

New Orleans and Hurricane Katrina

A Tale of New Age Racism and Media Framing



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Abstract

The media have great influence on the communication of political issues to the public. This is especially important during times of crisis, such as a natural disaster like hurricane Katrina. The media were able to hold the federal government and George W. Bush accountable for their slow emergency response. But the media were criticized themselves too, since they made discriminating remarks in their reports of Katrina. Whether George W. Bush and his administration had racist motives regarding the slow response can be argued, since the neighborhoods affected most had the most black residents, but it is almost impossible to prove this. What can be proven, is that the image the public was given of hurricane Katrina and the government response, was highly influenced by media framing.

Introduction

“The flood that sank George W. Bush” is how Douglas Brinkley described hurricane Katrina in an article for the magazine *Vanity Fair*. Brinkley argues that Katrina was a turning point in Bush’ presidency since this was one of the first times his decisions were criticized as much as they were. Hurricane Katrina flooded “an estimated 80 percent of the city” (FEMA 4) and caused extreme damage all around the city. Last year marked the tenth anniversary of these great floods that changed the city forever. Not only did this hurricane have a great effect on the city of New Orleans, it also damaged George W. Bush’s political career permanently. The way George W. Bush and the federal government responded to the disaster was highly criticized and the media were the first to blame Bush for the way Katrina destroyed New Orleans. According to most media outlets, Bush did not respond to the disaster as quick as he should have and his motives allegedly were based on racial preferences.

The media play a big role in modern societies, because, as Puglisi states, the “mass media are citizens’ most important source of information about public affairs” (Puglisi 931). This also means that the media have a lot of influence on the way that news is initially made public and what is emphasized most. Especially in emergency situations, such as natural disasters, the media are the first source of information, but this also means that they are able to frame a situation, which might lead to a distorted or biased portrayal of an event. This is why it is also important to be critical towards media statements. From this conclusion, regarding the case study of hurricane Katrina, two challenging questions emerge: ‘In what ways did the United States government respond to the occurrence of hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005?’ and ‘Can the criticism by the media towards this response be justified, especially when looking at the concepts of race, class and ethnicity?’

The research questions are approached from the perspective of different theories. In the first chapter theories about media framing and race are the focal point. Media framing deals with the idea that the media are able to influence the public by reporting in a certain way. By putting emphasis on a certain perspective, issue or person, the public as a result prioritizes this. The media are also able to frame a story in a way that changes the public’s opinion on the topic. Media framing, agenda setting and priming are three of the most important theories regarding media (Scheufele 10).

The media had great influence on the portrayal of the situation in New Orleans, but it is also relevant to look at theories of race when looking back on the disastrous hurricane, because race was a major topic of discussion at that time. New Orleans was, and still is, a multicultural city and has many African-American inhabitants. The neighborhoods that were

affected most when Katrina hit, were ones with the most black residents, namely the Upper and Lower Ninth Ward. The Ninth Ward was flooded for days and since it took so long for a bill to be signed that provided aid, the issue of racism was brought up. Racism is an everyday issue in the United States (and in the world). The conception that with the ending of segregation racial inequality was ended too, is simply incorrect. Michelle Alexander is the author of *The New Jim Crow* and she deals with the issue of new age racism. Because race is still a defining factor for many people and therefore integrated in American society and subsequently also in the American government, it is important to take a look at what race really is and means.

After this chapter, the focal point shifts to the situation on the Gulf Shore after hurricane Katrina hit. It deals with some facts and figures regarding the damage that was caused, especially economic, and following the neighborhoods affected most are discussed. Since race is a factor often brought up when looking back at the seemingly slow emergency response, it is relevant to take a look at the affected neighborhoods and the backgrounds of the people residing there. In the last subchapter the preparedness of New Orleans is discussed. Not only the federal government, but also the local government of the city of New Orleans dealt with criticism, as it appeared that the hurricane protection system was highly inadequate.

Following, there is a chapter that specifically deals with how the media reported on Katrina. There is also a distinction made between different types of media. Different types of media also have different ways of reporting, which is why it is significant to make this distinction. In this subchapter examples of newspapers are provided and the differences are very noticeable between these different newspapers. Lastly in this chapter, the criticism that was expressed on the American government in the media is explained. The main issue that is brought up is the lack of fast and adequate emergency response from the federal government and the distant attitude from president at the time George W. Bush.

The final chapter is used to discuss more theories of media, especially regarding the functions of the media in society. The media functions as an information provider, which should lead to informed citizens (Grabe 215). The media also plays the role of the watchdog or gatekeeper (Grabe 226), since they are able to hold the government accountable for their actions for society's sake. The question whether these functions are actually fulfilled or remain to be ideals is raised and answered. Abutting to this the criticism that was directed towards the media related to their reports of Katrina is reviewed.

As stated, this research looks into the role the media in the portrayal of a disaster and how this affects government officials. I am arguing that the United States Government,

specifically George W. Bush, was not able to limit the damage in the city of New Orleans after hurricane Katrina, due to lack of adequate emergency response, and were rightfully criticized because of this, especially when one looks at the regions in New Orleans that were affected most, because these were mostly black and poor regions. Also the media play a big role in the portrayal of a disaster and the communication to the public about this disaster, which can lead to a biased and subjective portrayal of the events, because the media does not only function to provide the public with information, but they have commercial motives as well, for example the amount of newspapers sold or viewing rates.

Chapter One: Existing Theories

1.1 Theories of Media (Framing)

Media framing offers an effective theoretical approach to better understand the New Orleans and Katrina case study, because “how an issue is characterized in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences” (Scheufele 11). The media can make or break careers and reputations. Both negative and positive events or statements can be blown up or disregarded by the media, which can have a big influence on the concerning person.

There are three media models that deal with this phenomenon. Agenda setting, priming and framing are these models, which are especially important in political communication (Scheufele 10). Agenda setting theory describes the ability of the media to influence which topics get more attention and get emphasized on the public agenda. This can be done by reporting on certain topics more than others, or doing so more prominently, which gives the public the idea that this topic or issue is important. Priming is often combined with agenda setting. Priming is the action by the media in which they intentionally do not report on certain things, to alter the opinion of the public (Scheufele 11). This can be done because many people, especially regarding political issues, are not fully informed about for example a presidential candidate and since they do not have full knowledge, the media are able to alter their opinions or standards, by playing into this lack of knowledge.

“Framing refers to the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue” (Chong 104). The media can achieve this in all sorts of ways, for example: leaving out certain details, emphasizing other details or changing up facts slightly. Framing is not always used to deceive an audience or to spin the truth (Scheufele 4), but it is “is a necessary tool to reduce the complexity of an issue” and make it understandable for the public. In some cases though, it is used to make a story more sensational or for a dramatic narrative. In the case of hurricane Katrina and especially the portrayal of the way Bush stood up as a leader was subject of media framing. The emphasis was put on Bush’ distant attitude, while his attempts to help the city were not reported on as much.

In a lot of ways media framing is similar to agenda setting, it basically is a “more refined version of agenda setting” (Scheufele 7). Agenda setting focuses more on which topics are presented and framing “focuses not on which topics or issues are selected for coverage [...] but instead on the particular ways those issues are presented (Scheufele 7). Media framing can also be used to link different aspects to each other and present them in a certain way, to make the public think they are related. For example, Bush’s republican

background can be linked to the fact that especially black neighborhoods were flooded for a long time and these were particularly reliant on fast emergency response. These facts may not necessarily be related, but if the media presents them to be, the public may assume them to be related.

1.2 Theories of Race

Race formed a big issue in New Orleans after Katrina hit, because the neighborhoods that were affected most, were mostly inhabited by blacks. Race became an issue in the following media reports and in the discussion about the seemingly slow government response. This is why it is relevant to understand the concept of race and the history of the black race in general, since history often greatly influences the present.

Race is something more than biology, it is something with “broad political and economical implications” (Ferguson 192). This became clear after the upsurge of minority movements in the 1950s and 1960s. Race became an increasingly important aspect in the creation of one’s identity, instead of it just being a part of someone’s biological inheritance (Ferguson 192). Different movements started using race as a way of identifying themselves and it became “an expression of cultural and political agency” (Ferguson 192). Because society was defined by segregation these groups wanted to reform society, for example granting people of all races land and ending police brutality, based on race, against them (Ferguson 192). The civil rights movements that are known for the fight against racial injustice and fought for equality for people of all races were subsequently established. But race is not only a way of identifying yourself or expressing political identifications, since it is also a way of belonging or the contrasting phenomenon of exclusion. Race is a term used to define people, so also a term used to determine whether that person belongs to a certain group or not. This can have positive effects, because people can have a sense of belonging as a result of the color of their skin. But it can also have counterproductive effects, because people can feel excluded and as if they do not belong, since they have a different appearance.

The 21st century is sometimes defined as a post-racial age. The post-racial age is the idea that there can be a society without any form of race (Harris 2). Race is put aside entirely, which ends all sort of racism. But race is something that can not be ignored. It is what structures the society and environment. Ignoring race is actually a form of discrimination, because you ignore someone’s background. Some people think that with the election of Obama, this post-racial age has started, but that is not the case, since people are focusing so much on the fact that he is the first black president. If there really was a post-racial age, the

color of his skin would be ignored, and he would just be the president, instead of the first black president.

Since the United States cannot be considered to be a post-racial society, because race still very much influences the structure and identity of society, it can be concluded that race is still important and a defining factor for the American society. This is very much the case, because race helps people defining their identity, but it also creates conflicts in society. Racism is still a very current issue in the United States, even though slavery and segregation were abolished a long time ago. *The New Jim Crow* explains this phenomenon of new age racism. *The New Jim Crow* is a theory created by law professor and civil rights advocate Michelle Alexander, who is also the author of the book *the New Jim Crow*. In the book *The New Jim Crow*, author Michelle Alexander deals with the issue of racial injustice within the criminal justice system and the lack of awareness regarding this issue. She states that even after the abolishment of the Jim Crow laws, black people still get hindered in the use of their civil rights. Laws within the criminal justice system have for example made it legal to withhold black people from voting, while not having to deal with the allegations of discrimination. To understand the parallels between the 'old' Jim Crow and the 'new' Jim Crow, Alexander first creates a timeline for the reader to understand the development of a negative and hateful attitude towards colored people. It is said that this does not only happen within the criminal justice system, but within everyday life as well. There is a "change of tactics" (Alexander 1) but with the same motive: wanting to place whites above blacks in society. This can be linked to possible racist motives the United States Government, in specific George W. Bush, might have had during the occurrence of Hurricane Katrina, because the neighborhoods affected most during this disaster were black neighborhoods. Not only was racism a possible motive for the slow emergency response, but it also was an aspect of the media reports, which will be discussed in chapter four.

The Jim Crow laws have made it impossible for black people in the United States to vote and make use of the same facilities as whites for a very long time. Even after the implementation of laws that gave black people the right to vote, aspects off Jim Crow such as literacy tests withheld them from voting (Kennedy). Nowadays these laws have been prohibited, but different laws have been set up, which makes it impossible for black people to vote. These laws have the same results as the Jim Crow laws by giving many black people the label of 'criminal'. As a convicted felon, even after you have served your sentence, you are not allowed to vote anymore. Since a large percentage of the incarcerated in the United States

are black, many people of this group are prevented from voting. Alexander calls these laws the 'New Jim Crow' laws, because it is largely discriminating towards one ethnic group.

Alexander starts providing evidence for her thesis by sketching an image of the resentment towards minority groups, specifically black people, and the creation of racial hierarchy. When the colonies in the New World started growing, the need for cheap labor grew with it. Since there were not enough white servants available, the colonists needed a new source of labor, which ended up being black slaves imported from Africa. These slaves became property of their masters and had hardly any control over their own lives anymore. They had to do what their master asked them to do and if they did not comply they had to deal with severe consequences in the form of physical and mental punishment. Since they were seen as the master's property, they were treated like that as well. Their lives meant nothing and they were only alive to serve their masters. This was all a result of white supremacy. White people considered themselves to be better and more worthy people, which is how they justified their behavior towards the black people they considered less worthy.

Even after the abolishment of slavery, the racial hierarchy was still maintained. Whites were seen as superior over blacks and this resulted in racial segregation. Many things in the American society were separated. Blacks went to black schools, could not go to the same bars or restaurants as whites and were denied basic civil rights. They were treated as being undeserving and the Jim Crow laws contributed to this. These laws made it extremely difficult for blacks to make use of their civil rights (Kennedy).

The Jim Crow laws worked against everything black people had fought for. They had fought for their freedom and finally got it, yet these laws still withheld them of truly having equal rights to whites. But an end was brought to this, when the Jim Crow laws were abolished. A society without racial segregation started to emerge. Even though officially the Jim Crow laws were abolished, Alexander argues that there are still similar laws that discriminate immensely towards blacks, but are justified by the way the laws are phrased. She calls these laws and parts of the criminal justice system 'the New Jim Crow' to show that American society has not changed as much as one might think and to critique this. By using this name to describe the flaws of the system, she can show the parallels between history and the present. She sheds a light on different aspects of the criminal justice system and the way that blacks are treated within this system, that shows that blacks are legally discriminated daily. This behavior towards black people is very much relevant to the situation in New Orleans after hurricane Katrina hit. It is suspected that George. W. Bush deliberately slowed

down the emergency response because the neighborhoods affected most were inhabited by mostly black people.

If this is the case, which is almost impossible to prove, then that means that black people are considered to be less deserving of help than white people. This acknowledges that white supremacy is still alive in today's society. Also, it can be seen in the way the media portrays black people and white people. This will become clear in chapter four.

Chapter Two: Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans

2.1 Facts and Figures

Hurricane Katrina is one of the most well known hurricanes that have hit the United States. Its strength, which resulted in extreme damage, explains why it is so well known. Katrina “was one of the strongest and most destructive storms to impact the coast of the United States during the past 100 years” (FEMA 1). It first hit the mainland in Florida on August 25th, 2005. At that time it only was a category five hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, but its strength grew as it moved to the Gulf. The hurricane changed from a category one to a five and back to a three again, before it hit the mainland again in Southern Louisiana. It started moving upwards, all the way through Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi. Katrina’s extreme force highly damaged large, mainly coastal, areas of these states. Katrina’s economic damage is estimated around 125 billion dollars, which makes it “the most expensive natural disaster in U.S. history” (FEMA 1). Approximately 5,5 billion dollars worth of damage was done to the infrastructure, including big roads and bridges. Vehicles were destroyed, ships were wrecked and many people lost their homes. Around 450 thousand people were displaced and had to find alternative places to stay, because their homes were too damaged. Appendix A displays data collected by the Red Cross, showing the damage caused to homes in various states and on various levels of severity.

The final death toll of Katrina is still uncertain. The National Hurricane Center sets it at 1836 deaths, but there are still people reported missing, which makes it impossible to determine an exact number. Most of these deaths occurred in the state of Louisiana, because this state was hit hardest, fourteen hundred of these people were killed in the city of New Orleans.

2.2 Which neighborhoods were affected most?

By August 31st 2005, approximately eighty percent of the city of New Orleans was flooded. Only the French Quarter and the Garden District were able to escape major flooding, because these areas are above sea level. The 17th Street Canal levee, the Industrial Canal levee and the London Avenue Canal floodwall breaches, caused most of the flooding in the city. Amongst others, these breaches caused the extreme damage all around the city. Over 350 thousand people were living in the City of New Orleans at this time, but over 300 thousand people also resided the suburban areas such as the Jefferson Parish, St. Bernard Parish and the Mississippi Coast area at the time of the disaster. (Logan 1)

A distinction can be made in demographics between the people living in the damaged

areas and the undamaged areas. There are three categories by which these people can be defined. First of all race. 45,8 percent of the people in the damaged areas were black (Logan 1), in comparison to only 26,4 percent in the undamaged areas. The second category is the poverty and employment status. Before Katrina hit, 7,6 percent of the people in the damaged areas were unemployed and 20,9 percent of the households had incomes below the poverty line (Logan 1). Only six percent of the people in the undamaged areas were unemployed and 15,3 percent of the households had incomes below the poverty line.

Lastly, it is relevant to look at the housing tenure. Almost half, namely 45,7 percent, of the homes in the damaged areas were rented, compared to 30,9 percent of the homes in the undamaged areas. From these results, it can be concluded that the neighborhoods affected most were poorer than the undamaged ones and also that the damaged neighborhoods were inhabited by more black people than the undamaged ones.

One of these damaged neighborhoods was the Ninth Ward. This neighborhood can be divided into two different sections, the Lower Ninth Ward and the Upper Ninth Ward. Both of these suffered from catastrophic flooding during hurricane Katrina. The region was flooded from multiple sources, both from levee breaches as from floodwall failures. The Lower Ninth Ward suffered the most damage, since the breaches did not only cause flooding, but the extreme strength of the flood waves displaced and smashed buildings from their foundations. The Lower Ninth Ward and its damage functioned as a symbol in the media of the devastation of the entire city of New Orleans, caused by hurricane Katrina.

2.3 Evacuation and Preparedness

The effects of hurricane Katrina on the city of New Orleans were massive, but not only the strength of the hurricane led to the devastation in the city, because the city's deficient hurricane preparedness and protection were also reasons for the ravages. "A large portion of the destruction from Hurricane Katrina was caused not only by the storm itself, however, but also by the storm's exposure of engineering and engineering-related policy failures" (Andersen 5). Some of the levees and floodwalls were not designed well and others were inoperable (Andersen 5), which hindered them from working properly and preventing the city to flood. One of the things the designers of the floodwalls did not take into account is the concept of erosion. Erosion is a natural occurrence where, because of water or wind, soil is transported to a different place or broke down entirely. The soil beneath the levees was subjected to this process, which resulted in the creation of water-filled gap (Andersen 5). Since these levees were not protected against erosion, which is a design/strategy choice, the

floodwalls could not withhold the water and this allowed New Orleans to flood entirely.

These are all direct causes of the catastrophe that occurred in the city, but there are also some important indirect causes that contributed to the intensity of the caused damage. There were aspects of the hurricane protection system that did not necessarily have to be an issue, but combined they led to disaster. First of all, the system was not constructed as one connected system, but it was made up out of individual constructs. Some of these constructs were very strong, but stood alongside weak portions, which thus did not make it a strong interconnected system. Not only was the system not connected, it was not controlled by one single agency either. Many federal, state, parish and local agencies held responsibility for the operation of the levees. There was not enough inter-agency coordination either, which led to an even more disconnected system (Andersen 7).

Also, the system was not strong enough in general. It “was designed for meteorological conditions [...] that were not as severe as [the conditions] [...] characteristic of a major Gulf Coast hurricane” (Andersen 6). This means that the entire system was not up for a hurricane the size of Katrina, from which can be concluded that the city of New Orleans was highly exposed and extremely vulnerable. The actual risk of the hurricane was not understood or communicated well with the public. The risk of the levees failing and what the effects of this could be, were not grasped. Because of this, some citizens did not realize the importance of evacuation or protection. The risks for their health and safety were far greater than recognized.

Chapter Three: Hurricane Katrina and the Media

When a disaster occurs, the media play a big role in communicating the situation with the public. This is why it is relevant to understand media and the differences between different media forms.

3.1 Different Types of Media

There are different types of media, who all report in various ways. The three main sources of media are print media, broadcast media and social media/the Internet. Print media are a traditional form of media and covers media products such as newspapers, magazines, journals et cetera (Wahl-Jorgensen 18). With the rise of media sources on the Internet, the importance of print media is declining, but it remains to be an influential source for information. Broadcast media are a newer form of media and include television and radio broadcasts. Especially television broadcasts are a way of remaining well informed for many. Before the rise of television, people were more reliant on radio broadcasts than nowadays. A medium form on the rise is the Internet or social media (Westerman 171). More people, especially of younger generations, look for news online. They can access more traditional outlets, such as newspapers, online as well. But also new forms of media such as Twitter and Facebook can be used for information supply. Within this research there is a focus on written media in the form of traditional print media. In other words, newspapers, tabloids and magazines will be the focus of this research. The reason being that newspapers “provide cues to other types of news organizations about what is newsworthy. Their importance therefore extends beyond their own readership to the content of other news media” (Lawrence 11). Television broadcasts for example often get their information from print media as well. Also, even though social media is on a rise and “readership [is dwindling], newspapers remain America’s premier source of public affairs information” (Robinson 135).

There are not only various types of media that report differently, because within these types there are also contrasting elements. A good example of this is the distinction between quality newspapers/broadsheets (such as the New York Times) and tabloids/magazines (such as The Daily News). The most noticeable differences are in layout, language, target groups and headlines.

First of all it is important to look at the target group of both media types. Quality newspapers attract readers with information and articles about current events. These readers are often demanding and looking for informative articles. These events can vary from domestic to international news, or from financial reports to cultural reviews. They want to be

informed extensively and demand details. There is a level of seriousness to the newspaper and articles (Sterling 223). This is all in contrast to the targeted audience of tabloids, because tabloids target the less demanding reader. These readers are not interested in detailed reports, but are looking for the basic outline of a situation. They do not want to approach situations in a business-like way, but they are interested in the personal aspects of stories.

An aspect related to the target group, are the headlines used. Quality newspapers often have fairly long headlines, which already answer a few questions about the event (what, who, when, where, how). They are very informative and also formal, without any grammatical omissions. Tabloids focus more on the eye-catching factor of the headline, instead of its informative nature (Sterling 224). They will use alliterations, emotive verbs or adjectives and capital letters, all to attract the attention of the reader. Grammatical correctness is not as important, so omissions are more likely to be made.

The way headlines are framed, also has to do with the choice of words. Quality newspapers are more likely to use difficult vocabulary and stick to Standard English. The language used is formal and remains factual. The entire text is neutral and it is unlikely for quality newspaper to write biased articles, except for opinion columns. Tabloids do not pay attention to remaining neutral and use as many words as possible to attract the readers' interests (Li 117). These words can be subjective, false, or shocking, but as long as they attract attention, they will be used. Correct language is not significant either, because grammatical emissions will be made and colloquial English is used more often than formal English (Sterling 223). This also makes it more understandable for the average citizen, or people who are less educated, which gives tabloids an important role in society.

There is a concept that specifically describes journalism without well-researched articles, but that are more focused on attracting as many readers as possible. This term is yellow journalism, or yellow press. There is an emphasis on eye-catching headlines and dramatic stories to attract readers and sell more. Journalists who mingle in this type of journalism are often describes as lacking "ethical behavior" (Knight 752), because they are "manufacturing sources and stories" (Knight 752). Nowadays the term yellow journalism is most often used to describe journalists who deal with news unprofessionally and do not track their sources or check their facts properly before making a story public.

When these characteristics are linked to the events in New Orleans a few assumptions can be made. It can be assumed that in situations like natural disasters, quality newspapers will focus on the facts of the situation. They will report factual information, without making it sensational. They report about the catastrophe without creating extra drama to attract

publicity. Tabloids on the other hand are most likely to focus on the dramatic narrative of it all and will twist the stories to their advantage to attract attention. When these assumptions are related to the research question, it can be concluded that tabloids are most likely to blame the government of the United States for the size of the disaster and describe former President George W. Bush as the bogeyman. Whether these are truthful assumptions, will be researched in the following chapter.

3.2 The New York Times and The Daily News: a Comparison of Media Types

As mentioned, print media is the focus in this research. In the following subchapter a comparison will be made between two different newspapers. There will be one quality newspaper used, namely The New York Times, and the tabloid used is The Daily News. These are used to point out some main differences between media types. In the following subchapter other media sources are introduced as well to give a broader view of the media reports.

The New York Times is a daily newspaper that was first published in 1951. It has the second largest circulation and has been rewarded with the most Pulitzer Prizes of all news organizations. The Pulitzer Prize is an achievement award and very desirable for anyone working in journalism business. Since The New York Times has won 117 awards, its professionalism and quality are emphasized.

The Daily News was the first newspapers printed in tabloid format in the United States and was first published in 1919. Just like The New York Times, it is very popular and holds the fourth largest circulation in the United States. Even though tabloids are not necessarily only focused on scandal and sensation, there is a significant difference in their target group, which can be noticed in differences in layout and language.



Sources: The New York Times, 31 August 2005 via huffingtonpost.com and The Daily News, 30 August 2005 via nydailynews.com

First of all there are differences in the lay out. As can be seen from the images above (bigger versions in appendix B and C) the front pages of the two papers are very different. As described earlier, quality newspapers often have longer headlines with a lot of information, while tabloids stick to a shorter often shocking/eye-catching headline. With these two front pages, those theories can clearly be applied. The New York Times uses the following headline “New Orleans is inundated as 2 levees fail; much of Gulf Coast is crippled; toll rises” while The Daily News uses “Killer!” as a headline. Both of these headlines were used to describe the fatal and damaging effects of Katrina. The quality newspaper used formal language, with as much information as possible, which also made the headline quite long. This is characteristic for a quality newspaper. The tabloid on the other hand had a very short headline, but it was very eye-catching. It could shock and attract the public to read the article. This can be linked to the target group, because the target group of quality newspapers probably would be less attracted to such a short headline, because they desire more information and more formal articles.

3.2 Criticism on the United States Government

In the coverage of hurricane Katrina by the media, there was a lot of criticism pointed towards the American government and president George W. Bush. When Katrina first hit the Gulf shore on Monday the 29th of August 2005, president George W. Bush was on a month-long vacation in Texas. As a result of the hurricane he had to cut short his vacation by a few days as he returned to Washington almost two days after the hurricane first hit. The fact that it took Bush more than a day to return from his vacation and take control of the situation caused a flood of criticism, especially since it took until Friday night for Bush “[to sign] a \$10.5 billion relief package passed by Congress to help victims of the massive storm” (CNN). Bush did not only receive criticism from the media or the American people, because he also received huge amounts of criticism from his fellow politicians. House Leader at that time, Nancy Pelosi stated the following after this bill was signed: "Whatever the judgment is about the leadership that has happened right now, if we think that this was a good example of leadership, we have, indeed, lowered our standards as a nation" (Pelosi, CNN). By stating this, she wanted to point out that she believed that the United States government did not act soon enough after hurricane Katrina. According to her, there was a “lack of sense of urgency” (Pelosi, CNN) during the first week after the natural disaster occurred. Pelosi is not the only one who believed this to be the case, because the government, on all levels, was highly criticized during and after the disaster.

Bush was criticized for his detachment during the whole situation. Instead of visiting New Orleans right away, he chose to fly over it in his airplane while on his way back to Washington. A picture of him looking out of his window (appendix E) of the plane was shown everywhere and made him look “insensitive and uncaring” (Adubato 230). Bush himself called flying over the affected areas “a huge mistake” (Bush, NBC) five years later on an interview. Bush’ actions were especially disappointing when related to the way he dealt with the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers in New York on 9/11, 2001. He was able to demonstrate “compassion and empathy” (Adubato 229) after 9/11, specifically because of his “mental and physical presence” (Adubato 229) on ground zero only a couple of days after the attacks. He was able to comfort the American people and play a uniting role. He lacked this ability during the events in New Orleans. Just like 9/11, Hurricane Katrina was a major domestic emergency and it can be considered to be the first after 9/11 (Adubato 230), which raised expectations for Bush to deal with the situation in similar ways, but he did not.

Not only President Bush was criticized, because the entire federal government was a target for criticism. Especially the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was

denounced, as they were believed to take actions too late and lacking force. Again, politicians questioned the Federal Government's actions. One of these people was the mayor of Chicago Richard Daley, who said that the city of Chicago had offered aid, but this was not accepted. He stated the following as a response to the lack of request of aid:

"I was shocked. We are ready to provide considerably more help than they have requested. We are just waiting for the call". (Daley, Chicago Tribune)

"I think the president this morning said it publicly—which is smart—they don't think they responded as quickly as possible. [...] Now, after that, let's do it. [...] I don't want to sit here and all of a sudden we are all going to be political—we are going to criticize this one or that. Just get it done". (Daley, Chicago Tribune)

Supposedly FEMA purposely slowed down the emergency aid, because according to them "the response to Hurricane Katrina must be well coordinated between federal, state and local officials to most effectively protect life and property" (FEMA). This was not the only instance where FEMA turned down help, because they turned down supplies offered by the Coast Guard and Wal-Mart as well. Aaron Broussard, president of the Jefferson Parish (which covers parts of the New Orleans' conglomerate) at that time, wanted to hold people responsible for these actions. He stated that "when Wal-Mart sent three trailer trucks loaded with water, FEMA officials turned them away. Agency workers prevented the Coast Guard from delivering 1,000 gallons of diesel fuel, and on Saturday they cut the parish's emergency communications line, leading the sheriff to restore it and post armed guards to protect it from FEMA" (Shane). Instead of offering victims and people in need aid, there seemed to be a competition for who held authority and FEMA did not seem to be prepared for a disaster of this size.

Many people criticized the federal government, and later also the local government when it became clear that the hurricane protection system was in such a bad state. Explanations and possible motives for the lack of adequate emergency response are discussed and rumored about. One of these possible motives is the shared racial background of the victims in New Orleans and the possible antipathy felt by government officials for people of this background. As explained, many parts of New Orleans were affected, but the Lower Ninth Ward suffered the most damage. The people abiding in this neighborhood are mostly black. In general, many citizens of the city of New Orleans are black, or of another minority

ethnic background. The huge amount of multicultural citizens gives New Orleans its identity and many people are very proud of it. But in this case, many people of different backgrounds felt personally targeted by the government because they did not step in as quick as was expected to offer them aid. Reverend Jesse Jackson even stated that "many black people feel that their race, their property conditions and their voting patterns have been a factor in the response" (Jackson).

Reverend Jackson was not the only one who expressed this feeling of discrimination felt by the black community. Rapper Kanye West expressed his frustrations during benefit concert *A Concert for Hurricane Relief*, a four-hour live show dedicated to raise money, awareness and relief for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. During this show West went off script and expressed how he felt that black people were discriminated and portrayed badly in the media.

"I hate the way they portray us in the media. You see a black family, it says, 'They're looting.' You see a white family, it says, 'They're looking for food.' And, you know, it's been five days [waiting for federal help] because most of the people are black. And even for me to complain about it, I would be a hypocrite because I've tried to turn away from the TV because it's too hard to watch. I've even been shopping before even giving a donation, so now I'm calling my business manager right now to see what is the biggest amount I can give, and just to imagine if I was down there, and those are my people down there. So anybody out there that wants to do anything that we can help—with the way America is set up to help the poor, the black people, the less well-off, as slow as possible. I mean, the Red Cross is doing everything they can. We already realize a lot of people that could help are at war right now, fighting another way—and they've given them permission to go down and shoot us. George W. Bush doesn't care about black people." (West, Hurricane for Relief).

As can be read in this transcript of West's speech at the Hurricane for Relief charity show, West appears very angry at both the media and the Bush administration. He believes that the president and the government deliberately slowed down the emergency response because the people affected most were black. Also, he is mad at the media for portraying blacks as criminals, while whites are portrayed as survivors.

The media provided a platform for politicians such as Daley and celebrities, and also victim of discrimination in this case, such as West to express their visions on the situation in

New Orleans. I decided to shortly deviate from my research of print media, because I felt that the speech given by Kanye West was the perfect example for the frustration amongst black people.

Chapter Four: Did the Media Portray an Honest Picture?

“In modern media societies mass media are citizens’ most important source of information about public affairs” (Puglisi 931). During a disaster of all sorts, people find themselves reaching out to the media to get information. It is the only way to get new information about the situation, whether through traditional media such as newspapers, through broadcasts, or even social media. This makes the influence that the media have on the image that is created or the portrayal of a situation extremely big. They can influence how people perceive a situation and even implement certain ideas. Since the media have so much power in the creation of an image, it also means that the media have great influence on the reputation of people, for instance politicians. In the case of Hurricane Katrina and the way this even was reported by the media, the media left its mark on the portrayal of the catastrophe.

4.1. Roles the Media Played versus Roles the Media Should Play

The media play a couple of important roles in society, among these the function of informed citizenship and the role of watchdog/gatekeeper. Informed citizenship deals with the idea that the media exists to inform the public about important issues, so they remain informed (Grabe 217). This can be about all sorts of topics, but this role of the media is especially important regarding the spread of information about politics. The media can be used to raise awareness about certain political topics or to make a certain politician a focal point. This can be used to their advantage by politicians in the form of agenda setting. Through the media, politicians can raise awareness for certain issues, events or topics and by doing so attract the attention of the public. But similarly, the media can also decide where to put their focal point. If they emphasize a certain topic or issue, it can become prioritized by the public, which means that politicians have to adapt accordingly. This can also have negative effects. In case of a mistake or scandal, the media can choose to enlarge this and put extreme emphasis on it. In this case, a sensational story can be created regarding this mistake and the media have the power to make it as big or as small as they want, all by deciding what to report on and how to report it. This can make or break a politician’s career.

A good example of this is the Lewinsky Scandal. The first allegations regarding sexual extravagances about, Governor at that time, Bill Clinton were made in 1991 (William 68). In the following years many more followed and the media provided a platform for the alleged sexual partners of Clinton to tell their story. The media took a spin on this and created sensational stories. A climax was reached in 1998 when Clinton’s presidency was “rocked by another sex scandal” (William 73) when a report about “an alleged affair between President

Clinton and a White House intern, Monica Lewinsky” (William 73) became public. All media outlets covered the story and the rumor about the affair turned into a sensational scandal. There was no way around it for the public, “whether one started the day by listening to National Public Radio or Howard Stern, by watching *Good Morning America* or CNN, by reading *The New York Times* or *The Star*, the topic was the same” (William 74). Bill Clinton and his career never really recovered from this scandal. If the media had not blown up this story, or if they had not decided to take this rumor as serious as they did, Clinton’s reputation had not suffered this much damage.

This phenomenon can be linked to George W. Bush and his administration during the catastrophe in New Orleans. The media were soon to decide that George W. Bush seemed distant and not as engaged as a president should be during such a time of crisis. His flyover and the picture of him in the plane that went viral were seen as insensitive (picture in Appendix E), but this situation could also be presented differently. Instead of describing the president as emotionless while looking out of the window of the plane, you could also perceive it as a look of shock. Combined with the slow response and compared to Bush’ response after the attacks of 9/11, the media were ready to judge and portray Bush as acting inadequately.

But the media also lead to informed citizenship. Many people all over the United States and the world were sympathizing with the people in New Orleans and the affected parts of the Gulf shores. The media were able to keep them informed about the status of the situation in the area and could even call for help. Through shows such as the *Concert for Hurricane Relief* awareness about the urgency and significance of the hurricane could be raised and people could be stimulated to help or donate money to the cause.

The second important function of the media is the role of gatekeeper/watchdog. Reports by the media on political situations, events, campaigns and so on, are the only way for the public to gain information about it, because the public has no clue what happens behind closed doors and the media are the only way to make this information public. In some cases “politicians may wish to communicate directly with voters about certain matters, such as popular policy decisions” (Puglisi 931). This is why the White House does regular press sessions where people from the media are invited to ask questions regarding a topic, or are given a press release. By doing so, the closed doors open a little and the public regains a bit of control because the media function as gatekeepers.

Politicians are not always eager to use the media as a platform, especially when a

mistake has been made. “[Politicians] clearly have no incentive to advertise their wrongdoings. As a result, the mass media have the potential to play a crucial role as watchdogs, informing citizens about any improper conduct by those in power” (Puglisi 931). The media can step in when something interferes with the interests of the public. This can be in the form of a scandal such as Bill Clinton’s Lewinsky scandal, which in the opinion of the media made him unqualified to govern the country, or not living up to promises made during the election campaigns. The media are able to hold the government and its officials accountable for their actions and decisions. By doing so the principle of a democracy can exist.

But creating informed citizens and holding the government accountable when necessary are ideals of what the media should be and do. From this description the media seem to be an ethical body that protects the public from harm from the government and tries to inform them about reality. But reality is, that the media does not always paint a truthful picture. The media should technically be unbiased, but biases are everywhere. The people that work at the media outlets, the beliefs the outlets associate themselves with and the way the outlets identify themselves all have influence on the way they report news. Every news source is biased in some sense.

The media have to perform roles that might seem contradictory, namely “government watchdog and guardian of their own interests” (Johnson 377). Even though the media “are essential for constructing public events and crisis situations” (Maia 387) there can be conflicting interests. Especially news outlets are focused on attracting the most readers and/or viewers, so they will gain popularity and earn more money (Wahl-Jorgensen 61). To do so a shift in priorities can occur, because the focus lies on the most sensational story instead of informing the public and holding the government accountable for their actions. This can result in a lack of fact-checking or basing stories on rumors, as was the case with the Lewinsky-scandal. Even though, Bill Clinton ended up confessing to this affair, the reports in the media were based on rumors.

Also, it was never confirmed that George W. Bush had racist motives for slowing down the emergency response action, or not standing up as firmly as he did during 9/11. These are all assumptions and not actually confirmed by any facts. But it did make for a juicy story, which is why commercial media still used this angle in their reports.

4.2 Criticism on Media Portrayal

The media were highly critical of the American government and the slow emergency response, but the media itself also received criticism. The way the media portrayed the people affected by the hurricane was criticized immensely, especially by people of color, because they seemed to be discriminating towards black people in their reports.

As referred to earlier, Kanye West made a statement about black people being called looters when looking for food to survive, while white people are described as finding food. This relates to the issue of 'Lootie'. Lootie is a name given to a man after a picture of him went public. In this picture, there is a black man carrying drinks and it is stated in the picture that he is 'looting'. In other pictures, white people are shown who are carrying food or drinks and it is said that they are 'finding' food (Appendix D). This difference in describing similar situations has been used to emphasize the problem of discrimination. Even in an emergency situation, there is a distinction made between how black people and how white people are trying to survive, while they undertaking similar actions. Black people are portrayed as looters and as doing something wrong, while white people are felt sorry for, because they have to go looking for food, since they need to survive. Words such as 'survivors' were used for white people, yet black people were portrayed as 'looters' or 'criminals'. This distinction by the media were seen as first hand racism and contributed to the idea that the lives of black people were less important than white lives, which is why it took so long for aid to be provided.

Conclusion

The situation on the Gulf shore, specifically in New Orleans, was disastrous after hurricane Katrina hit. Not only were there people who lost their lives, many people lost their homes and belongings as well and the economic damage went through the roof. Katrina ended up being “one of the strongest and most destructive storms to impact the coast of the United States during the past 100 years” (FEMA). Parts of the city of New Orleans were flooded for days and especially the Ninth Ward suffered immensely. The Ninth Ward is one of the neighborhoods in New Orleans with the most black residents and many people living there have lower incomes. This is one of the reasons why it is said that the government’s emergency response was deliberately slowed down, because of racist motives.

George W. Bush was given the blame for the lack of adequate emergency response by the federal government and was portrayed as being distant and insensitive during the catastrophe. His behavior was compared to his behavior after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, in which he played a unifying role for the nation by standing up as a strong leader. He showed compassion and soon arrived at ground zero to pay his respects. The way he dealt with Katrina was quite differently. President Bush was on vacation in Texas when the hurricane hit the Gulf Shore, but did not fly home to Washington until almost two days of torment had passed. It took him until Friday night to sign a bill for financial aid, while the hurricane had hit the Gulf Shore on Monday morning. But not only the president was criticized, also FEMA took a hit. The organization seemed to be more focused on its authority and on how to organize the aid, which led to great frustration among other politicians, as they wanted to offer help but this was not accepted.

The media are big players when it comes to the communication with the public, especially during a disaster such as Katrina. This results in much power for the media when it comes to the portrayal of a situation. But the media sometimes has conflicting motives. On the one hand they function as a watchdog that can hold the government accountable for their actions. In this case, the media were able to hold the government accountable for their slow emergency response. Secondly the media are a source of information with the goal to create informed citizenship. This means that the media have to portray an objective image of situations, people or issues, so the public can be informed and can subsequently shape their outlook and opinion on it. This is where the conflict occurs. Even though these are the ideal functions of the media, in reality these functions can clash with another important motive for the media, namely to earn money. Especially commercial media are focused on making as much money possible and they can achieve this by presenting the most sensational story,

which will attract readers. As a result these stories are sometimes biased, based on rumors or the facts are poorly checked. This means that the public does not get informed with truthful and adequate information. Also it can lead to the media focusing on scandals within the government, instead of functioning as a true watchdog. The watchdog role gets overshadowed by a search for sensation.

Since the media are the most important source of information for the public during times of crises, they were able to influence the portrayal of the situation in New Orleans greatly. Not only were they able to portray the president and its administration as the reason for the lack of adequate response because of racist motives, but they were also able to choose which people were victimized and which were not. The media portrayed black people as being looters and criminals, while white people were only finding food to survive. The media received a lot of criticism for the way they discriminated towards black people and how they victimized white people.

It can be concluded that the media played a big role in the portrayal of hurricane Katrina and New Orleans. They properly executed their role of watchdog by holding the government accountable for their slow and inadequate emergency response, but especially tabloids also focused on who could tell the best story and could attract the most readers. This has to do with commercial motives. This also contributed to the damage done to president Bush' career and the credibility of its administration. The public lost faith in Bush, which was partially justified because of the slow emergency response, but was also fed by the media. It can never be confirmed that Bush had racist motives for slowing down the emergency aid and even though this were rumors, it did affect his career. This means that the media partially fulfilled their ideal functions, but also contributed to the downfall of Bush' administration.

Following from my research results, it can be said that my research had some limitations. As mentioned, it is impossible to prove whether Bush had racist motives. This is something that can be suspected, but it cannot be proven in any way. This made part of my research inconclusive.

Another limitation, or more of an obstacle than a limitation, was the excessive amount of newspaper articles and news broadcasts. For this thesis I was only able to shed a light on a small part of the media reports made during that time. This also means that there are possibilities for a future project. For a future project a comparison could for example be made between newspaper reports and broadcasting reports regarding hurricane Katrina. Or more different newspapers and tabloids could be used in the research I executed. This would perhaps illustrate the ideas of media framing and media functions even more.

An additional possibility for a future project would be a comparison between two disasters. In this research there was made a short comparison between how George W. Bush dealt with 9/11 and how he dealt with hurricane Katrina, but this could be researched and compared more extensively. There could even be made a comparison between different presidents. For example, there could be made a comparison between how George W. Bush dealt with Katrina and how Barack Obama dealt with the BP oil spill in 2010.

The first research question was the following: ‘In what ways did the United States government respond to the occurrence of hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005?’ It can be concluded that the federal government responded too slow to the catastrophe in New Orleans. Bush signed an emergency bill that would provide financial aid and FEMA stepped in to take control of the situation, but all these actions were fairly poorly executed and executed on a late notice as well. The city itself was not prepared enough either, because their hurricane protection system was set up poorly.

The second research question ‘Can the criticism by the media towards this response be justified, especially when looking at the concepts of race, class and ethnicity?’ is harder to answer. Yes, the media criticism towards the response can be justified because it was executed too late and inadequately. It can also be said that the neighborhoods affected most were black neighborhoods inhabited by residents with lower incomes, but it cannot be confirmed that this is the reason for the slow response. Also, I argue that the media itself made some mistakes as well in their reports, by discriminating towards blacks.

Overall, I argue that racism indeed still plays a big role in modern society, which can directly be seen in the media coverage of Hurricane Katrina. It cannot directly be seen in the government emergency response, because the motives or reasons for this inadequate behavior are unclear.

Appendix

Appendix A: Results by the Red Cross Regarding Damage

TABLE 1-1. Katrina Housing Damage Summary

Location	Dwelling Type	Destroyed	Major	Minor
Alabama	Single-Family	363	966	345
	Manufactured	-	1	26
	Apartment	-	-	-
	Subtotal	363	967	371
Louisiana	Single-Family	241,524	38,350	40,066
	Manufactured	1,552	1,146	1,855
	Apartment	40,762	33,676	27,842
	Subtotal	283,838	73,172	69,763
Mississippi	Single-Family	68,466	62,981	95,468
	Manufactured	263	2,241	4,811
	Apartment*	-	-	-
	Subtotal	68,729	65,237	100,318
Hurricane Katrina TOTALS	Single-Family	310,353	102,297	135,879
	Manufactured	1,815	3,388	6,692
	Apartment	40,762	33,691	27,881
	Total	352,930	139,376	170,452

(SOURCES: AMERICAN RED CROSS, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME BUILDERS, 10/05 <<http://www.redcross.org>>, <<http://www.nahb.org>>.)

* Data incomplete.

Source: "FEMA 549, Hurricane Katrina in the Gulf Coast: Mitigation Assessment Team Report, Building Performance Observations, Recommendations, and Technical Guidance."

FEMA.gov. FEMA, 1 July 2005. Web. 20 May 2016.

Appendix B: Frontpages by the New York Times

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3 7 15 25 50 75 85 97

“All the News That’s Fit to Print”

The New York Times

OLIV. CLIV. No. 53,323
Copyright © 2005 The New York Times
NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2005
ONE DOLLAR

NEW ORLEANS IS INUNDATED AS 2 LEVEES FAIL; MUCH OF GULF COAST IS CRIPPLED; TOLL RISES



Water engulfed much of New Orleans yesterday, and officials feared a steep death toll after breaches in the levees sent the waters of Lake Pontchartrain pouring into the city.

CITY IS OFF LIMITS

Pentagon Joins in the Effort — Bush Cuts Vacation Short

By JOSEPH P. REASHER and N. R. KLEINFELDER
NEW ORLEANS, Aug. 30 — A day after New Orleans thought it had narrowly escaped the worst of Hurricane Katrina’s wrath, water broke through two levees on Tuesday and virtually submerged and isolated the city, causing incalculable destruction and rendering it unshelterable for weeks to come.

With bridges washed out, highways converted into canals, and power and communications lines inoperable, government officials ordered everyone still remaining east of the city. Officials began planning for the evacuation of the Superdome, where about 18,000 refugees huddled in increasingly grim conditions as water and looting raged on and rising water threatened the generators.

The situation was so dire that late in the day the Pentagon ordered five Navy ships and eight Navy maritime rescue teams to the Gulf Coast to bolster relief operations. It also planned to fly in search boat rescue teams from California.

As rising water and widespread devastation hobbled rescue and recovery efforts, the authorities could only guess at the death toll in New Orleans and across the Gulf Coast. In Mississippi alone, officials raised the official count of the dead to at least 39.

“It looks like Birmingham is what it looks like,” Gov. Haley Barbour said, describing parts of Harrison County, Miss.

Across the region, rescue workers were not even trying to gather up and count the dead, officials said, but pushed them aside for the time being as they tried to find the living.

As the sweep of the devastation became clear, President Bush cut short his month-long summer vacation on Tuesday and returned to Washington, where he will meet Monday with a task force established to coordinate the efforts of 14 federal agencies that will be involved in responding to the disaster.

The hope of the catastrophe caught New Orleans by surprise. A certain sense of calm had kept the city poised calmly yesterday, as the authorities and residents alike prepared for a more horrific event than had been anticipated. Mayor Ray

DEMOCRATIC FIELD LAGS IN CITY POLL

Many Choose Bloomberg Over Any of His Rivals

By JIM HUTTENBERG and MARIBRE CONNELLY
New York City Democrats are largely unimpressed with their field of mayoral candidates in the coming primary election, and nearly half of them believe that the Republican mayor, Michael R. Bloomberg, deserves reelection, according to the latest New York Times poll.

With two weeks to go before the Sept. 13 primary, more than a quarter of Democratic voters said they remained undecided. And half of Democrats said that if Mr. Bloomberg were in the Democratic primary they would vote for him, giving the mayor more than double the support of the next most popular candidate, Fernando Ferrer, in such a hypothetical matchup.

The poll showed Mr. Bloomberg in an enviable position as he heads to the November general election. It was a startling reversal for a mayor who two years ago had the lowest job approval rating in the history of the New York Times poll, 24 percent. Today, 39 percent of New Yorkers approve of the job he is doing, 9 percentage points higher than his previous high of 30 percent in late June.

But when voters were asked to

Continued on Page B3

Secrecy Veils China’s Jailing Of a Journalist

By JIM YARDELY
BEIJING, Aug. 30 — For the more than 11 months that he has been in custody, Zhao Yan has been held in one of the darkest corners of China’s legal system because of the accusations against him: that he leaked state secrets to his employer, The New York Times.

The accusation, which Mr. Zhao and the Times deny, deprives a defendant in China of almost all rights. Mr. Zhao still has not had a court hearing. No public explanation has been given for his arrest. He is forbidden to see his family. His lawyer’s efforts to post bail were denied out by a judge but by the Ministry of State Security, the agency that arrested him.

Mr. Zhao, 41, who worked as a researcher for the newspaper’s bureau in Beijing, was no stranger to State Security when it picked him up last Sept. 17 at a Plaza Hotel in Shanghai. His previous work as a muckraking journalist and rural activist earned him regular visits from agents and invited speculation that his past life was the reason for his arrest.

But a confidential State Security report and interviews confirm that Mr. Zhao was the focus of a high-level investigation begun in response to an article in the Times on Sept. 7. The article, which cited two anonymous

Continued on Page A6

Face to Face With Death and Destruction in Biloxi

By SHIMLA DEWAN

BILOXI, Miss., Aug. 30 — If an aerial camera flying over this ruined peninsula were to zoom in, past the blocks of flattened houses, past the canyons crumpled like an accordion, past the bridges that pulled home from their moorings and sailed inland, past where the Biloxi Visitors Center and the McDonald’s used to be, past the lawnmowers and topgolfers and scooters and tangled Hawaiian shirts and barbwire and hula hoops, it would arrive at a pair of bare feet jutting toward the sky, out of a square hole in a concrete slab.

“That’s J.D.,” said Jimmy Elley, who stood studying the wreckage of the Tivoli Hotel on Tuesday with a fixed expression. Then he gestured to a white, waxy hole, barely visible under the slab. “And that’s Sue.”

He walked around what had been

the roof of the two-story building and pointed. “I played poker with him the night before,” he said, pointing to an arm, and the top of a head, of a silver-haired man bobbed in by the pale green air of a shower stall. “He actually won 18 bucks from me. I don’t know his name. I just know he couldn’t swim.”

The manager of the Tivoli, a residential hotel, said later that there were eight people under that slab — eight not yet counted in the death toll in Harrison County, one of the hardest hit by Hurricane Katrina.

The authorities said they had no firm tally of the death, and large

parts of the county had yet to be searched. Joe Spraggins, the head of emergency management for the county, said the official count was at 100 but sure to grow.

At a news briefing just east in Gulfport, Gov. Haley Barbour warned that the death toll could soar. “There is incredible evidence that the casualties are more than 50, maybe 60,” Governor Barbour said, “and it seems likely that that’s not the end of it. It may be higher, maybe substantially.”

Chief Pat Sullivan of the Gulfport

Continued on Page A12

AFTER THE HURRICANE

OIL PRICES As the extent of the damage to offshore platforms becomes apparent, oil prices soared above \$70 a barrel and gasoline futures jumped by 30 percent amid concerns that it would take months to restore production. **PAGE 13**

PUBLIC HEALTH Federal health officials rushed equipment and experts to the Gulf Coast and warned that the consequences of the storm were likely to be enormous. **PAGE 14**

A CATY’S SICK People who show what is perhaps America’s most distinctive city are wondering what will remain of New Orleans, physically and psychologically. **PAGE 11**

THE MILITARY RESPONSE Five Navy ships and eight maritime rescue teams were ordered to the Gulf Coast. **PAGE 14**

NEWS SUMMARY

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Bringing them	F1-30
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Updated news.nytimes.com

Tomorrow in the Times: Page D9



Evelyn Turner’s husband, Navity Bowie, who had cancer, died in New Orleans when his oxygen ran out.

INSIDE

Five Lebanese Detained in Assassination Inquiry

A United Nations investigation into the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri of Lebanon has ordered five current or former Lebanese high officials with links to Syria detained for questioning. **PAGE 4**

Poverty Rate Rose in 2004

Even as the economy grew, incomes stagnated last year and the poverty rate rose, the Census Bureau reported. It was the first time in recent years that the poverty rate failed to decrease for five straight years. The report reflected lingering weakness in workers’ pay. **PAGE 4**

Hints of Missing Millions

In the first hopeful signs for investors in the Enron hedge fund, Arizona authorities say that \$101 million they seized from a bank account could be from the fund. **MONDAY, PAGE 11**



Roddick is Ousted at Open

Andy Roddick, seeded fourth in the U.S. Open, was a first-round loser, dropping straight sets to Gilles Muller. **SPORTS, PAGE 11**

In Search of a Place to Sleep, and News of Home

By KATE ZERNIK and FODI WILGORN
SARASOTA, Fla., Aug. 30 — Hundreds of thousands of evacuees from the New Orleans area stranded in overcrowded hotels, motels and makeshift shelters and on highways across much of the South underscored a new reality on Tuesday: an extended diaspora of a city’s worth of people, one rarely seen in the annals of natural disaster.

As news spread that the devastated, largely engulfed and cordoned-off New Orleans area would not be habitable until at least next week, hurricane refugees gathered in hotel lobbies and shelters around television sets beaming images of their waterlogged city and turned to cell-phones and laptops, usually in vain, for information about the homes, relatives and neighbors they had left behind.

Hotels as far away as Houston (250 miles from New Orleans), Memphis (270 miles) and Little Rock (445 miles) were booked, and the American Red Cross had opened more than 230 shelters in schools, churches and civic centers spread through 16 Southern states.

Many found themselves wandering away after making out credit cards or being forced to leave previously booked rooms.

America Williams, 34, evacuated on Sunday, plunging into a sport utility vehicle with her boyfriend and 12 of his relatives — seven of them children. “They just told us to drive, to drive east or west to get as far from the storm as possible,” Ms. Williams said. “Our intention was to go to Atlanta, but it was raining so hard we stopped in Birmingham.”

After two nights in three \$50 rooms and a motel, the family ran out of money and moved on Tuesday to the Birmingham Jefferson Civic Center where the Red Cross had just opened a shelter. “We’re down to our very last,” Ms. Williams said. “We came

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"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

Late Edition
New York: Today: Mostly to partly sunny, high 88. Tonight: mainly clear, low 69. Tomorrow: still mostly to partly sunny, high 87. Yesterday: high 87, low 76. Weather map is on Page D8.

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NEW YORK, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2005

ONE DOLLAR

BUSH SEES LONG RECOVERY FOR NEW ORLEANS; 30,000 TROOPS IN LARGEST U.S. RELIEF EFFORT



Some people made their way out of the New Orleans area on railroad tracks yesterday as officials began evacuations. But thousands of people were said to still be trapped in the city.

HIGHER TOLL SEEN

Evacuation of Stadium
— Police Ordered
to Stop Looters

By ROBERT D. McFADDEN
and RALPH BLUMENTHAL

NEW ORLEANS, Aug. 31—Chaos gripped New Orleans on Wednesday as looters ran wild, food and water supplies dwindled, bodies floated in the floodwaters, the evacuation of the Superdome began and officials said there was no choice but to abandon the city devastated by Hurricane Katrina, perhaps for months. President Bush pledged vast assistance, but acknowledged, "This recovery will take years."

For the first time, a New Orleans official suggested the scope of the death toll. Mayor C. Ray Nagin said the hurricane may have killed thousands in his city alone, an estimate that, if correct, would make it the nation's deadliest natural disaster since the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire, which killed up to 6,000 people.

"We know there is a significant number of dead bodies in the water," and others hidden from view in attics and other places, the mayor told reporters. Asked how many, he said: "Minimum, hundreds. Most likely, thousands."

As survivors struggled with a disaster that left damage of up to \$25 billion, a gargantuan relief effort got under way. Ships, planes, helicopters and convoys of supplies and rescue teams converged in the Gulf Coast, and Pentagon officials said that 30,000 National Guard and active-duty troops would be deployed by this weekend in the largest domestic relief effort by the military in the nation's history.

With police officers and National Guard troops giving priority to saving lives, looters brazenly ripped open gates and ransacked stores for food, clothing, television sets, computers, jewelry and guns, often in full view of helpless law-enforcement officials. Dozens of carjackings, apparently by survivors desperate to escape, were reported, as were a number of shootings.

On Wednesday night, Mayor Nagin ordered 1,500 police officers, most of the city's force, to turn from search and rescue to stopping the looting. "They are starting to get closer to

GAS PRICES SURGE AS SUPPLY DROPS

U.S. to Open Oil Stockpile
— Relief Called Distant

By JAD MOLAOUAD
and SIMON ROMERO

For the first time since the 1970's, gasoline lines reappeared yesterday in some corners of the country. Three days after Hurricane Katrina dealt a devastating blow to the nation's largest energy hub, the worst-case possibility was quickly becoming a reality: gasoline prices surged well above \$1 a gallon, with some consumers complaining of price gouging; service stations in a handful of locations running out of gas; drivers rushing to fill their tanks, only to find themselves waiting in line with others.

After the sudden drop in oil supplies, gasoline sellers were quick to raise their prices. While gasoline averaged \$2.60 a gallon earlier in the week, unleaded regular gas was selling yesterday at \$3.09 at stations in West Palm Beach, Fla., \$3.48 in Indianapolis, and \$2.35 in San Francisco. Premium fuel was going for up to \$3.50 a gallon in Chicago.

Shortages and gasoline lines were reported in parts of South Carolina, the Dakotas, Arkansas and Kentucky.

The White House responded yesterday by saying it would release oil from the nation's emergency stockpiles to meet shortages and would relax environmental standards nationwide so that refiners could produce more—but dirtier—gasoline.

"A lot of crude production has been shut down because of the storm,"

Continued on Page C6

Hard New Test For President

Disaster at Home Adds
To Challenges of Iraq

By DAVID E. SANGER

WASHINGTON, Aug. 31—Not since he sat in a Florida classroom as the World Trade Center burned a thousand miles away has President Bush faced a test quite like the one he returned to confront this afternoon.

After initially stumbling through that disorienting day almost exactly four years ago, Mr. Bush entered what many of his aides believe were the finest hours of his presidency. But unlike 2001, when Mr. Bush was freshly elected and there was little question that the response would include a military strike, Mr. Bush confronts this disaster with his political capital depleted by the war in Iraq.

Even before Hurricane Katrina, governors were beginning to question whether National Guard units stretched to the breaking point by service in Iraq would be available for domestic emergencies. Those concerns have now been amplified by scenes of looting and disorder. There is also the added question of whether the Department of Homeland Security, designed primarily to fight terrorism, can cope with what Mr. Bush called Wednesday "one of the worst natural disasters in our country's history."

All this has inextricably linked Mr. Bush's foreign agenda, especially Iraq, to the issue of how well he manages the federal response to the monumental problems in Louisiana, Miss.

Continued on Page A22

At Stadium, a Haven Quickly Becomes an Ordeal

By JOSEPH B. TREASTER

NEW ORLEANS, Aug. 31—The sick and the disabled were the first to be led out. But late Wednesday afternoon, as the slow evacuation of the Superdome began, it was not always easy to distinguish them from the rest of the 30,000 or more storm refugees who had stepped for days in the arena's sickening heat and stench, unshowered, exhausted and hungry.

They had been crammed into the Superdome's shadowy ramps and corridors, spread across its vast artificial turf field and plopped into small family encampments in the plastic orange, teal and purple seats that rise toward the top of the dome.

They had flocked to the arena's cooling sanctuary from the winds and waters of Hurricane Katrina. But underfed, undrugged and without air-conditioning or even much lighting, the domed stadium quickly became a sweltering and surreal vault, a place of overflowing toilets and showers. Food and water, blankets and sheets, were in

short supply. And the dome's reluctant residents exchanged horror stories, including reports, which could not be confirmed by the authorities, of a suicide and of rapes. By Wednesday the stink was staggering. Stacks of rotting garbage in bulging white plastic bags baked under a blinding Louisiana sun on the main entry plaza, choking new arrivals as they made their way into the stadium after being chucked off rooftops and balconies.

The odor billowing from toilets was even fouler. Trash spilled across corridors and aisles, slippery with smelly mud and scraps of food.

"They're housing us like animals,"

said Iiesha Russell, 31, unemployed after four years in the Army in Germany, dripping with perspiration in the heat, unable to contain her fury and disappointment at being left with only National Guardsmen as overseers and no information about what might lie ahead.

Once inside the dome, refugees were told that for their own safety they could not leave—the flood waters climbed four feet up the walls outside—and many lacerated the shelter to a prison.

Michael Childs, 45 and a house-

Continued on Page A18

950 Die in Pilgrims' Stampede on Baghdad Bridge



A young Iraqi wept at Medical City Hospital in Baghdad as he identified the body of a stampede victim.

By ROBERT F. WORTH

BAGHDAD, Iraq, Aug. 31—More than 950 people were killed and hundreds more injured Wednesday morning when rumors of a suicide bomber provoked a frenzied stampede in a procession of Shiite pilgrims as they crossed a bridge in northern Baghdad, government and hospital officials said.

Most of the dead were crushed or suffocated, witnesses said, but many drowned after falling or jumping into the Tigris River after the panicking crowd broke through the bridge's railings. The disaster was by far the greatest one-day loss of life since the American-led invasion in March 2003.

Fear had begun spreading in the crowd an hour earlier, after a group of insurgents fired rockets and mortars near the gold-domed Shiite shrine where the pilgrims were

headed, killing at least seven people and wounding two dozen.

Insurgents have often struck at Shiite religious processions in the past. But the stampede appears to have started with unfounded rumors of a man wearing a suicide belt on the bridge.

The pilgrims were among a throng of hundreds of thousands of mostly poor Shiites from northern Baghdad and the surrounding area who had converged on the shrine bearing colored banners and symbolic coffins to mark the anniversary of the death of Imam Musa Kadhim, one of Shiite Islam's holiest figures.

FOR HOME DELIVERY CALL 1-800-NYTIMES
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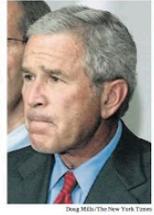
AFTER THE HURRICANE

THE RESCUERS: Dozens of rescue teams from the Federal Emergency Management Agency are searching for the living in the wreckage of the Gulf Coast. In places like Pass Christian, Miss., they are mostly finding the dead. PAGE A20

THE LOOTERS: Across New Orleans, looters took advantage of an overwhelmed police force, helping themselves to food and water, as well as televisions and firearms. PAGE A16

THE FUTURE: In looking to rebuild, New Orleans faces the staggering question of how much of the city is even salvageable. PAGE A19

THE LEVEE: The 17th Street levee that gave way was part of an aging system so underfunded that Army Corps of Engineers officials complained about it for years. PAGE A18



Shag Meir/The New York Times

F.D.A. Officers Quit in Protest

The director of the Food and Drug Administration's office of women's health resigned to protest the agency's decision to further delay approval over-the-counter sales of the morning-after pill, calling it the result of "abortion politics." PAGE A21

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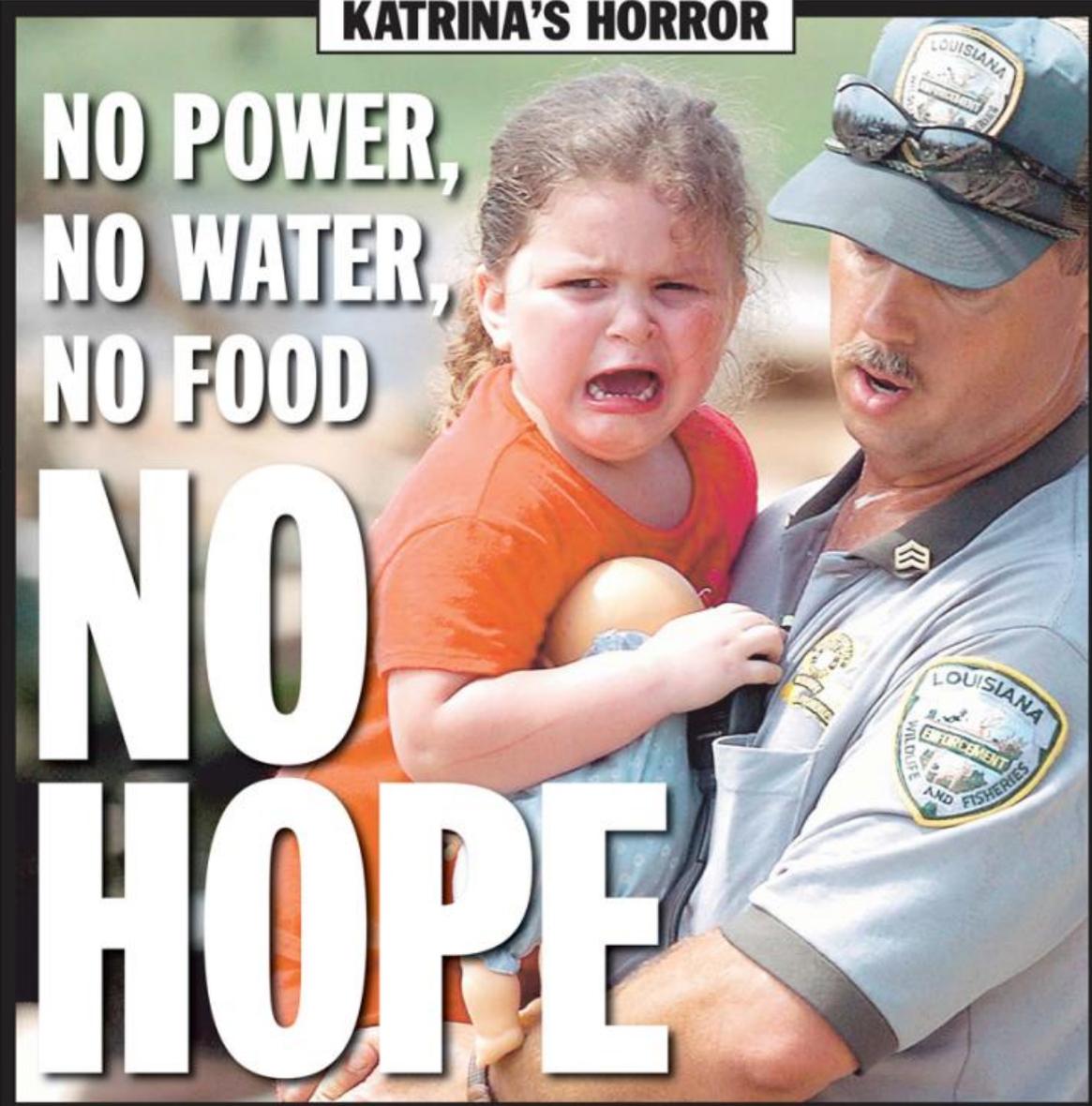
Appendix C: Frontpages by the Daily News

Weather: T-storms, 83/68 SPORTS ★ FINAL Wednesday, August 31, 2005

DAILY NEWS

25¢ HAWKER COPY NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

KATRINA'S HORROR



**NO POWER,
NO WATER,
NO FOOD**

**NO
HOPE**

NEW ORLEANS TO BE COMPLETELY ABANDONED

SEE STORIES PAGES 2-7

EPA/GERARDO MORA

Source: The Daily News, 31 August 2005 via nydailynews.com

Weather: Partly cloudy, 88/68

SPORTS ★ FINAL

Thursday, September 1, 2005

DAILY NEWS

50c

NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

NEW ORLEANS MAYOR: THOUSANDS FEARED DEAD



Families seeking shelter wade through flooded New Orleans street.

MICHAEL APPLETON DAILY NEWS

- **Bush vows massive effort will save city**
- **News reporter's trip through streets of hell**

HURRICANE KATRINA COVERAGE BEGINS ON PAGE 2

Weather: Rain, 81/70

SPORTS ★ FINAL

Tuesday, August 30, 2005

DAILY NEWS

25¢ HAWKER COPY

NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

KILLER!



Rescue workers launch a boat amid floodwaters in Pascagoula, Miss. AP

- Katrina slams Gulf Coast with 145-mph fury
- 55 dead — many in one Miss. apt. complex

STORIES ON PAGES 2-7

Appendix D: Discrimination in Media Reports



“Two residents wade through chest-deep water after finding bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana” - AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen



“A young man walks through chest deep flood water looting a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage.”
AP - Associated Press – Tue Aug 30, 11:31 AM ET

Source: (n.d.): 3. *Hurricane Katrina and the “Two-Photo Controversy”*. Escola Mundo. Web. 9 June 2016. <http://pt.educationforsocialjustice.org/file.php/1/The_Two-Photo_Controversy.pdf>.

Appendix E: Bush' Flyover



By JIM WATSON/AFP/Getty Images.

Source: Jim Watson via Vanity Fair

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