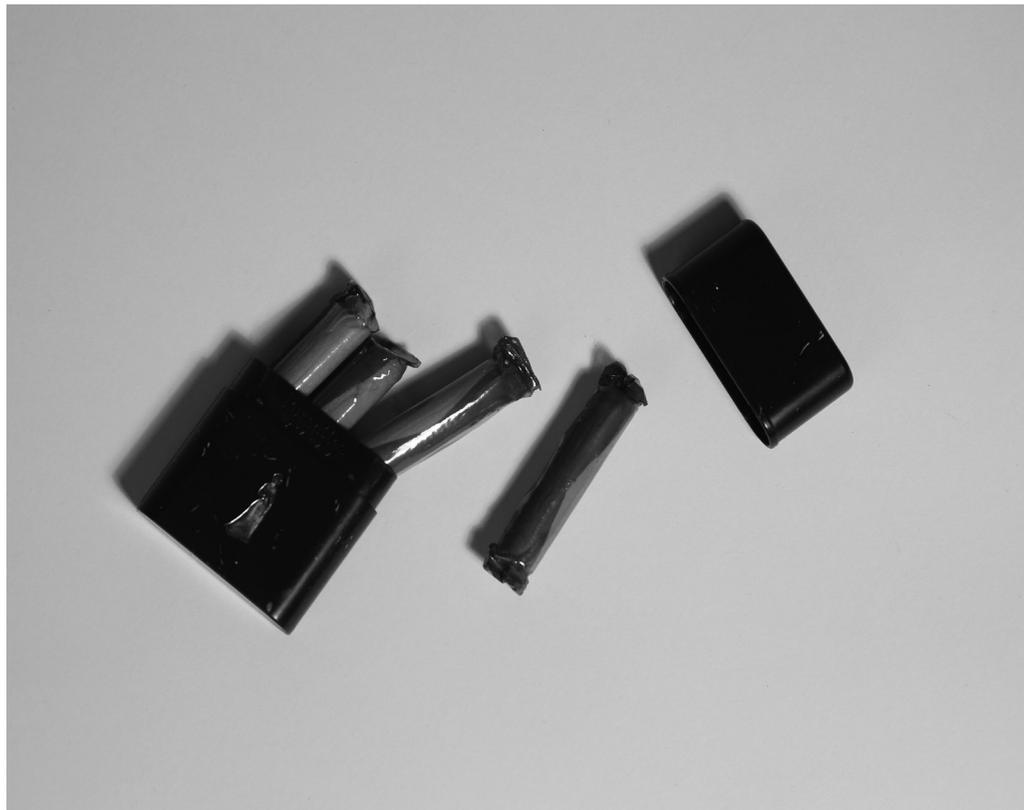


PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS – For many of the evacuees, their money ran out faster than they expected because they could not access their funds. They would have to beg for essentials like tampons and diapers.



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS – Jean Gibson was a very established woman before the storm. Above are some of her personal items she was able to take with her when she left New Orleans.

President Bush mobilized a broad federal government response to the region devastated by Hurricane Katrina yesterday, ordering the Department of Homeland Security and a White House task force to coordinate an unprecedented recovery effort that he said could take years.

The response by numerous federal agencies will focus first on saving lives, rescuing people who have been trapped by floodwater and getting medical help to people injured in the storm. Federal officials said they will then turn largely to providing temporary shelter to hundreds of thousands of displaced people. Then they will focus on assessing the almost unfathomable infrastructure damage and draining New Orleans.

Michael Chertoff, secretary of homeland security, announced yesterday that the hurricane had been declared “an incident of national significance,” invoking for the first time a plan that gives the relatively new federal department responsibility for coordinating the government's response to a terror attack or natural disaster.

ad_Icon
“I anticipate this is going to be a very, very substantial effort,” Chertoff said at a news conference where he said it was too early to estimate costs. “I don't even think we have fully assessed all of the collateral consequences that are going to have to be dealt with. We have a substantial challenge, but . . . we're going to do what it takes.”

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has dispatched more than 50

medical assistance teams to the area along with 25 urban search and rescue teams with more than 1,000 personnel focused on saving lives and recovering bodies. FEMA is also working around the clock with the Army Corps of Engineers to try to fix the breached levees around New Orleans, which were allowing water to flow into the more than 80 percent flooded city.

Michael D. Brown, FEMA's director, asked Chertoff to make at least 2,000 DHS employees available for deployment to the region, according to a memo dated Monday. FEMA was looking for bilingual employees, and those with commercial driver's licenses and logistics skills.

Yesterday afternoon, Michael Leavitt, secretary of health and human services, declared a public health emergency for the entire Gulf Coast region, which speeds emergency health measures. Leavitt said the department plans to build 40 medical shelters with 10,000 beds and 4,000 medical personnel. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration assembled public health teams amid worries about chemicals and toxins, sanitation problems and mosquito-borne disease.

“We are gravely concerned about the potential for cholera, typhoid and dehydrating diseases that could come as a result of the stagnant water and the conditions,” Leavitt said.

The Transportation Department's priority is evacuating residents, officials said, despite many impassable roads and bridges. Restoring minimal transportation

Third Stop. Block of El Dorado

Ira Glass

Well, we have arrived at the third stop on our tour, a little block called El Dorado. It just has a handful of houses on it. Face north on this block, and you see an empty lot that is overgrown and smelly. And if you turn and face south, you see two nicely rebuilt, bright blue houses.

Roy Bradley

How you doing?

Zoe Chace

Good. How you doing?

Roy Bradley

I'm good.

Ira Glass

When Zoe, from our program, happened upon this street, this guy, Roy Bradley, called out to her from his porch.

Zoe Chace

You were the first house?

Ira Glass

Said he was the first house back on the block. And now they were trying to take his house. Come up, he said.

Roy Bradley

Come on up.

Ira Glass

Roy was dressed for football season, though it was still summer—a New Orleans Saints shirt, Saints hat, Saints slippers, Saints socks. Zoe stuck around to get to know him a little bit.

Zoe Chace

Roy's 46, and he's lived in the Lower Ninth for 46 years. Right away, he takes me around the corner to his mom's house, which there's no house. It's an empty green lawn with a square of sidewalk in front. 23 years ago, Roy's family all came outside and wrote their names

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priority to rebuild there. (Jabin Botsford/The Washington Post)

After the storm, “the problem ... was the uncertainty as far as how many people would return,” McDonald said. But beyond Katrina, he said, there is probably a “lack of businesses who wanted to locate in an African American community.”

City Councilman James A. Gray, who represents the East, says local politicians have also squandered precious time and resources. Nagin, who was mayor during the storm, is serving time in federal prison on fraud and bribery charges, some related to disaster funds. And the East was represented for two years on the city council by Jon Johnson, who was convicted of defrauding the government of disaster relief money.

Still, Gray remains hopeful about the neighborhood's economic prospects. People say all the time: “We have 83,000 mostly middle-class people out here. Why isn't

there a shopping center?” he said. But “they may not know what it takes to build a major shopping center and the time that it takes to put a deal like that together.”

Mardele Early opened Lake Forest Elementary Charter School in New Orleans East a year after Katrina, confident that a good school would attract residents to return to the area. (Jabin Botsford/The Washington Post)

And there are beacons of hope. As soon as she was able to return, Mardele Early, 61, and six former New Orleans public school teachers developed Lake Forest Elementary, a public charter school considered one of the best in New Orleans.

“In my heart, I knew if I started a school, people would come,” Early said.

In 2006, Lake Forest opened its doors in a building powered by generator because electric and telephone service still hadn't been restored. Nine years later, the school educates 600 students, from jittery pre-kindergartners all the way up

to restless eighth-graders.

On a recent morning, they all lined up in the gymnasium for Early's daily pep talk. A few dozen parents looked on, including Kenyatta Ford-Theodore, 42, whose daughters are in first and sixth grade.

Ford-Theodore said she enrolled the girls in Lake Forest a few years ago when she realized the free public school offered a better education than the expensive private school she had been paying for elsewhere in New Orleans. Her family soon moved to the East, and she opened a Papa John's franchise, one of several businesses working to revive the local strip mall.

“This is a good community,” Ford-Theodore said. “We just need people to believe in it.”

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infrastructure -- including highways, airports, seaports and oil pipelines -- has so far taken a back seat. Secretary Norman Y. Mineta said yesterday that 13.4 million liters of water, 10,000 tarps, 3.4 million pounds of ice and 144 generators have already been shipped to the region.

Though stretched by wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Defense Department said 11,000 National Guard members were at the disposal of governors to help with security and law enforcement, though no plans to send large numbers of active-duty troops are in place.

After Hurricane Andrew, a full brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division was dispatched to Florida to bolster security and to assist in humanitarian operations. Although federal law normally prohibits U.S. forces from engaging in law enforcement, some paratroopers were used to patrol streets.

Paul McHale, assistant secretary of defense for homeland security, said he

expects a fleet of about 50 helicopters to support FEMA operations, and eight swift-water rescue teams have been sent from California. Eight naval ships are also slated to help with medical support, humanitarian relief and water transportation, and the hospital ship USNS Comfort is scheduled to arrive from Baltimore late next week.

Emergency experts said the two main issues facing the government are how to provide shelter for the displaced and how to recover from unthinkable economic losses. The experts said it is too early to measure the effectiveness of the emerging response, but they said it certainly will be a long road ahead.

“There are just so many problems to deal with right now, with looting, just trying to get in there and get the highways done, it's a huge, huge problem,” said James Lee Witt, a FEMA director under President Bill Clinton. “I know they'll get a handle on it at some point, but it is going to be difficult.”



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS – Some of the knobs from the houses that Ray Bradley built. His livelihood was based on building up the neighborhood and providing homes to the people of the Lower 9th.



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS – This was the door handle to Ray's home. Currently, he is dealing with the backlash of the Hurricane and trying to get the rights to house back.

Cost of Katrina is Expected to Break Records

Article from the *Washington Post* September 1, 2005

by GILBERT M. GAUL & CECI CONNOLLY

As Gulf Coast residents take measure of the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina, federal officials face a cleanup and restoration cost easily topping the nearly \$7 billion price tag of the 1994 Northridge earthquake in California, the single most expensive U.S. disaster to date.

While estimates of the overall cost of dealing with the floods and other damage in New Orleans and a wide swath of the Gulf Coast vary dramatically, some experts say the combined public and private spending on Katrina could run into the tens of billions of dollars.

"This is going to be the most expensive natural disaster that's hit the United States

in history," said Sen. Thad Cochran (R-Miss.), who intends to push for quick approval of an emergency spending bill by his Appropriations Committee.

Last year, Congress approved two bills totaling \$13.6 billion to cover the cost of four hurricanes, according to a White House fact sheet. That included money for highway repairs, military base evacuations, coastal restoration, national park cleanup, wastewater treatment plant repairs, and the administrative costs of providing billions in low-interest loans to small businesses and farmers.

The bulk of the money -- \$6.5

billion -- went to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for immediate help with food, housing, transportation and medical needs, and longer-term assistance such as rebuilding property and providing legal, tax and mental health counseling.

FEMA, which responds to natural disasters, had \$2.5 billion in the bank when Katrina stormed up through the Gulf Coast, said Scott Milburn, spokesman at the Office of Management and Budget.

"I think it's fair to say this is going to be a record," said Michael Buckley, a deputy director at FEMA who helps

oversee the flood insurance program.

About one of every five properties with federally backed flood insurance coverage -- about 1.3 million homes and businesses -- is located in an area swamped by Katrina. The toll of those claims is going to be "astonishing," Buckley said.

Yet, even with its record-smashing potential, Katrina's impact is not entirely surprising. Federal payments for weather-related disasters have grown dramatically in recent decades, especially for hurricanes and floods, as more and more construction takes place along the coasts. Often unnoticed, the financial

impact has been huge, totaling more than \$31 billion in the last dozen years, according to FEMA figures, and forcing government officials and Congress to borrow funds and issue emergency appropriations.

As more storms pile into the coasts, the number of federal disaster declarations has surged, from an average 13 per year in the 1950s to 52 per year so far this decade. Federal disaster spending also has soared, from an inflation-adjusted \$340 million in the 1950s to more than \$25 billion in the 1990s, a review of federal disaster spending records shows.

Hurricanes and coastal storms

account for a growing share of the tab. Even excluding Katrina, hurricanes represent eight of the 10 most expensive natural disasters in history, ranked by FEMA relief payments. Five of the storms have made landfall since 2001, signaling a return to what many meteorologists believe is a busier and more damaging hurricane period than in recent decades.

Disasters also are growing more expensive. Federally backed flood claims totaled \$2 billion last year, about double what FEMA pays in an average year, and the agency borrowed \$300 million from the treasury to cover claims.

Lives and Homes Strewn on an Abandoned Street

Article from the *Washington Post* September 1, 2005

by SHAILA DEWAN

PASS CHRISTIAN, Miss.—, On Henderson Avenue, the houses were all out of order, scattered like pool balls on the broad green lawns.

"The white house is where the green house used to be, and that house is where the white house used to be," Belinda Fields said.

"No, the white house used to be over there, and then the pink house," corrected her brother-in-law, Brian McKay.

"I forgot about the pink house," she said.

Her husband, Lionel Fields, shook his head. "Looks like the town is over with," he said.

In much of Pass Christian,

which juts into St. Louis Bay west of Gulfport, houses were flattened by a tidal surge. But on Henderson Avenue, about as far inland as it gets on the peninsula, Hurricane Katrina had picked up the houses, swirled them around and set them back down, still for the most part standing.

On Wednesday, as the coastal region began to shake off the shock, car after car streamed into town with residents determined to inventory their losses. No one had given much thought yet to lost jobs or lost schools. They were primarily concerned with lost homes and lost life.

James Necaie, his wife and her sister opened their door in Pass Christian to find their

two cats dead. The Necaies work at the Gulf Coast casinos, which are seriously damaged, but they said they had more immediate worries than employment. "I'll deal with that when it comes," Mr. Necaie said. One man wandered down Henderson Avenue looking for his house.

"My house is gone, too," Ms. Fields said. She lived a few blocks away. Mr. McKay and his mother, Ethel Fields, lived in the green house.

Houses were still standing, but the fate of their contents was no better than if they had fallen.

Mr. McKay, 39, broke through the small window in the front door, reached through and

unlatched the door. Inside, it looked as if the house had been spun like a bingo cage. "I wouldn't have survived," Mr. McKay said. He had decided at the last minute to evacuate.

In the street, Ms. Fields found two curled photographs. "It's your grandpa and y'all when you were small," she said. Mr. McKay put the photos in his pocket.

Earlier, Robin and Oscar Joseph had brought a carload of daughters, nieces and children to see what had become of their house. Holding a video camera, Ms. Joseph picked through the mud, filming the concrete slab where her house once stood, the house itself, several yards away, and the shed, which lay on its

side. Up in the old oak tree, a wooden door was lodged like a platform.

"I'm hurt," Ms. Joseph said.

Still another house had been picked up, carried to the corner and spun around to face North Avenue. Stephen Biggs sat on its porch, snoozing as he might have done on any summer afternoon, a jug of water by his side. The house belonged to his sister, Mr. McKay's aunt.

Mr. Biggs said his own house, a trailer, was gone, and his brother with it. "He probably drowned," Mr. Biggs said. "I've been out in the woods hunting for him."

On the far side of North, another house from

Henderson was jammed under the awning of a gas station.

Some residents said the neighborhood would rebuild, but it was hard to know where they would start. "When you're my auntie's age, or my mother's age, there aren't too many places you can go," Mr. McKay said. As for himself, Mr. McKay said he was about to leave for an offshore job on a utility boat. "I'll probably stay out there as long as I can," he said.

in wet cement.

Roy Bradley

This is my sister Veronica, my sister Kesie. That's my wife, Danielle, right there. And they call me Boo Boo. So this is me here. Man, this is still here. Big man, that's my daddy. Oh, Betty—that's my other sister. Samantha—we call her Betty.

Zoe Chace

How many of these people still live in New Orleans.

Roy Bradley

Um, just me.

Zoe Chace

Kesie's in Slidell. Veronica's in Mobile. And on and on. Roy is the only one back. He has two houses here in the Lower Nine, bright blue, right next to each other. It was a big deal when he and his wife bought them—2001, not long before Katrina. This was Roy's life plan, a classic life plan. Pay down the mortgage on both houses by renting out one of them. He worked two jobs, still does. He cooks at Mizado's at night and at TGI Friday's during the day. Once the mortgage was paid off, he and his wife Danielle would buy another place and rent out the starter homes to pay off that one.

Roy Bradley

These houses would help us pay for the next house, or the next step. And then after we pay that off, we would be into something else. And maybe I could open me a restaurant. And I wouldn't have to work so much in my own place. Me and my wife could open her beauty salon.

Zoe Chace

Danielle jumps in here.

Danielle Bradley

You see, we crawl before we walk.

Roy Bradley

Crawl before you walk.

Danielle Bradley

So we don't have to come back to crawling.

Zoe Chace

That was the plan, before the storm. When the storm did hit, Roy left town on the advice of his favorite weatherman, Bob Breck.

Roy Bradley

I'd been listening to Bob Breck since I was a child on Channel 8 weather.

Zoe Chace

You trusted him.

Roy Bradley

He was on it, man. He was there all night. And he just was saying, please, go. Please, please, whatever you do. And that's when I just said, you know what? I'm going to go.

Zoe Chace

Did you see some of your neighbors when you were driving out? And you were like, yo, let's go.

Roy Bradley

Oh, I seen a couple of them, man. And my neighbor at this corner here, at Gordon and El Dorado, he was washing the car. And he was washing the car. And he was cleaning out the drains at the corner there, because we used to do that before the storm. And I was like, man, you ain't leaving? You ain't going nowhere? Man, I ain't going. I ain't worried about no storm. You know how we do around here. And that actually was the last time I seen him. He didn't make it through. Wanda, his wife, told me that he drowned, that they was on top of the roof. And he had drowned before they got to the roof.

Roy estimates the number of neighbors he lost in the storm around 14. As we walk, he points out their houses, or where their houses were. There was a guy across the street who died right after the storm. He was running a generator, and his



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS — "23 years ago, Roy's family all came outside and wrote their names in wet cement." These were saved from outside his home.

Many Children Lack Stability Long After the Storm

Article from the *New York Times* December 4, 2008

by SHAILA DEWAN

BATON ROUGE, La. — Last January, at the age of 15, Jermaine Howard stopped going to school. Attendance seemed pointless: Jermaine, living with his father and brother in the evacuee trailer park known as Renaissance Village since Hurricane Katrina in 2005, had not managed to earn a single credit in more than two years.

Not that anyone took much notice. After Jermaine flunked out of seventh grade, the East Baton Rouge School District allowed him to skip eighth grade altogether and begin high school. After three semesters of erratic attendance, he left Baton Rouge in early spring of this year and moved in with another family in a suburb of New Orleans, where he found

a job at a Dairy Queen.

A shy, artistic boy with a new mustache, Jermaine is one of tens of thousands of youngsters who lost not just all of their belongings to Hurricane Katrina, but a chunk of childhood itself.

After more than three years of nomadic uncertainty, many of the children of Hurricane Katrina are behind in school, acting out and suffering from extraordinarily high rates of illness and mental health problems. Their parents, many still anxious or depressed themselves, are struggling to keep the lights on and the refrigerator stocked.

For some, like Kearra Keys, 16, who was expelled from

her Baton Rouge school for fighting and is now on a waiting list for a G.E.D. program, what was lost may be irretrievable. For others, like Roy Hilton, who stands a head taller than his third-grade classmates, recovery may lie in the neighborhood school near the New Orleans duplex where his family has finally found a home.

The families profiled in this series were among the last to leave Renaissance Village when the Federal Emergency Management Agency closed it in May. The government was trying to nudge the poorest, least-educated and sickest evacuees toward self-sufficiency — or at least toward agencies other than FEMA.

More than 30,000 former trailer residents landed in apartments paid for by the federal government until March 2009. Case managers promised by FEMA to help these families find permanent homes have yet to start work in Louisiana.

Many of the adults are at least partly victims of their own poor choices. But the children are another matter. For them, the experts prescribe the one thing that has been hardest to obtain: stability. Their parents sometimes work against that goal.

Jermaine's father, Joseph Griffin, has had trouble holding on to steady work and said he did not see much value in his son's attending school this semester because he had

house burned up. He died, and burned in the house.

Zoe Chace

The son of Danielle's pastor died, Roy says, when his house was dragged a few blocks away. The roofs here were filled with people during the storm. One of his neighbors even swam to Roy's house to look for him. It took months before he was even allowed back onto this block. He had to show ID at the bridge. And then the National Guard gave him 30 minutes. You already know the house was totaled. Everything they had was gone.

Roy Bradley

My wife cried. She cried the whole time we was in the house. I thought it was gonna flood all over again in the house. I said, baby, you've got to stop.

Zoe Chace

You didn't cry?

Roy Bradley

Well, seeing her cry, I might have dropped a tear or two. But I—you know. Women, you know...

Zoe Chace

He'll cry, though. He cried for an hour the night the Saints won the Super Bowl. Next, for Roy, the familiar beats of Katrina keep going — 13 hour car ride to Baton Rouge, a year in Atlanta, then back to New Orleans and a FEMA trailer. No stores, no lights, nobody, no one around. They got a little FEMA money, a little insurance money, and a whole bunch of free help from this nonprofit who set up shop right next to Roy's broken down home, lowernine.org. Two years after the storm, the family moved back in. So picture right at this point in the story, it was like Roy was back where he was when he first bought his houses. It was a reset. Start at the bottom and climb back up. And this is the moment when Roy makes

this totally fateful decision. He decides to take out a loan to borrow some money, fix up the other little house, which was a shell after Katrina; it was dry rotting, so he could start renting it again.

Roy Bradley

I put it on Facebook. I'm trying to get a loan. Anyone knows someone that they can suggest to me to go to to get a loan. You get all these people, oh, yeah, yeah. So that's when I went on to Loan Partners and took out the loan.

Zoe Chace

Loan Partners, the kind of company that made a lot of loans after Katrina to help with construction and rebuilding. And they lent Roy money for exactly that, to rebuild his rental property—\$60,000. But this was nothing like a typical mortgage loan. It had a very short deadline—one year—less, actually—11 months. And it worked like this. For a year, you just pay interest every month. At the end, you pay off the whole thing, the original \$60,000, all at once. I asked to see a copy. The rate seems high, 12 and 1/2%. And there are all sorts of hikes in fees that kick in if you're delinquent.

Roy Bradley

I didn't read all that.

Zoe Chace

These are really hard terms.

Roy Bradley

And I signed it.

Zoe Chace

Without really reading it.

Roy Bradley

I didn't.

Zoe Chace

Because why? You kind of trusted your friend, and they were like, this is a good company.

already missed so much class. "If he doesn't get no credits for it, what sense does it make for him to sit up in there?" Mr. Griffin said. "I was going to try to get him a job."

The health problems of Hurricane Katrina children are daunting. When the Children's Health Fund, whose mobile health clinics have provided the only doctors and psychologists available to many of these families, reviewed the charts of children seen this year, researchers with the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University found that 41 percent under age 4 had iron-deficiency anemia — twice the rate for children in New York City's homeless shelters. Anemia, often attributable to poor nutrition, is associated with developmental problems and academic underachievement.

Jermaine Howard, who lives with his family in Baton Rouge, La., struggles in school and has not earned credits in two years. Credit Tim Mueller for The New York Times
Forty-two percent of the children, who lived in trailers laced with dangerous levels of formaldehyde, had allergic rhinitis or an upper respiratory infection, the study found.

"Not only has their health not improved since the storm," the study said, "over time it has declined to an alarming level."

Medical care, counseling and child care are hard to find. In that respect, LaTonya London has been lucky. Her youngest children, born while the family lived at Renaissance Village, have two of the 16 Early Head Start slots — down from 200 right after the storm — reserved for evacuees of Hurricane Katrina in Baton Rouge. The baby, Edbony, was born with no forearms. Darren, 2, was two months premature and suffers from asthma and delayed speech.

The eldest of Ms. London's five children, Darrell, 7, has developed behavior problems so serious that he has already been suspended several times from first grade, causing Ms. London to abandon plans to start vocational training, she said. In response, she has resumed counseling sessions for Darrell at the mobile clinic.

Dr. Irwin Redlener, the director of the Children's Health Fund, notes that there is as yet no comprehensive method of tracking these children, who are supposed to be the subject of a long-term study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The key to giving these children a future, doctors and educators have long said, is providing them with a sense of stability — a home that seems permanent, a school where they can put down roots. The recommendation is underscored by the gains made by those families that have found a toehold.

After months of looking, Laura Hilton, who is functionally illiterate, finally found an apartment in New Orleans for her and her two sons, George, 17, and Roy, 11, that was within walking distance of Roy's school. Laura's husband was murdered in New Orleans after the storm, and at the trailer park the Hilton children attended school only fitfully. Roy was known for being both endearing and utterly ungovernable.

Now Roy, who is at least three grades behind and needs special education, tutoring and counseling, can hardly be persuaded to leave school when the last bell rings. He helps teachers on their work days and shows up for Saturday detention even when he has not misbehaved. He fights less, and recently volunteered to sit in the principal's office at recess to keep from getting into trouble and losing his

field-trip privileges.

"When he first came in, I was like, 'Why me?'" Wanda Brooks, the principal at the James Weldon Johnson Elementary School, said. "As a school, you're frustrated — why didn't somebody look at this when he was 10?" But then she got to know Roy.

"They begin to talk to you, and you begin to realize what the child went through," Ms. Brooks said. "He has not gotten over his dad's death."

Alton Love and his daughter, Adrian, 9, who is adjusting well since Hurricane Katrina. Credit Lori Waselchuk for The New York Times

Roy has received special attention from a male role model, Edward Williams, the football coach at Johnson. On a recent morning, Mr. Williams went into Roy's classroom to find him sulking at his desk while the other children practiced a dance routine.

Drawing Roy aside, Mr. Williams told him: "You got to get up and move around. You got to try."

But life outside the trailers has not been a relief for every child. With its white tent that served as a community center, Renaissance Village reeked of impermanence, though for many young children who lived there it was almost the only home they had known. Since the park closed, Adrian Love and her father, Alton, have moved into a Baton Rouge apartment (her mother, a crack user, lives in New Orleans). Mr. Love, who has not been able to hold a job since the storm, does not allow Adrian, 9, to play outside much, instead writing out long-division problems for her in a notebook after dinner.

On Adrian's first report card this year, she got straight A's.

But she sees her friends from Renaissance Village only rarely. "I wish I still lived there," she said.

Children who had no serious problems before the storm are likely to recover well, said Toni Bankston, who until recently was the director of mental health at the Baton Rouge Children's Health Project. But, she estimated, only about 60 percent fall into that category.

Ms. Bankston has particularly grave concerns about the children who have fallen so far behind in school that there is little chance of their catching up. "What you're looking at is our future juvenile justice, our prison population," she said.

In October, Jermaine Howard returned to Baton Rouge and moved into the one-bedroom apartment occupied by his father, brother and grandmother. With the help of Sister Judith Brun, a nun who has been working with evacuees since the storm, he enrolled in ninth grade at Broadmoor High School.

That process alone provided a snapshot of the chaos of Jermaine's life. From several plastic baggies and a dented metal canister, the family could barely amass the documents needed to prove his address.

School administrators balked when they discovered that he had previously been registered under his father's last name, Griffin, not the name on his birth certificate. Jermaine, with tears in his eyes, was forced to explain that his mother was in prison. He was told to pay a visit to the ominous-sounding Board of Hearings. Then came the kicker: because he had already missed so much, he would receive no credit for this semester.

"Nice to see y'all," the school guidance counselor said. "Just too bad it wasn't about three months ago."

Roy Bradley
Right. That, and just to get my house fixed. That was my main goal is to get myself back on track to where I was before the storm hit.

Zoe Chace
The only reason Roy was able to get this loan in the first place was because after Katrina, the government was handing out checks to homeowners to rebuild their houses. Loan Partners knew Roy would qualify for a bunch of this money as soon as he fixed up his rental property. And Roy did qualify. And the money did come. But instead of paying off the loan all at once, he just kept sending those monthly payments. He thought it was like a mortgage, like the mortgages he'd been paying for years before the storm. Roy found out how big a mistake he'd made when he came home and he found this sign on his house.

Zoe Chace
Can you read what it says?

Roy Bradley
"Five day notice to vacate the premises. First Civil Court of New Orleans states, February the 12th, 2015. Occupants--" I don't know when I became occupant in my house. "Owner wants possession." When have you become the owner? From Loan Partners?

Zoe Chace
Here's the thing. Loan Partners does own Roy's house now—both his houses. Roy didn't pay off his loan. The houses went into foreclosure, and Loan Partners got them. Roy and Danielle can't really believe this. They're challenging it in court and appealing the sale. I talked to one of the guys at Loan Partners, Bob Bergeron. He said, no, their business isn't built through squeezing people through tough terms and then taking their property. Most of the people they've lent money

to haven't defaulted, he says. And that seems to check out. It's not such an unusual loan for a professional real estate investor. But it is for Roy, who is so far from where he thought he'd be at this moment—close to losing his home for the second time in 10 years.

Roy Bradley
To say that it's been 10 years, it should be better. You know, it's like I'm trying to get it back together, and now I'm back like I'm going back down this road. Then 10 years later, I shouldn't be there. I should be stepping to another step in life.

Zoe Chace
There are so many lots for sale in the Lower Ninth Ward since the storm. And in Roy's neighborhood, people are buying them up, building new houses, then turning them around and selling them for a couple hundred thousand dollars just down the street from him. It's a fortune compared to what Roy paid 15 years ago. What do you think the neighborhood will be like in 10 years?

Roy Bradley
10 more years? Oh, all of us will be gone. Black homeowners, we'll be out of here. 10 more years—this is just my theory of it—they're going to be done kicked all of us out of here. And they're going to have these nice, big, pretty houses back here. You're going to have the street car come down through the middle. And they're going to have the thing in the back on the levee. And then we'll be gone for good. I hope not, because I hope to still be here.

Zoe Chace
Roy's original plan was to buy properties in the Lower Ninth and rent them out to pay for his home. With the neighborhood booming, that's exactly what's happening—for other people.

U.S. Airman has finally found the Katrina survivor who bear-hug captured his heart

Article from the *New York Times* September 2, 2015

by LINDSEY BEAVER

It was a heartening moment captured amid overwhelming bleakness: A 3-year-old Hurricane Katrina survivor wrapped her chubby little arms round an Air Force pararescue jumper who had rappelled into New Orleans to save the girl's family from floodwaters.

The 2005 photograph showing a toddler with pigtails and an ear-to-ear grin holding tight to Staff Sgt. Michael Maroney was soon everywhere — plastered on Burger King placemats, AT&T phone cards, a magazine cover.

For many people, including Maroney, it represented hope at a time of total devastation.

"I was a single father trying to raise two boys. I had just gotten back from Afghanistan, and New Orleans was under water," Maroney, now 40, told *The Washington Post*. "When she hugged me, everything went away. There were no problems in that moment. That meant everything to me."

"It had been such a rough week; when she wrapped me up in that hug, I was in la-la land," he said earlier this year. "Nothing else existed."

Maroney never got the child's name — but he has never stopped trying to find her.

Now, he has.

LeShay Brown, now 13, lives with her family in Waveland, Miss., about 60 miles from New Orleans.

She and her relatives plan to reconnect with Maroney in a few weeks, according to *People* magazine.

"I can't wait to meet her to tell her how important she is," Maroney told the magazine. "In my line of work, it doesn't usually turn out happily. This hug, this moment, was like — everybody I've ever saved, that was the thank you."

It was September 2005 when Maroney was sent to New Orleans to find survivors in Katrina's aftermath. LeShay's family had been waiting about a week to be rescued, and the young girl soon found herself in Maroney's MH-60 *Pave Hawk* helicopter.

She planted a bear-hug on him — and it was captured by Air Force photographer Veronica Pierce.

LeShay has since said she doesn't remember the hug, but those who saw it will never forget it.

"I was crying because I was scared ... that was the first time I was on a helicopter, the first time I was on a plane and the first time I ever left New Orleans," LeShay's mother, Shawntrell Brown, told *People* magazine. "The helicopter had open doors, so I looked out and you could just see all the water over everything, and it was just too much for me, so she was comforting me."

"It's okay," LeShay told her mother at the time, according to *Air Force Times*. "We're safe. Don't worry."

Maroney is now an Air Force Reservist who instructs pararescue jumpers in San Antonio, and for years since the rescue — and hug — he has been wondering about the young girl and where she

ended up. In 2005, he posted the picture on social media and has been looking for her ever since.

It wasn't until this February that the story started gaining traction, when 16-year-old Andrew Goard from Waterford, Mich., learned about Maroney's story and launched the #FindKatrinaGirl campaign. The next month, *Air Force Times* wrote about Maroney's quest to find the girl, and the campaign went viral.

"I would love to get another hug and see how she's doing," Maroney told *The Post* at the time, noting that he still had the photo up in his home. "I'd love her to know that there isn't a day I haven't thought of her."

The news eventually made its way back to LeShay Brown.

"The whole neighborhood told us they saw LeShay on the

news, and everybody told us someone was looking for her," her mother told *People*. After she saw the photo, Shawntrell Brown said: "I knew that it was her."

LeShay's friend tracked down Maroney's 13-year-old son on social media and passed along a message: LeShay wanted to hear from the airman.

"I was excited that he was looking for me for such a long time," LeShay told the magazine.

Maroney told *People* that he knew the odds of finding her were long.

"I figured one in a trillion," he said. "I thought it never would have happened."

Now that it has, he said, he can't quite believe it.

"Words are failing me," he told *The Post*. "I can't even express how I feel."



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS — When the airman helped the little girl, she was found wearing these cowboy boots and still has them.

Fourth Stop. Alabo Street between N. Villere and Urquhart

Ira Glass

We've arrived at the fourth stop, our last stop, on the tour of the Lower Ninth.

Boy

Morning. Come on, man. You got the ball.

Ira Glass

On Alabo Street, between North Villere and Urquhart, there's some rebuilt homes. And there's some homes that look like Katrina just hit, like one house that scares the neighborhood kids that has possums living inside. In front of an abandoned lot, somebody's put up a basketball hoop. And we talked to so many people in the Lower Ninth who are still so traumatized by what happened a decade ago that at some point, we just started looking for anybody who wasn't. That's how we ended up here.

Brishun Gary

When I think about it, I just turn on the TV...

Boy

You know what people do?

Brishun Gary

Shhh. I'm talking.

Boy

Come on, man.

Brishun Gary

I just turn on the TV, do a search, and I type in Hurricane Season—you know the movie that they made about New Orleans, yeah? I'll be watching that.

Ira Glass

Brishun Gary and his buddies talked to Zoe. They are 14, 13, and 11. And they do not remember the storm. Their big source of information, this film Hurricane Season, is a straight

to DVD film about high school basketball players in the city after the storm. Needless to say, when these guys tell the story of the storm that destroyed their own neighborhood, it is without the pain you hear when adults tell it.

Brishun Gary

Because my grandmother was with that. They was living through that. She said they lying down. Next thing you know, all you hear was, ah, ah, swish.

Boy 2

What?

Brishun Gary

And she said—because they were screaming. No, listen. Because they were screaming. And then she was like, swish. And then the water just came on. The roof came off. So she said she couldn't get on top of the roof, so she got on top of her dresser. And once she told me that, I'm like, man. I thought she was lying at first. So I started watching movies. And then I was like, oh, yes, must be true.

Ira Glass

What's interesting talking to kids about this is that some of the events that adults remember with horror, like being displaced to Texas or to Georgia, and all the difficulties in providing for their kids and finding housing and finding work, for the kids was sometimes just a very different experience.

Breyana

It was so fun.

Ira Glass

Breyana was only two when her family fled the city for Texas.

Breyana

Because I remember getting



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS – Children played card games or with small toys they took when they evacuated. It was a distraction from what was happening around them

What Hurricane Katrina has taught us about human resilience

Article from the *Washington Post* August 26, 2015

by SARAH KERSHAW

Survivors of Hurricane Katrina are rescued from their flooded homes in New Orleans and transported to shelter.

In announcing President Obama's plans to commemorate the ten-year-anniversary of Hurricane Katrina on Thursday, the White House said the president and his cabinet members would tour areas of the Gulf Coast that were pummeled by the

disaster to "highlight some of the many remarkable recovery and resilience stories across the region."

Americans love stories of resilience, stories of people who somehow find the inner strength to not merely survive or bounce back from devastating trauma, but to thrive, flourish and "bounce forward," as some psychologists describe the phenomenon.

Who hasn't heard Nietzsche's dictum "That which does not kill us makes us stronger?"

And the notion of "post-traumatic growth," as opposed to post-traumatic stress and other mental scars left on the survivors of catastrophes like Katrina, has recently become a popular, if controversial, subject in psychology.

Resilience, so often and rightly

celebrated, is complicated. The questions of who can overcome, who cannot, and why, have no simple answers, though many researchers have been tackling them in recent years.

During a visit to New Orleans on Thursday, President Obama hailed the city for the progress it has made rebuilding since Hurricane Katrina struck the area 10 years ago. (Reuters) Prompted in large part by the

to spend time with my family. Because usually, you know your mom goes to work, and your grandma goes to work. And I was happy, because my mom and my grandma was at home, and we get to have fun with each other.

Bron

Like after Hurricane Katrina, we went from Mississippi, from Mississippi to Georgia, from Georgia to South Carolina, from South Carolina to North Carolina to North Carolina, Pennsylvania. I've been all over. I've been all over for real.

Ira Glass

Bron was 12 when the storm hit and his family went all over.

Bron

It's pretty nice to actually see other states than just New Orleans. Because when I was young, I didn't used to see nothing else outside. Hurricane Katrina really helped me out to see other places. Yeah.

Ira Glass

Over on Gordon Street, between Burgundy and Rampart, Robyn ran into this 23-year-old, just, you know, on the street. And they started talking. And his name is Terrence Marshall. He went to Texas for a year after the storm. And then his family came back. And since then, he's found all of his old friends from when he was a little kid growing up here, from back when he was 13, except one of them.

Terrence Marshall

His name's Samuel. Samuel.

Robyn Semien

Have you tried to find him?

Terrence Marshall

Yeah, I tried on Facebook and Myspace. I tried Twitter. I called his house phone. But the line was disconnected. I can't find him.

Robyn Semien

You tried to ask other people who knew him?

Terrence Marshall

Yeah. They ain't seen him either. So I just hope ain't nothing happened to him.

Robyn Semien

But you don't know.

Terrence Marshall

I don't know. I just want to see him again.

Ira Glass

Though most of the people who died in Katrina were elderly, many of those in their own homes, some kids died, too. The best estimates are 10 or 20 in New Orleans. Terrence is an adult now. When he last saw Samuel, they were both in middle school, both 13. They loved to play Game Boy together. He asked Robyn that we would broadcast a message over the radio. Here it is.

Terrence Marshall

Hey, old Sam, it's T. Tell me if you made it. Have you made it through Katrina? Some kind of way you hear this, let me know you're alive, you hear me? I seen everybody except you. Tyrone. I've seen Mo. I even seen B. But hey, just let me know if you're out there. Hello?

Robyn Semien

Terrence, it's Robyn. Can you hear me?

Terrence Marshall

Yeah, I hear you.

Robyn Semien

Hey, I have someone here that wants to talk to you.

Terrence Marshall

All right.

Samuel

Hello?

CONTINUE FROM PAGE A19

Sept. 11th terrorist attacks in 2001 — although early research on resilience was inspired by the stories of breast cancer survivors — a large body of work has emerged examining the concept and experience of resilience. Psychologists and other social scientists have identified multiple factors that influence what happens to people after catastrophic events.

One key to understanding responses is the nature of the event itself.

“Not all events are created equal,” said Roxane Cohen Silver, a professor of psychology at the University of California, Irvine.

Individuals and communities tend to experience more negative consequences and have an especially hard time recovering from man-made disasters like the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, the Boston marathon bombing or the massive BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, researchers say. But natural disasters like hurricanes, earthquakes, floods and wildfires can be different.

Supply chain experts share tips on streamlining operations and improving customer service. Notably, Hurricane Katrina, which killed 1,800 people and displaced hundreds of thousands, is considered both a natural and a man-made disaster. That is largely because after the storm made landfall, breaches of the man-made levees intended to guard against flooding led to the widespread destruction.

Some of the questions that can determine how survivors will respond and recover include: Was the event an “act of God” or Mother Nature — an anticipated disaster linked to geography, like hurricanes along the Gulf and

Atlantic coasts and wildfires in California? Or was it entirely unexpected, like the 2012 shooting inside a movie theater in Aurora, Colo. that killed 12 people and injured more than 70 others in a place that most people would assume is safe?

Was there someone to blame, like Osama bin Laden or other terrorists, or the different shooters who killed 32 people in 2007 at Virginia Tech; the 20 children and six adults in 2012 at Sandy Hook Elementary school in Newtown, Conn.; and the nine people gunned down in June while worshipping in their church in Charleston, S.C.?

With blame, and possibly a sense of injustice, comes anger, a potential obstacle to recovery from trauma and resilience. (The opposite, forgiveness, can be one of the strongest signs of resilience, experts say, but it is often extremely difficult for victims to practice.)

[Related: How a man made peace with the terrorists who killed his brother and other journeys of forgiveness]

“Anger can be a real hurdle to get over,” said Russell T. Jones, a professor of psychology at Virginia Tech. “The degree of anger that one might have can really inhibit an individual from seeking help. They become so angry, they just are unable to try to understand it, process the anger and move through it.”

An example of the different responses to disasters lies in the Gulf region itself, said David Abramson, Director of the Program on Population Recovery and Resiliency at New York University, who has spent years researching the impact Katrina has had on children in particular in an ongoing study.

Kyle Maynard proves even the biggest challenges can be overcome with simpler steps.

People whose livelihoods in fishing were destroyed by the 2010 BP oil spill have had a harder time recovering mentally and “getting back on their feet,” after that disaster than many did after from Katrina, he said.

“People may be less afraid of earthquakes, even if they can cause the same level of profound damage, destruction and death,” he said, than, say, something like the Sept. 11th terrorist attacks, because “those things that are totally unexpected and that come from other human agents introduce the notion of evil, which becomes much scarier.”

Jones was a co-author of a study examining the impact of Katrina on the mental health of residents during the year following Katrina. The study showed a surprising finding — and an early sign of resilience: the prevalence of suicidal ideation, the desire to die and possible planning of one's death, was significantly lower after the disaster than before.

The study included a comparison between data from mental health surveys before Katrina of two census tracts that were later hit hard by the hurricane and a survey of residents in the same areas during the year after Katrina.

Researchers concluded that while the prevalence of mental illness, such as PTSD and depression, doubled among the study subjects in the wake of Katrina, an unexpectedly low prevalence of suicidal ideation was a sign that “post-traumatic personal growth” was happening for survivors.

Since then, the concept of post-traumatic growth or P.T.G., has taken off, suggesting that people tend to make positive changes in their lives as a result of trauma and disaster — and that Nietzsche may have been right. The term was officially coined by Richard Tedeschi

at the University of the North Carolina, Charlotte.

According to this view of trauma, not only are people more likely than previously believed to grow as a result of disaster, but also those who surmount extraordinary life challenges are more likely to find personal strength, experience spiritual change and an appreciation of life than those who have faced no traumas at all.

Silver, the University of California psychologist, cautioned that the growing emphasis on P.T.G. has the potential to imply that there is something inherently wrong with those who do not thrive in the face of adversity. If taken too far, the idea can wind up blaming the victim, she said.

“Thousands of people encounter different kinds of events at different times in their lives,” Silver said. “People learn something from each event to which they are exposed, learn something about the world, about the way in which they come to terms with each event. Anything that suggests there is something wrong with the person who doesn't bounce back, that makes me very nervous.”

Silver is a co-author of a multiyear study “Whatever Does Not Kill Us: Cumulative Lifetime Adversity, Vulnerability and Resilience,” that found a key factor in predicting a negative impact on the well being of victims and survivors was previous exposure to trauma. Some examples include the loss of a parent, physical and sexual abuse, illness, homelessness and natural disasters.

So if someone in New Orleans had already survived, say, rape or cancer, or had a history of repeated trauma and then lost everything because of Katrina, he or she could be more likely to have a harder time coping mentally with what

Terrence Marshall
Hello?

Samuel
Hey, what's up?

Terrence Marshall
Who is this?

Samuel
This is Samuel.

Terrence Marshall
Man, you're lying.

Samuel
Nah.

Terrence Marshall
I swear to god, son. Hey, Sam, where you at? Sam, it's Terrence, son. Sam, it's Terrence, son.

Samuel
Yeah. What's up, man?

Terrence Marshall
Damn, boy. Where the hell you been?

Samuel
I've been to New Jersey. I've been to Arkansas.

Terrence Marshall
Man, what's up, brah? I even seen Maurice, Tyrone, Jessica, all of them. I thought you was dead, boy. I swear to God.

Samuel
Yeah.

Terrence Marshall
Man, what's up, for real? How your mom doing? How your brothers doing? What's up?

Samuel
Like, they're doing good.

Terrence Marshall
Yeah, so I'm still short, lil son.

Samuel
[LAUGHS]

Terrence Marshall
Yeah, exactly. I'm only like 5'6",

son—5'5", 5'6", son.
Samuel
[LAUGHS] I'm like 6 foot now.

Terrence Marshall
Damn!

Robyn Semien
Hey, wait. Samuel, will you tell me, what did you think happened to Terrence? I never asked you that.

Samuel
I actually thought he did not survive Katrina.

Robyn Semien
You thought he didn't make it.

Samuel
Yeah. Yeah. In Katrina, like, you hear the death count, but you don't hear who.

Terrence Marshall
Hey, I don't mean to cut you off. Not to cut you off, but you still talk—like, you got a different accent. But you're still talking and responding the same way from when you were a little kid, son. You were like, uh. And you still do that.

Samuel
Yeah. They say I have like a dad laugh. That's how they made fun of me here.

Terrence Marshall
[LAUGHS] Man, I'm not even gonna lie, man. I got a huge burden—like, this is like a real—I really feel like you blessed me just now. Like, seriously, it feel good. It feel real good talking to you son, because you were like my best friend, son. Like damn, dude.

Samuel
Yeah.

Terrence Marshall
This feel good. This feel good talking to you.



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS — Postcards show memories of the families who lived in New Orleans Lower 9th Ward. Many people were distributed around the country and stayed connected through written word.

The thing that People too often forget about Hurricane Katrina

Article from the *New York Times*

August 27, 2015

by CHRIS MOONEY

Water spills over a levee along the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina 30 August, 2005 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

With the 10-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina nearing — the storm made its Gulf Coast landfall on August 29 — attention is mounting. President Obama traveled to New Orleans Thursday to meet with mayor Mitch Landrieu and residents, and to underscore how successful the city's recovery has been.

But when it comes to ensuring a better future not only for New Orleans, but other

hurricane-prone coastal cities like Tampa and Miami, there's one critical thing to remember about Katrina. And that is this: Katrina wasn't the worst-case-scenario hurricane for New Orleans.

Sure, it was a monster hurricane, especially over the Gulf of Mexico. But it weakened considerably as it approached the Gulf Coast. "Overall, it appears likely that most of the city of New Orleans experienced sustained surface winds of Category 1 or Category 2 strength," notes the official report on the storm's meteorology and track from the National Hurricane Center.

Moreover, Katrina's location of final landfall — where the hurricane's eye passed the shore — was near the border between Mississippi and Louisiana. That's a good way from the center of New Orleans.

Furthermore, New Orleans was on the left side of the eye at that point — and in the northern hemisphere, hurricanes are most dangerous to those who lie on their right side (relative to the storm's path of motion). That's because the storms rotate counterclockwise, meaning that on the right side, "the motion of the hurricane also contributes to its swirling winds," as NOAA's Hurricane Research Division explains.

There's one caveat to this analysis, though. Katrina was a very large storm, and even though it was weakening as it approached the Gulf Coast, its size allowed it to drive waves more typical of a stronger hurricane. Katrina drove a larger storm surge than Category 5 Hurricane Camille

did in 1969. (For a more exhaustive take on the storm's meteorology, read here.)

Nonetheless, the fact remains that a Category 5 hurricane landfall, without weakening, is possible along the Gulf Coast.

Fortunately, New Orleans has vastly improved hurricane protections nowadays — up to a roughly category 3 strength, with walls as high as 32 feet in some places around the city. So the city is much better prepared for any hurricane that it may have to face. Even a stronger storm than Katrina would presumably have most of its water stopped by the new protection system, even if some waves and water might overtop the walls.

But the point is much larger than New Orleans, which, after all, now has hurricane protections that our other coastal cities lack. There's a worst case scenario storm for Miami, and for Tampa, that is also considerably more dire than these cities have seen in recent memory.

The active hurricane era that brought us Katrina and Sandy may be over

Article from the *New York Times* September 11, 2015

by PHIL KLOTZBACH

Hurricane Wilma of 2005 was the last major hurricane to make landfall on the U.S. coast. It came ashore in Florida as a category 3, after weakening from its maximum intensity of category 5. (NASA)

Floyd, Katrina, Wilma, Ike and Sandy — just a few of the devastating hurricanes we’ve seen in the years since 1995. It’s been an astonishingly active hurricane period of the Atlantic Ocean, costing the U.S. over \$500 billion in damages. But there’s evidence to suggest that the painfully memorable, two-decade era that brought some of the most intense hurricanes on record — and some the most active hurricane seasons — is coming to a close.

Over the years from 1995-2012, the Atlantic Ocean averaged 3.7 major hurricanes (Category 3 or higher) per year. In the period before that, 1970-1994, the Atlantic produced an average of just 1.5 major hurricanes each year. And that pattern of active versus quiet extends back through the first half of the 20th century, as well.

However, over the past two years we’ve seen incredibly low hurricane activity, and the 2015 season is running at just 50 percent of normal to-date. Which leads us to ask the obvious question: Has the active Atlantic hurricane era come to an end?

Active and inactive periods since 1900, defined by the number of major hurricanes (Category 3 or stronger) per year. Active and inactive periods since 1900, defined as the number of six-hour

periods with major hurricanes (Category 3 or stronger) per year. The first part of the 20th century was likely underestimated due to lack of observations.

The variations between active and inactive periods appear to be caused by fluctuations in sea surface temperature patterns across the Atlantic Ocean, known as the Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation (AMO). When the AMO is in its positive phase, there is typically a horseshoe-shaped pattern in the ocean surface temperatures, with warmer than normal water in the far northern Atlantic and the tropical Atlantic, and normal or even cooler than normal temperatures off the East Coast.

During this positive phase, when ocean temperatures are warm and ripe in the tropical Atlantic, pressure and wind patterns are also altered in such a way that favor Atlantic hurricane formation and intensification. This pattern was also seen in earlier historical hurricane periods, and is likely driven by fluctuations in the Atlantic’s warm water conveyor belt, the thermohaline circulation, which is driven by the ocean temperature and its salinity.

(NOAA)

But in 2013, this pattern changed considerably, with colder than average water emerging in the northern and tropical Atlantic, while warm water developed off of the East Coast. This shift leads us to ask if the AMO is driving active and inactive hurricane regimes, and if so, does this

mean we have indeed entered an inactive period.

Another way that our research group monitors the AMO is through a measurement that combines ocean surface temperatures in the far northern Atlantic and pressure in the tropical Atlantic. When pressure is higher than normal, it implies a more stable atmosphere, which is not conducive for hurricane formation. Currently, this measurement of the AMO index is at the lowest level we’ve seen since 1994, in line with the Atlantic’s drop in hurricane activity.

Atlantic multidecadal oscillation from 1950 to 2015. What do these changes mean for landfalls? Utilizing historical data extending back to 1878 (and treating the 1878-1899 as an additional active period), the odds of major hurricane landfall do not change much for the Gulf Coast regardless of AMO phase, while the odds drop by about a factor of two for the Florida Peninsula and East Coast during a negative AMO period.

(Phil Klotzbach/NOAA)

This makes sense from a physical perspective, as hurricanes that wind up along the East Coast tend to originate from waves of low pressure that track into the Atlantic off the coast of Africa, which are significantly affected by the large-scale environment embedded in the AMO. Gulf Coast storms often develop from areas of low pressure that are lingering in the region, typically in the wake of a strong

cold front. These types of hurricanes are not significantly impacted by the AMO.

A caveat in the relationship between the AMO and hurricane activity is that there can be short-term periods that defy the long-term regime. For example, during the overall inactive period from 1970-1994, both 1988 and 1989 had above-average hurricane activity.

In addition, the activity of a given hurricane season also depends on what else is going on across the globe. El Niño, which is defined by warmer than normal waters in the eastern and central tropical Pacific, inherently decreases Atlantic hurricane activity because it increases wind shear in the region, making the environment unfavorable for hurricane formation. El Niño has been primarily responsible for the below-average season we’ve seen so far this year. So, given the likelihood that El Niño will be decreasing in intensity next summer, leading to either neutral or even La Niña conditions, it will serve as a good test of the hypothesis that we’ve entered a quiet Atlantic hurricane era.

Phil Klotzbach is an atmospheric scientist who specializes in hurricane research at Colorado State University. His most recent study, “Active Atlantic hurricane era at its end?” can be found in the journal *Nature Geoscience*.

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Miami’s worst recent hurricane, Hurricane Andrew in 1992, was a Category 5 at landfall but also a very small storm, so most of the severe damage came from winds, not waves. “As bad as it was, Andrew could have been worse,” notes a recent Miami Herald retrospective, observing that “an expected storm surge bringing a wall of water over Miami Beach and Key Biscayne never materialized.”

Tampa, meanwhile, was praised two years ago in the

CONTINUE FROM PAGE A20

the hurricane wrought than someone with no previous history of trauma.

However, the study also found that people with “a history of some lifetime adversity” handled traumatic events better than people with no history of adversity and lots of history. In other words, prior bad experiences and trauma — but only in moderation — could prepare someone for a trauma or disaster, laying the groundwork for resilience.

There are varying estimates of the percentages of people who will meet the psychiatric criteria for PTSD in the aftermath of tragedy. Jones said that between 60 and 80 percent of individuals will experience at least one major traumatic event in their lives, but only between 8 and 15 percent are likely to develop PTSD.

In mid-April of 2007 the professor was scheduled to fly to the Gulf region to continue his trauma and disaster preparedness work with children, teaching them how to prepare for storms. He was headed for a school in Pearlinton, Miss., a tiny bayou town ravaged by Katrina. But as he was packing for the trip, he heard the news that a mass

local Tampa Tribune for its “blessing” in not having been hit by a major storm in 92 — now, 94 — years. The last major hurricane was the 1921 Tampa Bay storm, which pushed 10 feet of water into the bay. Now there are vastly more people and property living in the area.

So if Katrina taught us just how devastating a hurricane can be, it should also teach us something else — there must be no end to vigilance and readiness, because there could always be an even worse one out there.

shooting was unfolding on a day of bloody horror at his own campus in Blacksburg, Va.

He quickly cancelled his trip to New Orleans, scheduled for the day after the shootings, and rushed to the scene. Jones has since expanded his trauma research to include the Virginia Tech rampage and other shootings.

One key finding of his research on the Virginia Tech and Colorado shootings was that in some cases family members of those killed, the injured and others who were traumatized by witnessing the events, avoided or delayed seeking help. People have waited for years to seek treatment from mental health professionals for anxiety, insomnia, nightmares, and problems with relationships and work, Jones said, which may lead them to a breaking point.

On the other hand, in more than 30 years of researching disasters and trauma, Jones said he had also seen striking signs of resilience.

“People became more spiritual or religious,” he said. “They had a deeper meaning and purpose in life, they were discovering inner strength.”

I was a ‘Katrina kid.’ Ten years after the storm, I still call New Orleans home.

We saw the beginning of the beauty of the city before we were forced to leave.

Article from the *Washington Post* August 24, 2015

by CHRISTINA D’ANTONI



PHOTO CREDITS FOR IMAGES USED TO SARA REMI FIELDS – Empty toy chest mirrors the loss of childhood to the children who lived through Hurricane Katrina

I was digging deep into drawers of memories I had purposely left in plastic bins at the back of the closet when I found a thick, folded-over stack of printed instant messages. One of the messages, from a middle-school frenemy, stuck out — there were two words I read like family members. New Orleans.

“Why do you talk about New Orleans and Katrina so much? It’s annoying,” she said. This sounds juvenile because we were. I was 12 years old when Hurricane Katrina hit, and this message was from a girl at my evacuation school that I barely knew. It must have hurt enough to print it out.

We were called “Katrina kids.” The phrase still evokes the same feelings it did 10

years ago, along with “post-Katrina” and “before the storm,” phrases born of a necessity to name the two halves of our lives. They are at once heartbreaking and nausea-inducing for everyone involved.

I have lived in Washington, D.C., only two years less than I lived in New Orleans. I know the D.C. Metro map better than any parade route or the streets of Uptown. I’ve been eating steamed crabs almost as long as I’ve had them boiled. I never had a boyfriend there. I’ve had two here. This is the dilemma of the permanently displaced Katrina kid. We only saw the beginning of the dirty, hot beauty of New Orleans. When we go home, we’re visitors.

At 10 or 12 or 13, or however

old we were when the storm hit, it was the first time we were something besides children. I have a photo I keep losing and finding, of me posing with a pink bow wrapped around my head. I was playing dress up in my old room with my best friend Kaitlin. The photo was dated Aug. 26, 2005 — three days before the storm. I can’t remember parts of my childhood very clearly, because Katrina takes up space in the brain that 40-year-olds don’t have. All the years before this memory seem to have gone somewhere, and to my knowledge they are stuck somewhere within this picture.

Katrina kids talk about New Orleans because one day we appeared at a random school in Alabama, and we were asked why we were there. Some kids loved us for our uniqueness, others kept us out of circles in fear of their own worlds collapsing in. Unlike other seventh-graders, we were not just children. We had a story and we cried all through math class and we missed home. We were asked this question of Why, and when we went home to ask mom, it was to a hotel room and she didn’t know. Talking about New Orleans was the closest we got to an answer.

September came, and all of the evacuated Katrina kids started moving back home. My friends I hadn’t seen in months started messaging me, and there was a first day of classes scheduled at my old school.

Kids whose houses did not flood moved back into their homes. Kids like me had to move around and watch while their families rebuild. In March, we moved back in, and I painted the new walls of my old room a bright yellow. One day as I was rolling around the newly laid carpet in my parents’ room, I was told we were selling our home and moving to D.C. I felt like I was moving out before the paint felt dry enough. Time and its lines felt sickly slanted then.

This is where Katrina kids’ stories leak into opposite directions. This is where the kids who moved home got to stay home and stopped writing so furiously in their diaries. This is where all the kids who never went back or who went back and left, like me, started to wonder if they were ever going home for good.

It’s been 10 years, and I’m still wondering. I’m 22, and at 14 I watched my friends in New Orleans go to the high school I had chosen already. At 18, I heard about their

trips to the underage bars like the Boot and TJ Quills. Somewhere in between then and now, I watched them date each other, break up, grind in the backs of trucks at Mardi Gras and drink the Abita beer I thought you could only get in town. We inevitably grew out of touch, and I stopped talking about New Orleans so much in my school in D.C. Turns out it’s annoying anywhere you go.

Now when I’m traveling and am asked where I’m from, I give a weird look. I gather myself and say, “Well, it’s complicated. I’m from D.C., but I’m originally from New Orleans.” After I offer my answer, I immediately feel shame and a lot of other things. I always wish I was the person with the one or two-word answer.

People move. They have multiple homes. Some lose their homes or are kicked out, and it’s tragic. But natural disasters are their own breed. There is no person or group of people you can blame more than the storm itself. But it’s hard to be angry with the wind. You resent your parents who did the best they could and your friend whose house didn’t flood. Even the very name of the storm cannot sustain the level of weight we give it, and that is why it is so very nauseating to speak of.

Ten years later, I have yet to befriend another 20-something who was permanently displaced by Hurricane Katrina as I have been. But I know all of you are out there. We live in Texas and Maryland and maybe as far as the Middle East. We remember what it was like to just be a kid without the Katrina. We remember the stickiness of snoball syrup against our teeth, and we remember what it was like to play in the street, hopscotching against the humidity with mosquitoes nipping at our knees. We place too much meaning in places and things like photographs. But we also know the stench of mold and the way parents cry behind doors and the sad sounds of the old that came with the flood.

We have our reasons we have not returned. We are from New Orleans. You can tell by the way we falter when asked. We understand the weight of water that came and the way it inches through doors and wells up in eyes. There is a depth to the city that is immeasurable by conversation. We know what it means, and that’s why it never leaves us.

Katrina swept away New Orleans' school system, ushering in new era

By Emma Brown September 3, 2015

Akili Academy in the Upper Ninth Ward of New Orleans absorbed some students

LETTER FROM LOUISIANA
NOVEMBER 28, 2005 ISSUE
SHELTER AND THE STORM
Katrina's victims come to town.
By Katherine Boo
I was a 'Katrina kid.' Ten years after the storm, I still call New Orleans home.

We only saw the beginning of the beauty of the city before we were forced to leave.

Post Nation
White people in New Orleans say they're better off after Katrina. Black people don't.

By Abby Phillip August 24, 2015

A man pushes his bicycle through flood waters near the