Riders from the Storm: Disaster Narratives of Relocated New Orleans College Students in the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina

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Hurricane Katrina forced the evacuation of some 50,000 college students from New Orleans, as well as the closing of universities and the relocation of over 18,000 of these students to new colleges and universities around the country. While qualitative studies and oral histories of Katrina survivors have recently begun to appear, no research to date has examined the narrative accounts and experiences of college students who evacuated from New Orleans in the wake of this historic disaster. Utilizing qualitative data drawn from a web-based survey of college students (N=7,100) displaced from their universities in the aftermath of the storm, we analyze a diverse array of individual narratives that illustrate the disaster's salient impacts on their lives and education. These accounts thematically highlight traumatic events associated with students' evacuation and relocation, personal and financial loss, psychological stress, perceptions of recreancy, satisfaction with official disaster responses, educational impacts, and feelings about returning to New Orleans. We conclude by discussing the implications of our work for current disaster research, as well as the value of qualitative research for understanding the "voices of Katrina."

By most accounts, Hurricane Katrina was one of the deadliest and most expensive disasters in U.S. history, creating widespread devastation to New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf coast, with potentially $200 billion in economic losses, more than

260,000 destroyed homes, and over 1,800 people dead (Brinkley 2006; National Geographic 2005). The storm displaced over one million residents of the Gulf region, including more than 50,000 New Orleans college students whose wind and flood-damaged campuses were forced to close for the fall semester. As colleges and universities nationwide responded to the catastrophe by opening their admission doors to any student forced to evacuate from the hurricane, tens of thousands of these survivors quickly relocated to hundreds of new institutions outside the impacted area to enroll in classes for the fall 2005 term (Ladd, Marszalek, and Gill 2006; Marszalek et al. 2006). Communicating with their displaced New Orleans universities' administrators, faculty, and friends through emergency remote websites and other emergent telecommunication systems, these student evacuees constituted a new, nationally linked Internet community within the larger Katrina Diaspora (Foster and Young 2005). Meanwhile, New Orleans universities found themselves facing a severe economic crisis due to over $1.5 billion in building and infrastructure repairs, lost tuition funds, and payroll outlays (Ferrell and Hoover 2005; Mangan 2005).

Despite the increasing effects of hurricanes and other hazards on university and college campuses over the past decade (FEMA 2003), little attention has been paid to the impacts on and disaster-related experiences of college students in the aftermath of a regionally catastrophic hurricane (Gill et al. 2006). Although existing studies suggest that college students' socioeconomic resources and social roles usually protect them from many of the direct impacts and suffering caused by disasters (Gutierrez, Hollister and Beninati 2005; Pickens et al. 1995; Sattler et al. 2002; Van Willigen et al. 2005), recent research by the authors indicates that Hurricane Katrina and the historic Gulf Coast exodus that followed created significant psychological, economic, and social impacts for the college students of New Orleans (Gill, Ladd and Marszalek 2007a; Gill, Ladd, and Marszalek 2007b; Ladd, Marszalek, and Gill 2006; Marszalek et al. 2006). While qualitative studies and oral histories of Katrina survivors have recently begun to appear in the literature (e.g., Brinkley 2006; Deichmann 2006; Rose 2005; Smallwood 2006; Stein and Preuss 2006; Thomas 2005; Walker 2006), no research to date has examined the narrative accounts and experiences of college students who evacuated from New Orleans in the wake of this historic disaster.

Utilizing qualitative data drawn from a web-based survey of college students (N=7,100) displaced from their New Orleans universities by Katrina during the fall 2005 semester, we examine a diverse array of personal narratives and reflections that illustrate the disaster's most salient impacts on their lives and education. In particular, we focus on student accounts that document many of these survivors' key experiences, including traumatic events associated with their storm evacuation and relocation, personal and financial loss, psychological stress and anxiety, perceptions of recreancy, satisfaction with the disaster response of government and other social/relief organizations, educational impacts, and feelings about returning to New Orleans. We conclude by discussing the implications of our work for current disaster research, as well as the value of qualitative accounts for understanding the "voices of Katrina."

Conceptual Framework

Social science research has produced an extensive literature focused on assessing the multiple impacts, stressors, dislocations, and life-altering changes surrounding both natural and technological disasters (see, for example, Alexander 1993; Baum and Fleming 1993; Clarke 2005; Couch and Kroll-Smith 1991; Drabek 1986; Gill and Picou 1991, 1998; Freudenberg 1993; Tierney et al. 2001; Norris 2002; Quarentelli and Dynes 1978). While the majority of works in the field tend to be essentially quantitative or theoretical, many of the most compelling studies have employed largely qualitative methods to illuminate some of the more interpersonal and descriptive aspects of disaster experiences (see Couch and Mercuri 2007; Edelstein 1988; Erikson 1976, 1994; Gibbs 1982; Gill and Picou 1997; 2001; Kroll-Smith and Couch 1990; Levine 1982; Picou 2000; Ritchie 2004). By definition, disasters, like any anthropogenic phenomena, involve complicated layers of cognitive meaning, interpretation, and social construction by impacted individuals and communities (Hannigan 1995; Scarce 2000). As a result, employing narrative accounts, testimonies, and oral histories in research can contribute immensely to a greater multidimensional understanding of how disasters can not only disrupt survivors' lifescapes, but also diminish trust, generate feelings of recreancy, create resource loss, and produce psychological stress and trauma (Erikson 1994; Edelstein 1988; Freudenberg 1993; 2000; Hobfoll 1988; 1989).

Edelstein (1988) suggests that all disasters disrupt "normal" patterns of everyday lifestyle behaviors, but technological disasters are more likely to challenge deep-rooted, fundamental, taken-for-granted assumptions about life and people's relationships to others, their community, and the environment. This challenge to ontological security can result in a lifescape change. Further, threats to ontological security may be accompanied by feelings of isolation and abandonment, distrust of others, perceived loss of control, and anxiety.

Freudenberg posits that issues of blame and responsibility for disasters increasingly involve issues of recreancy, that is, a collective perception that some person(s) and/or organization(s) did not fulfill their normative obligations in relation to the disaster. Recreancy contributes to a loss of trust in social systems, further challenges ontological security, and contributes to lifescape changes.

In his conservation of resources (COR) model of stress, Hobfoll (1988, 1989) states that stress occurs when resources are lost, threatened, or invested without gain. Under conditions of disasters, various tangible and intangible resources are sacrificed and expended. Such losses contribute to social and psychological stress.

Erikson (1976, 1994) argues that all disasters produce trauma to individuals, groups, and communities, but trauma resulting from disasters that involve recreancy and challenge lifescapes is unique and "collective." For example, collective trauma from disasters characterized by feelings of recreancy and changes in lifescape may emerge as social disruption and result in a corrosive, rather than a therapeutic community. Moreover, perceptions of recreancy heighten anger, frustration, and stress that typically accompany all disasters. In such cases, psychosocial stress tends to be chronic—it takes a long time to get over the hurt caused by another person or agency, especially when blame and responsibility are challenged by the offending parties (e.g., through litigation).

These conceptual considerations guided our data analysis and identification of recurring themes in the narratives reflecting students' experiences in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Research Design and Sample

In the weeks following the Katrina disaster, a research team of sociology and counseling education faculty, including the authors, formed at the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at Mississippi State University to assess the hurricane's impact on New Orleans college students. This historic tragedy provided a unique opportunity to study these students via the Internet during the period of their relocation to hundreds of temporary campuses and homes across the country. Consequently, we developed a web-based survey that collected quantitative and qualitative data on students' storm experiences, impacts, and needs following the disaster.

We attempted to include as many New Orleans universities in our study as we could, but logistics and disaster response priorities precluded many institutions from participating. We received approval, however, to conduct a web-based survey of three major New Orleans universities that were representative of the city's college student population: Loyola University New Orleans, Xavier University of Louisiana, and University of New Orleans (UNO). The sampling frame consisted of all the undergraduate and graduate students from each university who were officially registered for at least one class in the fall semester prior to August 29, 2005, when the disaster struck. Loyola University reported a fall enrollment of 5,644 students, Xavier University reported an enrollment of 4,190 students, and the University of New Orleans reported an enrollment of 17, 251 students (Pope 2006b).

Administrators from all three institutions provided computer files listing their students' email addresses as of November 1, 2005. The files included students' existing New Orleans university email accounts, personal email accounts, and/or newly reported email addresses from whatever college or university they were attending during the fall semester. We could not determine through which email address inquiries were most likely to reach students in a timely fashion so some students were sent email/survey links to each of their email accounts inviting them to participate in the study. Returned surveys were checked, however, to ensure that only one questionnaire per student was completed.

Emails containing a link to our web-based questionnaire were sent to all student email lists between November 10 and November 23, 2005. Initial emails were sent to 7, 574 Loyola student accounts, 7,091 Xavier student accounts, and 27,023 UNO student accounts. Two reminder emails were sent at one week intervals to those who had not yet responded to the study. We stopped collecting surveys on December 16. A total of 7,100 students responded with usable surveys, resulting in an effective response rate of 38%. Overall, the sample characteristics were found to be roughly proportionate to demographic profiles of each respective university (see Ladd, Marszalek, and Gill 2006; Marszalek et al. 2006).

Storm Stories: Student Accounts of Hurricane Katrina

The qualitative findings of this research were derived from written responses to one of four open-ended items included on the survey instrument. Given past research suggesting that disasters can produce both therapeutic (positive) and corrosive (negative) impacts on communities, we asked students the following question: *Please describe an event related to the disaster that has greatly impacted you (either positively or negatively).* A total of 3,476 written narratives were recorded and analyzed for salient

themes based on recurring comments illustrating a diversity of disaster impacts experienced by students.

In general, these hurricane accounts tended to reflect the following six thematic issues: (1) storm evacuation and relocation experiences; (2) personal and financial loss; (3) psychological stress and anxiety; (4) perceptions of recreancy and satisfaction with disaster responses of government agencies and other relief/social organizations; (5) educational impacts; and (6) feelings about returning to New Orleans. For each of these themes, we provide representative accounts that amplify how students viewed both positive and negative aspects of their disaster experiences. Where appropriate, we include descriptive quantitative data from our survey to frame and focus the thematic responses (see Ladd, Marszalek, and Gill 2006). Finally, minor punctuation, spelling, and typographical errors have been corrected in the narratives to enhance readability and clarity.

Storm Evacuation and Relocation Experiences

While the vast majority of student respondents (84%) were able to successfully evacuate New Orleans before the storm winds or levee flooding devastated the city, the events surrounding the evacuation exodus were painfully slow and stressful:

> We were in a car for 21 hours straight driving from New Orleans to San Antonio, TX. We almost got mugged because we were the only ones in a gas station who had food in our car. There were no bathrooms, there was no food to be bought.

> Because I evacuated at the last moment, I had to leave a friend in town because I couldn't talk her into leaving. She had no car of her own.

> The evacuation process was a very stressful situation both emotionally and physically.

> The evacuation process is one bad memory as a whole and was incredibly frustrating for most students on campus. More organization among the campus administrators and communication with students would have made this a less negative experience.

A few individuals even tried to reenter the city after evacuating to help others, but were turned away by authorities:

> My boyfriend and I decided about 5 days after the storm that we should try to go back and help in any way that we could. We were turned away at the foot of the I-55 bridge by a blockade of state troopers. When we told the trooper we just wanted to help and that we had food and water for people, I could see the tears well up in his eyes. He told us to turn around. That was the most heart breaking thing for me—knowing that I wanted to help, had the ability to help, yet couldn't because I had decided to evacuate.

Students frequently cited a range of negative experiences surrounding issues of relocation. Indeed, over one-third (36%) of the respondents found themselves being displaced three or more times since evacuating New Orleans, especially when Hurricane Rita hit the Texas/Louisiana coastline only three weeks after Katrina:

> I have moved 5 times and traveled thousands of miles. I left my boyfriend, then had nowhere to go but a hotel. I experienced other people who took advantage of my situation and treated me unfairly and unkindly. It has been a true nightmare.

> I've had to relocate 3 times before settling in where I am now. It was hell to drive so far everyday, wait in line for gas, take cold showers, share your tiny home with ten other people, and still keep peace of mind.

> We moved 7 times since Katrina. While in Carencro, LA we had to evacuate for Rita too. Moving all around and having to evacuate twice was really stressful!

> An event related to the disaster that has greatly affected me was having to stay in a shelter for nearly a month. I'm in the North freezing my butt off.

> Due to the mandatory evacuation and the fact that Loyola closed for the semester, I have relocated to LSU for the fall semester. I am renting an apartment in Baton Rouge for the semester. Last week, my Baton Rouge apartment was broken into and ROBBED. I lost my last few major possessions that I had managed to salvage from my parent's flooded New Orleans home.

> Having to completely relocate to Chicago where I don't know the city, have any friends, or family. It's cold here and the people aren't kind.

> Living with In-Laws has been the worst experience of my life!

> Since the storm I have relocated 6 times. I have stayed in shelters, been refused by shelters and forced to sleep in the back of a truck in a Wal-Mart parking lot, lived with a stranger in a home with no running water above an abandoned funeral home, stayed in a motel for a month with no money or transportation, traveled back and forth to New Orleans in hope of salvaging something, anything from my 19 years of life there, walked through the home that my father built and cried my eyes out looking at the devastation that thirteen feet of water can do.

For some, however, there were also positive outcomes that came from their forced relocation to new communities and universities:

> I volunteered with the Red Cross on the Mississippi Gulf Coast for a month in the aftermath. The experience was highly positive; it helped me make sense of the situation and focus my energy in a positive direction.

> All the outpouring of support from strangers that I met along my evacuation traveling has made a huge impact on me. People [who] don't know me, but feel compassion for all I've been through, have given me things and helped me in ways I never thought I could count on strangers to do.

> Strangers coming up to me and my family and offering help just because of our LA license plate.

> Because of the hurricane I was relocated to another university where I have met new people and made new friends that have impacted my life positively.

> I was sitting on the grass waiting for my number to be called at the Red Cross service center and a complete stranger walked up to me a gave me a $100 and told me that everything was going to be okay.

> Due to Hurricane Katrina, I was relocated to Houston, Texas where I met the love of my life.

> Positive: A family took care of us without even knowing us.

One traumatic aspect for many students involved not being able to contact family members or friends in the hours and days after the hurricane. Indeed, over one-fourth of the students (26%) had a family member, significant other, or close friend who was "missing" during or after the storm. The following narratives illustrate this situation:

> I was unable to locate my parents for approximately six days after Katrina. They were safe and secure, but we did not know that. Those six days were very stressful on all of us.

> I was separated from my husband and was not able to speak to him or know if he was safe for several days.

> Not knowing where my friends were and how to contact them was difficult. I never realized how much New Orleans and its culture meant to me until it was washed away.

Some students who evacuated were angered and traumatized by witnessing the suffering of New Orleanians on television, particularly in the context of the weak governmental response and rescue efforts seemingly shaped by discriminatory policies based on race and class:

> Seeing the victims of the storm and how they were treated makes me cry even to this very moment. The images that were on the news day after day will NEVER leave my mind. I was thinking to myself that could have been me.

> I witnessed an entire nation leave the people it claimed to care about on rooftops, freeways, and street corners. It was crushing to see people with nothing but hope and struggling to survive.

> The news coverage on Hurricane Katrina had me in tears. It bothers me that at times like this, the storm brought out the worst in people. People, even police officers, were looting. Rescue came so slow. It seemed like images from a third world country.

> Watching the people at the Convention Center not being rescued for 5 days has been devastating to me. The words "5 days" resonate in my mind as an indication of the disrespect and lack of concern that the U.S. government has for African-Americans. It has never taken them 5 days to respond to any disaster, anywhere in the world, and Black people sat for 5 days with no assistance.

> The reports of racism and how it effected the saving of people's lives has made me hate white people, especially those in all levels of government and the national media.

> I've had to deal with a lot of ignorant people at work who make crude jokes and remarks about the storm and the poverty level and how it was all "justification."

> This event has shattered the "American" view of a rich society. There is poverty everywhere in America, but there is no acknowledgement of people who are poor. The event removed the rose colored lens from the glasses of the majority of Americans. This is a positive impact that will hopefully make law makers and communities work to help and assist people of poverty.

A few, however, interpreted some media-reported events in the aftermath of the disaster from perspectives that accentuated racism and victim blaming:

> I am fucking furious over all those stupid-ass ignorant niggers down in the Superdome acting like barbarians and animals. All those motherfuckers are leeches of society. Everyone is bitching about how FEMA acted too slow, I feel they acted too fast!...THIS GOVERNMENT AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE NEED TO STOP APPEASING THE BLACK COMMUNITY SO THEY WILL NOT RIOT!!

> Seeing the blacks of New Orleans loot and create chaos has made me a racist.

Some New Orleans students were slow or never able to evacuate the city and thus experienced the disaster firsthand, physically witnessing the death and suffering of many citizens around them:

> When I was leaving New Orleans I witnessed bodies in the waters while we swam. Living through that experience had made me more determined to do the best I can so that I can help other survivors.

> Being trapped in a hotel surrounded by water was the worst experience ever.

> I had to sleep on the bridge and seeing all those dead bodies around me was very depressing and I still have flashbacks now. Seeing people passing out and catching heat strokes and seeing my whole city that I have lived in for 19 years under water will always be a hurtful memory to me.

> I was one of the 400 students left on Xavier's campus. The event that affected me most was the looking out on Xavier's campus and seeing all the damage and water.

> Watching an elderly man lying dead in his wheelchair outside the Convention Center has GREATLY affected me...I think about it often, and it is a constant reminder of what didn't have to happen. The image will haunt me, and the reality of it will forever haunt our city.

A few New Orleans students and their family members were also trapped in the unfolding disaster events:

> I had to live in my attic in Slidell for five weeks because the LSU animal shelter shut down on October 3 and I had no other care for my Staffordshire terriers.

> We lived without electricity for three weeks. We took cold showers in a make-shift shower my husband built out of a garden

hose and blue tarp. We finally obtained a generator from a church so we could run 2 box fans and sprayed ourselves with bug spray to stay somewhat comfortable at night. We ate food that the Red Cross brought around daily. I felt like I was in a third world country.

My husband is in the National Guard and had to stay in New Orleans for the hurricane. I was very stressed out when I heard the horrible events of looting that were going on in the city and feared for his life and was very scared that my 10-month old son would never see his father again. I seldom was able to speak with him which made it worse. I believe that the monsters that destroyed New Orleans were the worst part of the hurricane. Why did they have to loot the D-Day museum? MONSTERS. They would never understand what it is like to do something good for their country. When my husband told me that being in the city was worse than being in Iraq, I was astonished.

As expected, students' evacuation and relocation experiences were filled with lifestyle changes wrought with frustration, anger, anxiety, and stress. The stress would be heightened as students and other survivors began to assess resource losses.

Personal and Financial Loss

Hurricane Katrina created a staggering amount of personal and economic loss for residents of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. Like other survivors, many New Orleans college students lost family members, friends, and pets in the aftermath of the storm's devastation and flooding. Indeed, almost one out of 10 students (9%) indicated that a family member or close friend had died in the disaster. Some of the students expressed the trauma they felt; others expressed their loss in a matter-of-fact manner:

Because of the storm my uncle was stuck in University Hospital. He really needed help. Because the electricity went out, the faculty was unable to revive him and he died.

My Mother was evacuated to the Superdome and had all her luggage and all her medicine stolen. She was alone, very sick, and unable to evacuate or communicate with anyone. As a result, her health deteriorated and she was [taken] to four different medical centers.

My best friend drowned during the storm. She lived in the lower 9th ward and she'd stayed behind with her grandfather because he didn't want to leave.

I experienced a death in the family due to Hurricane Katrina.

> I had a colleague die. He stayed and died of asthma. I also had a friend who died of thirst.

> My family and I have been displaced from our home. A close friend has committed suicide because he lost the business he had built in the storm.

Many students lost their apartments, family homes, jobs, vehicles, and possessions. Survey findings revealed that eight out of 10 students (81%) reported damage to their residences and one-half of those (41% overall) indicated their residences were uninhabitable. Moreover, about one-fifth of students (22%) lost a vehicle in the storm and over one-third (39%) lost their job. The following narratives reflect this type of loss:

> I lost everything I owned, and the city I grew up in is destroyed.

> Both of my homes were destroyed, one got 11 feet of water and the other got 5 feet. My mother was in the hospital receiving cancer treatment during the storm and then had to be evacuated for security/treatment reasons. My uncle was mugged and beaten to death during the hurricane.

> My entire family lost everything they owned on the Gulf Coast.

> I lost my job and I was forced to move to a new city and leave my family and friends behind. This is especially tragic to me because EVERY one of my family members lost their homes and most lost their jobs. Sometimes I feel broken by the massive amount of loss suffered by myself, my family and friends, and my city.

> I lost my house, car, and cats. My family in Mississippi lost all of their houses as well.

> My wife ended our marriage and moved to Seattle.

> I had to leave my dog, Soby, behind when I was rescued and Soby died soon after. This has affected my mental health very negatively.

> The flooding of St. Bernard Parish as a result of the storm surge caused by Hurricane Katrina has greatly affected me in a negative way. The storm totally devastated my entire parish. No house was left untouched [and] well over half of the homes in the parish were completely inundated with water. I lost my house, all my clothes, my pictures, home movies, yearbooks, jewelry, inherited items from my aunt etc. I worked at the same place for five years and it was destroyed. My sister and brother both lost their vehicles. When we evacuated for the storm my mom went to work at one of the

local hospitals and she was missing for several days. My boyfriend was a Sheriff's Deputy and was stranded in the Parish for over three weeks...My mom, a single mother of 3, is now unemployed. Our insurance is giving us nothing but trouble. Soon I will live in a FEMA trailer because I can't afford rent to live anywhere else.

Financial losses stemming from evacuation and displacement expenses, including crime victimization, were also a prominent theme in many student accounts:

> After losing possessions, employment, and residence because of the hurricane, my girlfriend and I were robbed of all of our remaining valuable possessions when our apartment was broken into and looted. We were forced to move into a slum in a neglected neighborhood...When there was no one in our apartment or the apartments immediately surrounding ours, people kicked in the door and stole everything and anything of value and everything they wanted...In addition, just before this robbery, my car broke down between New Orleans and Baton Rouge on the last of many trips between the two cities. The amount to fix it makes paying for its repair impossible. I do not know how I will be able to pay my living expenses or my tuition.

> The College I am at originally told me that all the fees were being waived; now they are telling me I owe them money and I have none.

> I didn't get paid for two months.

> After evacuation, I fell into the snare that millions of college students do every year: I spent TONS of money on credit. The difference is, it was on survival. My parents are not wealthy. In fact I have (had) more monetary means to support the family than they do (did), and so I'm left with [an] unbelievable amount of debt that will make my life much more difficult, even in obtaining my education.

Four types of resources are identified in the COR model of stress: objects (e.g., physical possessions and transportation); conditions (e.g., good marriage and/or other relationships); personal characteristics (e.g., positive self concept, efficacy, and competence); and energies (e.g., money, knowledge, experience). Like other New Orleans survivors, college students experienced loss and the threat of loss for all four types of resources. Accordingly, social and psychological stress is heightened as resource loss is experienced.

Psychological Stress

One of the most consistent findings of disaster researchers is that pronounced levels of psychological stress typically emerge after hurricanes (e.g., Adeola 1999; Faupel and Styles 1993; Norris et al. 1999; Norris 2002, 2005; Van Willigen 2001). Katrina survivors from New Orleans are no exception to this pattern (Hunter and Pope 2006; Johnson 2006; Pope 2006a; Saulny 2006). Likewise, our survey data indicated that New Orleans students experienced significant levels of psychological stress, as well as a variety of storm-related physical and medical symptoms (Gill, Ladd, and Marszalek 2007a; Gill, Ladd, and Marszalek 2007b; Ladd, Marszalek, and Gill 2006; Marszalek et al. 2006). Specifically, over one-half (55%) of the students reported being depressed and over one-fifth (22%) reported symptoms that could be classified as indicative of "clinical" depression. Further, over one-half (52%) were in the moderate and severe range on the Impact of Event Scale. These mental health impacts were amplified in a number of revealing accounts:

> I have to say that this whole disaster has helped me to realize that everything can change in a day. All your plans can just wash away with the city. I thought I had everything set up; I had a nice job, a plan for what I wanted to do with my life. Now I have to reevaluate all of it. I have to find out how to get back on track with my life. This entire experience has caused me to fall into a really deep depression, and it's killing me.

> This whole disaster has affected my mental health. I can't get motivated to do things. I feel numb all the time and I can't enjoy everyday things anymore.

> I have been constantly dejected from society, depressed, stressed, and not well since the hurricane.

> Watching TV after the hurricane put me into a depressed state that I am still coping with today.

> I don't really feel well anymore. I'm not doing as well at my host university as I would like. This stresses me out but whenever I sit down to do work, I feel really tired, and I've been procrastinating a lot. I'm not sure whether I've been psychologically affected by the storm, as my apartment building and my school are still standing, but some of my friends have it rough. I don't, though. I'm not really sure what's going on. I've been trying to lose weight too, but I'm always hungry. I always feel really tired and sluggish, but this could be because I've gained some weight and have trouble sleeping. Something's off, but I just don't know what it is... Nothing positive has happened since the storm.

> During the summer of 2005, I had gone on a diet, lost 20 pounds, and quit smoking. Since the hurricane, I have put almost all the weight back on and started smoking again.
>
> I originally had PTSD, and the stress worsened it. Memory loss, motor functions, and sleep have severely decreased to the point of debilitation.
>
> [I] choose not to speak about it; [it's] too painful to [relive] the memories.
>
> The stress made me have sexual relations with a foreign student in the shelter and now I feel horrible about it and disgusted with myself for resorting to sexual means to resolve my stress.
>
> Being out of school for the past few months has truly made me feel depressed and like I had no direction in life.
>
> As a result of the emotional trauma caused by the storm, my best friend and I decided not to be friends anymore. Neither of us could handle the stress of losing everything and so we parted ways.

These narratives provide substance to existing disaster research on psychological stress. Storm experiences and loss of resources were major stressors for all New Orleans residents, including college students. Like other Katrina survivors, New Orleans college students also experienced the additional stress associated with feelings of recreancy.

Satisfaction and Recreancy Surrounding Disaster Response

For most observers, the devastation of New Orleans (as opposed to the Mississippi Gulf Coast) was defined less by the acute, primary impacts of the hurricane than it was by the slow and inefficient response of government and other social institutions to the storm's aftermath. Indeed, some researchers have applied Showalter and Meyer's (1994) concept of a "Na-Tech" disaster to Katrina, conceptualizing it as a catastrophe produced more by human and technological error than the forces of nature (Picou and Marshall 2006). As a result, the disaster response of the Bush Administration, FEMA, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Governor of Louisiana, the Mayor of New Orleans, as well as the actions of many private corporations, came under scathing attack by citizens and commentators from across the Gulf Coast and nation (Brinkley 2006; Houck 2006). The essence of these criticisms was that various government officials and relief agencies failed to fulfill the duties and obligations the public relied upon them to perform. Our survey data revealed that over two-thirds of the students expressed dissatisfaction with President Bush, FEMA, and Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco, while over one-third expressed dissatisfaction with New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, local government officials, and the national media. Likewise, about six out of 10 students stated that, based on their disaster experiences, they did not trust President Bush, FEMA, the federal government, or the Louisiana state government. Almost one-half reported a

loss of trust in their local government and the national media (Ladd, Marszalek, and Gill 2006).

Paralleling the attitudes of many residents and observers, New Orleans college students similarly tended to view the disaster in largely human and institutional terms and were particularly critical of the way in which various levels of government inadequately responded to citizens' needs:

> I am dismayed by the lack of initiatives coming from our local, state and federal government. By now (December 1st) I would have liked to have seen at least one step in a direction that would move New Orleans forward. My personal grief is that this city may end up being no better, and possibly worse, than it was.

> Seeing the screaming people outside the New Orleans Convention Center without food or water for days, then having that enormous earthquake overseas and the federal government donating 30 million dollars in help and food while the people of New Orleans died because of malnutrition—the whole experience has just solidified my distrust in the presidency.

> The Federal response should have been better, but the total failure of the state and city officials to get the poor out of the city was the true disaster. I already knew that the city was corrupt and the state poor, but this event proved that the seeds of this disaster were sewn long ago when the city and community chose to ignore the poor.

> I continue to be shocked and angered by the depth of corruption, stupidity and cluelessness exhibited by Louisiana's "leaders." Katrina exposed this to the entire world. I'm ashamed that my state and city elected these people.

> I feel betrayed by how unprepared government officials were in dealing with this event.

> My house is completely destroyed from the levee breech. We would not have had any damage if the levee would not have broken.

> I personally witnessed the failure of leadership in Jefferson Parish. It is disheartening that our elected leadership abandons the post when most needed.

> I was angered and saddened to see the disaster play itself out on national television and the city officials and leaders were not doing their job of insuring the safety of their residents. Why did the Mayor of New Orleans order a mandatory evacuation and then not provide any means of transportation to its residents that had no

access to evacuate? It saddens me to this day when I think about the anguish and fear that the residents were subject to. I do not believe I will return to live in New Orleans for a very long time.

Witnessing how our government and media failed the people. I doubt I'm the only one who has been sickened by the actions, or lack of action, taken by our leaders.

It was discouraging to find out that in this day and age, we citizens are being left to "hang out to dry" by self-centered politicians with no souls.

It makes you think the government really does not care for its citizens because they left us there for dead.

Virtually every student who mentioned the role of FEMA in the disaster rated the agency negatively in terms of his or her own experience with the agency or how he or she viewed its treatment of others:

I was unable to receive assistance from FEMA for whatever reason. I applied and they told me I was not eligible, even though I left and came up to Chicago with my roommate from New Orleans... She received $4000 assistance [and] is in the same boat as I am. Everyone else I've talked to received at least $2000 but for some reason I'm just not eligible and I am not nearly as wealthy as many of the other people who received assistance.

FEMA was terrible everytime I called them on the phone. Impolite, inflexible, and incompetent. Sometimes representatives were even sarcastic. This is the last thing the traumatized masses wanted to hear.

I was greatly affected by…FEMA's lack of concern during the rescue efforts of the poorer citizens of the city. Too many people died and not enough was done to help.

FEMA is a joke! The organization provides assistance to so many people who are already back in their homes with all the essential services and they let others (like me) who are still displaced/homeless slip through the cracks without providing any assistance or explanation as to why they aren't helping. I don't so much care about the money as the lack of a solid explanation as to why needy folks aren't being helped.

I am greatly disturbed by how the number of wealthy college students who lost nothing and yet have applied for and received

money from FEMA and the Red Cross when there are many people who need it more.

My best friend and boyfriend both lost their homes and now my boyfriend is living with me because he has not received any assistance from FEMA. This has given me a negative outlook towards FEMA because he needs the money and still hasn't received any.

A number of students remarked how these disaster experiences generated feelings of recreancy or institutional distrust toward the government and relief agencies that people depended on for disaster assistance:

I lost all of my clothing, food, and basically my life in the disaster, but for some unknown reason FEMA says that I am not eligible for assistance. That made me distrust the federal government even more than before.

Everything about this "event" has been negative for me and my immediate family. We have gotten very little help from any governmental agency or charitable organization and I have little trust in either of those now. I will NEVER donate to the American Red Cross EVER AGAIN in my life. They denied my family assistance and referred me to other organizations for help with food and clothes. Of course, me & my immediate family stayed in Louisiana. I have heard stories from those who went to other states where the help was plentiful. We stayed here and were not helped. I lost everything—my home, my job, my "life" as it was.

[I] lost everything and the government hasn't helped us at all—not a cent except for Red Cross and Catholic charities. I didn't trust them before, and now I'm thinking of immigrating.

I cannot count on any politician. Only a regular genuine person who acts unselfishly with their heart can be trusted.

There were also a number of narratives that criticized the response of other social institutions for not providing for the needs of survivors after Katrina. Feelings of being "revictimized" were implicitly expressed in many comments:

As a former resident of St. Bernard Parish, the failure of the levee system has affected my family the most. However, the delay and refusal of payment of insurance claims has prevented my family from moving on from this disaster. These delays should not have been allowed by the federal and state governments. Insurance companies should have been forced to pay out claims immediately. Although our home was fully insured with homeowner's and flood

insurance, we have still not received a penny despite the 13 feet of flood water our home received.

We had no food and no money to buy food before the storm. My grandmother is a diabetic and my uncle is mentally retarded. We were starving. Police officers told us that we could get food only from a Family Dollar located nearby. When we (there were about 20 people) entered the store (someone had already broken into it), we shopped civilly for what we needed because we had police permission to be there. But when we came out of the store, some other officers put guns in our faces and made all of us lay face down on the ground in broken glass. They cursed at us, they pointed their guns in our faces, and they took our IDs, and worse of all, they took the food we had. Fortunately, I was able to get my license back without getting a citation or ticket but it was a horrible event and I no longer believe in the people who are supposed to "protect and serve" us.

I also did not appreciate the media's opportunistic attitude towards this disaster. They played a large part in my depression. I couldn't turn on the television or play the radio without hearing the media go on and on about how I'm a refugee and my home was totally destroyed. I'm not a refugee because I am an American citizen and I'm still in America. If I evacuated to Mexico then I would be a refugee. They were totally reckless in their reporting.

I had a seizure about a month after the hurricane due to complications with a medication that I take for depression. Because of Katrina, I was unable to refill my prescription for several days. Abruptly stopping and restarting my medication caused me to have a grand mal seizure. I had to go to the ER, the bills for which are nearing three thousand dollars. I was instructed by the ER doctor to discontinue taking the medication altogether. Without medication or therapy, I have relapsed into a deep depression. My regular doctor evacuated and has not returned to the city. I have not yet seen a specialist for treatment.

Freudenberg argues that technological disasters produce feelings of anger and demands for accountability that he terms recreancy (1993, 2000). Defined as "the failure of experts or specialized organizations to execute properly responsibilities to the broader collectivity with which they have been implicitly or explicitly entrusted" (2000, 16), recreancy involves issues of institutional blame and is accompanied by public dissatisfaction with and diminished trust in those criticized for not carrying out their civic responsibilities. As the preceding narratives demonstrate, feelings of recreancy permeated the views of many students and probably contributed to their stress.

Educational Impacts

One of the most distressful aspects of the post-evacuation period for the vast majority of students involved their having to quickly relocate to other colleges and universities to enroll in fall classes after learning that New Orleans campuses were closed for the semester. This proved an extremely difficult transition for a number of reasons. First, before the storm struck, many students had not unpacked their belongings or attended a single class when the mandatory evacuation order was issued. Students new to the region were particularly caught by surprise and had received little guidance from their universities as to how to prepare and respond. Others had never been through an evacuation, had no destination plan, lacked access to transportation, or knew no classmates to whom to turn for help. Given the inability to anticipate the scope of damage the disaster would do to New Orleans, as well as the amount of time they would remain displaced, few students left their campuses with enough clothes, possessions, or educational records necessary to facilitate easy enrollment in another university. Second, in the weeks that followed Katrina, many students felt too traumatized by their disaster experiences to decide whether they were emotionally capable of taking courses at another university on such short notice, despite the open door admission policy that thousands of schools around the nation offered displaced Gulf Coast students. Third, due to the storm's disruption of city and campus telecommunication systems, most students were unable to contact their university administrators or advisors (most of whom were also displaced) for information on how to register at other schools, how their New Orleans tuition, financial aid, or scholarships would be applied, or what courses would transfer back toward their graduation requirements. With many universities already in session or about to begin their fall semesters in mid-September, students were often forced to enroll in classes without adequate knowledge of what the financial or educational impact of attending another school would be.

Uprooted from their friends, university programs, campuses, jobs, and communities, some students who relocated to another college or university expressed dissatisfaction with their educational experiences during the fall semester. Our survey findings show that almost three-fourths of students (74%) believed that their academic performance had been negatively affected by their disaster experiences and over one-third (36%) stated that they withdrew from classes for which they had signed up after Hurricane Katrina. Many students reported being too stressed-out to concentrate on their studies or were unhappy with their courses, the university, housing arrangements, or the students around them. Others were simply anxious to return to their New Orleans universities to try and resume the life they had known. Some of the negative aspects of relocating to other educational institutions and communities around the nation were captured in the following student accounts:

> I had to go to a different school and they had no courses for my major.

> I've wasted a full semester of my life and I hate it here.

> Being thrown into a different school it was impossible to make friends. It was impossible to concentrate. All my classes are pass/fail and I am finding it difficult to prepare enough to just pass.

Going to another university in the midst of all this drama. Also, going into classes and having to catch up on all of the extra work.

I just haven't adjusted well to my school here. I am very lonely and unhappy where I am now.

The most difficult thing was when my parents and siblings got to return to New Orleans to live because our house was fine, but I had to stay in Baton Rouge to attend school because Loyola was closed. Transferring to a new school was the worse part about the storm for me.

I hate my new university and don't like living back at home.

I'm attending an institution presently where Caucasian students are somewhat ignorant in regards to African American culture and society. I constantly have to speak out against their stereotypes. They show no real concern for the Katrina issue because they were not affected by it. I feel as if I really do not belong at this school. I can't wait to get back to Xavier!!!

I'm attending a Jesuit university in my hometown. I have been treated terribly by many of the students on campus, and have found very little empathy from faculty members of this institution with regard to my need to travel and recover my property in New Orleans, as well as the stress that comes with having a life in a separate city that also has to continue despite my current physical location. I find it ironic that this school's sister institution is said to be a school that promotes "social justice," when in fact there is nothing of the sort here.

My grades have suffered because I'm not focused at my other university.

The new university was a disaster. No one knew ANYTHING. And I STILL don't know what's happening with tuition.

I don't feel capable of going back to school in the spring. My mind is totally blown.

On the other hand, many students reported positive educational experiences at their new schools and saw their relocation period as an opportunity for personal growth and broadening their horizons:

> I am attending Loyola University Marymount in Los Angeles, CA and everyone here has been so welcoming and friendly. I have had a wonderful experience here.
>
> This is a painful yet unique experience. Because of this, I have received more confidence in myself.
>
> I came to Holy Cross in Worcester, MA and it's been one of the best things that ever happened to me in my entire life.
>
> Going to another college has broadened my perspective of the world and the differences that reside [in] separate regions of the country. It has been an overall enjoyable experience in that respect.
>
> I am glad that the Law School relocated to Houston. It is a great city and everyone has been wonderful here. I wouldn't have gotten the opportunity to discover this had Loyola not relocated here for the semester.

The educational turmoil experienced by New Orleans university students was an additional source of stress. There was potential investment without gain with regard to paid tuition and other financial aid that was jeopardized by the disaster. There was an additional loss of "conditions resources" as normal social networks of advisors, university staff, and administrators were severed. Although some gained positive experiences from their educational relocation, other students had more negative experiences that likely contributed to their psychological stress.

Returning to New Orleans

Despite being displaced to hundreds of distant colleges and communities across the country, many students returned to New Orleans once the flood waters receded to view the devastation, locate friends and family, and try to retrieve what personal property they could salvage from their residences, campus dorm rooms, or neighborhoods. Many who were able to return during the initial storm recovery phase expressed shock and dismay about the destruction they saw. Yet, like most New Orleanians, students were excited about the prospects of "coming home" to their city and universities, despite feeling extremely anxious about what they would encounter when they arrived. Others, however, had no desire to return to the city or university for the Spring 2006 semester and planned only to collect what they could from their former lives and move on. The following narratives illustrate many of the mixed feelings and experiences surrounding students' post-disaster reentry into New Orleans:

> When I walked back into my house for the first time after the disaster there was a foot of mud inside and everything I owned had been floating in my house because I could see the marks where it pressed against the ceiling. I had been looted and vandalized before I could get there to salvage.

When I was finally able to go back to my home in St. Bernard Parish, I thought I would be upset [and] and I thought it would finally hit me that I had lost everything I owned. Amazingly, when I saw my home destroyed and everything in it destroyed, I did not cry. I was actually in wonder at how water and wind could do this. I took pictures and looking at the pictures even now, I do not get upset and it makes me feel good that I do not hold onto worldly possessions. My husband and children were with me throughout all of this and they are OK, along with all my family and that is what really matters. I can always replace everything I lost over time but I could never replace them.

Everything has been awful. Returning home after the hurricane to try to get some stuff with soldiers with machine guns in my face. That was unforgettable.

I came back to New Orleans the Thursday after Katrina. It had a very negative impact on me having to live in fear for my life and possessions. The crime and the looting were very disturbing to see. Along with the sounds of the helicopters flying overhead all night long and the un-comfort of having to sleep in your own home with a loaded gun in your hand waiting for someone to try to break in and either take your life, valuables, or both. I still keep a gun next to my bed at night and in my truck during the day. Katrina has stolen my feeling of being safe and what is left of the place I call "Home."

After living in a cosmopolitan city for 2 months, I had to return to N.O. because of my husband's job. When I got there and saw all the devastation around me, I compulsively drove around the decimated city further traumatizing myself. Though I HATE New Orleans with a capital H, I felt as though a murder had occurred, a massacre.

The housing situation in New Orleans is horrible. The landlords are doubling, tripling and in some case quadrupling the rent for apartments that were not worth what was being charged pre-Katrina. There is a situation now that prohibits people who do not own property in New Orleans from returning. We simply cannot afford to live in the city now. I would like greatly to return to UNO for the spring semester but cannot afford to live there.

Driving through Lakeview, New Orleans East, and Chalmette, it was the most traumatizing, horrific thing I've ever seen in my entire life. Seeing things that I've grown up seeing and visiting

completely destroyed, seeing my high school filled with mold and ruined brought feelings that one could never describe.

I guess the thing that affected me may seem trivial to others. When I got home and saw the damage to my new home, I cried, because all of the things that my husband and I had worked so hard for were gone. My little boy's room was destroyed and not just that, even though everything was ruined, someone had broken into our home and took his toy box, his TV and our computer. Why? Anyway, I cried because I had "nothing." My little boy grabbed my hand and said "Don't cry Mommy, you still have me." That made me cry even more because it took a 4 year old to make me realize that even though we lost all of our stuff, we still had each other, and he made me realize just how lucky I really am.

Many students were especially apprehensive about having to return to New Orleans, while some vowed never to reside there again. As one student wrote, "I remain uneasy about returning to New Orleans given my stressful departure." Another said, "I have a small fear of traveling into the New Orleans area at the moment." With regard to stress, one student indicated problems with "having to come back home where there is plenty of stress." Finally, one student summarized the perspective of many, writing, "I will never live in New Orleans again!"

Other students, in retrospect, reported that their experiences with the Katrina Diaspora had helped them see themselves and the events around them in a new and more positive light. In particular, the disaster made many students more appreciative of New Orleans, their universities, and the importance of other people in their lives:

I have gotten to experience one of the greatest disasters in United States history and lived to tell about it. This has made me a stronger person.

I had to rely on the kindness of strangers... I discovered some faith in humanity.

Being alone in a new place made me realize that New Orleans is my hometown. I miss everything about NOLA, even the smell. We love it here but my kids were born there and we will always be returning to visit so they never forget where they were born and raised their first years. I listen to Jazz music more than ever and it helps me relax and think the day I return home is coming soon.

I have noticed how many friends and acquaintances of mine are dedicated to returning to their city and school. I think this disaster has made everyone appreciate New Orleans much more than he/she did.

I feel more confident in what I am capable of and what I can endure. I am a stronger person from this disaster.

Hurricane Katrina itself let me know that many people cared about me...

Finally, still other students experienced a heightened environmental consciousness in regard to understanding the origins and impacts of the disaster:

I am thankful for how lucky and blessed I have been throughout these events, although I feel as though these violent natural disasters are becoming more frequent because of how we are treating our environment. I hope people realize that global warming is no joke and if we don't start taking better care of our earth we won't be on it much longer.

I had to face the reality that Mother Nature can and will someday come knocking at your front door...just like it did to me.

Seeing the place where I grew up completely destroyed, leaving only memories of what was impressed upon me the power of Mother Nature. We will never be able to control her and we need to learn to live with her because in a fight, she will always win.

Narratives about returning to New Orleans reflect various lifescape changes among the students. For some, lifescape changes meant a decline in ontological security, a loss of trust in social institutions such as the city of New Orleans, and apprehension about returning. Others experienced positive lifescape changes as they saw themselves more empowered and committed to understanding the events in a larger socio-environmental context.

Summary and Conclusions

Our qualitative findings reveal how Hurricane Katrina produced profound psychosocial impacts for New Orleans college students. Uprooted from their campus communities and forced to relocate to new universities and residences across the nation during the fall of 2005, many students experienced social and educational disruption, personal loss, psychological stress, feelings of institutional mistrust, and anxiety about returning to their devastated city. Moreover, Katrina seriously impacted the institutional health of the university community itself. Despite the fact that between 70% to 90% of the students returned to their reopened campuses for the spring 2006 semester, each of the universities in our sample (and other colleges and universities in New Orleans) continue to face substantial operating debts, as well as a host of financial and institutional uncertainties regarding future enrollments. Summarizing the situation, a recent AAUP study concluded that Katrina inflicted enormous devastation on New Orleans' universities, creating "undoubtedly the most serious disruption of American higher

education in the nation's history" (American Association of University Professors 2007, 61).

Narratives about these experiences add substance to social science concepts that have emerged to increase our understanding of disasters. Students who evacuated from New Orleans and relocated to new residences and schools experienced substantial changes in lifestyles—both positive and negative. Narratives revealed the many difficulties and hardships students encountered at their new schools and which they believed negatively affected their grades. This dislocation in turn contributed to their psychosocial stress. At the same time, some narratives described very positive experiences as students adjusted to their new surroundings.

As expected from a Conservation of Resources perspective (Hobfoll 1988, 1989), narratives reflected the many resources students lost in the disaster. Students recounted these losses and provided compelling accounts of linkages between resource loss and psychosocial stress. Our quantitative findings also reinforce the fact that Hurricane Katrina caused significant psychological impacts among students (Gill, Ladd, and Marszalek 2007b). Their narratives on this subject deepen our understanding beyond the numbers and statistics.

These narratives also provide insight into students' lack of trust in the various agencies and organizations involved with disaster response and their levels of satisfaction with that response. Although there are numerous positive narratives for most relief organizations, severe criticism characterizes narratives about FEMA, the Army Corps of Engineers, and certain government officials. These narratives demonstrate clear feelings of recreancy—that is, the anger, frustration, and despair that follow perceptions that these agencies failed to do their job. Finally, although some narratives reflect students' increased appreciation and awareness of their experiences and surroundings, many narratives reveal apprehension and uncertainty about returning to New Orleans and about getting back to "normal." These patterns are indicative of potential lifescape changes.

College students are usually considered a relatively unique group that is not representative of the U.S. population, or those typically victimized by disasters. Indeed, some have suggested that students are less likely than local residents to be affected by the direct impacts of hurricanes due to their greater socioeconomic resources and fewer obligations to family and the community (Van Willigen et al. 2005). In our research, however, we find that key elements of these student narratives—their lifestyle and lifescape change, loss of resources, psychosocial stress, and feelings of recreancy—resonate closely with the accounts of other disaster survivors (e.g., Edelstein 1988; Erikson 1976), as well as many Katrina evacuees from New Orleans and the Gulf Coast (e.g., see Brinkley 2006; Deichmann 2006; Rose 2005; Smallwood 2006; Stein and Preuss 2006; Thomas 2005; Walker 2006). Like most of the citizenry of New Orleans, these students will bear the mark of this historic storm for the rest of their lives, no doubt remembering Hurricane Katrina the way older New Orleanians remember Hurricanes Betsy and Camille from the 1960s.

We believe the disaster experiences and impacts captured in these student narratives constitute a rich and important contribution to the emerging literature on the "voices of Katrina." Collected in the post-disaster period when many displaced residents were struggling to make sense of the tragedy through a lens of personal grief and collective national trauma, these accounts show students similarly in the midst of their own "storm story" and without adequate time yet to reflect on what had happened to

them or how it might affect their education and future. Just as the Gulf Coast recently commemorated the second anniversary of the storm, it seems clear that the magnitude of the catastrophic events surrounding Katrina and how they changed the lives of a region and nation continue to unfold. Toward that end, qualitative accounts and personal narratives serve as a powerful methodological tool in the study of disasters like Katrina, helping us understand not only its impacts and aftermath, but its enduring legacy.

Anthony E. Ladd is an associate professor of sociology at Loyola University New Orleans. His major research interests involve the study of stakeholder conflict and social movement protest surrounding environmental controversies. In addition to his current collaborative work on the psychosocial impacts of Hurricane Katrina on the college students of Mississippi and New Orleans, he is also conducting research on the socio-environmental impacts of salmon farming and aquaculture in the Pacific Northwest.

Duane A. Gill is professor of sociology at Mississippi State University (MSU) where he serves on the faculty of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work and as associate director of the Social Science Research Center (SSRC). He has devoted much of his academic career to the sociology of disasters and has published work on the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the Selendang Ayu shipwreck and oil spill, the Livingston (LA) train derailment and toxic spill, and other disasters. He was part of a SSRC research team, which included displaced New Orleans social scientists, that examined how Hurricane Katrina affected MSU and New Orleans university students. He recently served as a guest editor of a special issue of *Sociological Spectrum* devoted to Hurricane Katrina. Dr. Gill is currently conducting research on tsunami preparedness, community resilience, and cumulative impacts of disasters and risks.

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