

1: Political Affect: Connecting the Social and the Somatic (): John Protevi - BiblioVault

This article deals with political effects of Hurricane Katrina other than those related to Criticism of government response to Hurricane Katrina, which are contained in a separate article. Commentators have discussed the likely effects of Hurricane Katrina on a wide range of political issues.

Warm and hearty in public, Bush can be cold and snappish in private, and aides sometimes cringe before the displeasure of the President of the United States, or, as he is known in West Wing jargon, POTUS. The bad news on this early morning, Tuesday, Aug. 14, it was decided, as senior aide on the ground, would do the deed. The president did not growl this time. He had already decided to return to Washington and hold a meeting of his top advisers on the following day, Wednesday. This would give them a day to get back from their vacations and their staffs to work up some ideas about what to do in the aftermath of the storm. The reality, say several aides who did not wish to be quoted because it might displease the president, did not really sink in until Thursday night. Some White House staffers were watching the evening news and thought the president needed to see the horrific reports coming out of New Orleans. How this could be--how the president of the United States could have even less "situational awareness," as they say in the military, than the average American about the worst natural disaster in a century--is one of the more perplexing and troubling chapters in a story that, despite moments of heroism and acts of great generosity, ranks as a national disgrace. Bush has always trusted his gut. He prides himself in ignoring the distracting chatter, the caterwauling of the media elites, the Washington political buzz machine. His doggedness is often admirable. It is easy for presidents to overreact to the noise around them. But it is not clear what President Bush does read or watch, aside from the occasional biography and an hour or two of ESPN here and there. Bush can be petulant about dissent; he equates disagreement with disloyalty. After five years in office, he is surrounded largely by people who agree with him. When Hurricane Katrina struck, it appears there was no one to tell President Bush the plain truth: The war in Iraq was a failure of intelligence. He needed to be able to see that New Orleans would spin into violence and chaos very quickly if the U. S. Bush and his advisers in his "war cabinet" have always been action-oriented, "forward leaning," in the favorite phrase of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. They dislike lawyers and sometimes brush aside legalistic and even sound constitutional arguments. But this time "Rummy" opposed sending in active-duty troops as cops. Dick Cheney, who was vacationing in Wyoming when the storm hit, characteristically kept his counsel on videoconferences; his private advice is not known. Liberals will say they were indifferent to the plight of poor African-Americans. The inner thoughts and motivations of Bush and his top advisers are impossible to know for certain. Though it seems abstract at a time of such suffering, high-minded considerations about the balance of power between state and federal government were clearly at play. Problems cascaded and compounded; each mistake made the next mistake worse. The foe in this battle was a monster; Katrina flattened the Gulf Coast with the strength of a vengeful god. But human beings, beginning with the elected officials of the City of New Orleans, failed to anticipate and react in time. Congressional investigations will take months to sort out who is to blame. New Orleanians have a fatalistic streak; their joyful, jazz-blowing street funeral processions are legendary. After many near misses over the years since Hurricane Betsy flooded 20 percent of the city in 1962, longtime residents prefer to stay put. A former executive at Cox Communications, he had come to office in 2002 to clear out the allegedly corrupt old guard and bring new business to the city, which has not prospered with New South metropolises like Atlanta. As Katrina howled outside Monday morning and the windows of the Hyatt Hotel, where the mayor had set up his command post, began popping out, Nagin and his staff lay on the floor. Then came eerie silence. Morrell decided to go look at her district, including nearby Gentilly. Outside, Canal Street was dry. Then she spotted her first dead body. At dusk, on the ninth floor of city hall, the mayor and the city council had their first encounter with the federal government. A man in a blue FEMA windbreaker arrived to brief them on his helicopter flyover of the city. It was worse than Hurricanes Andrew in 1992 and Camille in 1969. Long neglected in the city budget, communications within the New Orleans city government were poor, and eventually almost nonexistent when the batteries on the few old satellite phones died. The city was doomed. There was no way

the water could be stopped. But, incredibly, the seriousness of the situation did not really register, not only in Washington, but at the state emergency command post upriver in Baton Rouge. In a squat, drab cinder-block building in the state capital, full of TV monitors and maps, various state and federal officials tried to make sense of what had happened. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, a motherly but steely figure known by the nickname Queen Bee, knew that she needed help. At about 8 p. President," she said, "we need your help. But the conversation was all a little vague. Blanco did not specifically ask for a massive intervention by the active-duty military. There are a number of steps Bush could have taken, short of a full-scale federal takeover, like ordering the military to take over the pitiful and by now largely broken emergency communications system throughout the region. But the president, who was in San Diego preparing to give a speech the next day on the war in Iraq, went to bed. By the predawn hours, most state and federal officials finally realized that the 17th Street Canal levee had been breached, and that the city was in serious trouble. Bush was told at 5 a. Pacific Coast time and immediately decided to cut his vacation short. To his senior advisers, living in the insular presidential bubble, the mere act of lopping off a couple of presidential vacation days counts as a major event. They could see pitfalls in sending Bush to New Orleans immediately. His presence would create a security nightmare and get in the way of the relief effort. Bush blithely proceeded with the rest of his schedule for the day, accepting a gift guitar at one event and pretending to riff like Tom Cruise in "Risky Business. The radio was reporting water nine feet deep at the corner of Napoleon and St. The looting and occasional shooting had begun. Now the numbers were dwindling; within a day, only 28 or 30 officers would be left to save the stranded and fight the looters, recalled a sad and exhausted Capt. Though more than , of its residents had no way to get out of the city on their own, New Orleans had no real evacuation plan, save to tell people to go to the Superdome and wait for buses. On Tuesday afternoon, Governor Blanco took her second trip to the Superdome and was shocked by the rising tide of desperation there. Early Wednesday morning, Blanco tried to call Bush. Hours later, Blanco called back and insisted on speaking to the president. The Pentagon was not sitting idly. By Tuesday morning and even before the storm the military was moving supplies, ships, boats, helicopters and troops toward the Gulf Coast. But, ironically, the scale of the effort slowed it. TV viewers had difficulty understanding why TV crews seemed to move in and out of New Orleans while the military was nowhere to be seen. But a TV crew is five people in an RV. Before the military can send in convoys of trucks, it has to clear broken and flooded highways. The military took over the shattered New Orleans airport for emergency airlifts, but special teams of Air Force operators had to be sent in to make it ready. By the week after the storm, the military had mobilized some 70, troops and hundreds of helicopters--but it took at least two days and usually four and five to get them into the disaster area. Looters and well-armed gangs, like TV crews, moved faster. In the inner councils of the Bush administration, there was some talk of gingerly pushing aside the overwhelmed "first responders," the state and local emergency forces, and sending in active-duty troops. But under an law, federal troops are not allowed to get involved in local law enforcement. The one federal agency that is supposed to handle disasters--FEMA--was dysfunctional. But it became a victim of the Iron Law of Unintended Consequences. Now a consultant, Allbaugh was down on the Gulf Coast last week looking for contracts for his private clients. Allbaugh replaced himself with his college buddy Mike Brown, whose last private-sector job omitted from his official resume had been supervising horse-show judges for the International Arabian Horse Association. He was replaced by Coast Guard Vice Adm. The Coast Guard was one agency that performed well, rescuing thousands. Bad news rarely flows up in bureaucracies. For most of those first few days, Bush was hearing what a good job the Feds were doing. Bush likes "metrics," numbers to measure performance, so the bureaucrats gave him reassuring statistics. At a press availability on Wednesday, Bush duly rattled them off: The denial and the frustration finally collided aboard Air Force One on Friday. One by one, the lawmakers listed their grievances as Bush listened. According to Jindal, the sheriff was told to e-mail his request, "and the guy was sitting in a district underwater and with no electricity," Jindal said, incredulously. Repeatedly, the president turned to his aides and said, "Fix it. Normally, the Guard is under the control of the state governor, but the Feds can take over--if the governor asks them to. Nagin suggested that Lt. Bush and Blanco disappeared to talk. More than a week later, there was still no agreement. Late last week, Bush was, by some accounts, down and angry. But another Bush aide described the atmosphere inside the

White House as "strangely surreal and almost detached. Life inside a bunker can be strange, especially in defeat.

2: Political Affect : John Protevi :

On August 31, , two days after Hurricane Katrina came ashore at Bay St. Louis, Miss., Air Force One flew low over the Gulf Coast to give President George W. Bush a view of the damage.

It hit the Louisiana coast near New Orleans at 6: CDT that same date, several of the levees holding back the waters of Lake Pontchartrain, a brackish lake of square miles, breached. Within minutes, considerable flooding had occurred, forcing many remaining residents to flee to their rooftops, where many remained for days. Hurricane Katrina has topped Hurricane Andrew as the most expensive natural disaster in U. Over a million people were displaced — the largest humanitarian crisis in the U. But Hurricane Katrina was in reality two disasters. The initial disaster was the hurricane itself that ripped the coastlands of Louisiana and Mississippi to shreds and left New Orleans a wasteland. The secondary disaster was the unbelievably poor communication and response that occurred between federal, regional, state, and local relief agencies and efforts after the hurricane. The combination of these two back-to-back disasters has caused catastrophic damage to a vast human population. The horrific consequences of Hurricane Katrina are too numerous to quote here and have been reported consistently in the press. These consequences include record numbers of deaths, injuries, refugees, and expenses as well as a city of approximately 1., million people that will need to be almost entirely rebuilt. Communication Issues Communications breakdowns will occur during any natural disaster, especially one as devastating to an infrastructure as Hurricane Katrina. Some of the most vulnerable communication tools, such as cell phone towers and radio antennas, depend on aboveground structures. A majority of the public-safety systems serving police and fire departments in the Gulf Coast region ceased functioning, severely hampering the coordination of rescue efforts. These failures left many key emergency response personnel with no way of communicating with one another during a time when coordination of rescue efforts was most important. In New Orleans, hundreds of police officers were left trying to communicate on two radio channels using a back-up system, which resulted in delays before their messages could get through. Many of these failures occurred because of poor planning, with key generators placed on ground floors vulnerable to flooding; however, at least one transmission site operated by the New Orleans police flooded despite being 10 feet off the ground. Backup systems became overwhelmed due to high volume. Phone lines proved vulnerable to Katrina, with almost 2 million phone lines and cell phones experiencing interruptions or being out of service along the Gulf Coast. This combination of failed backup generators either flooded or out of fuel , downed telephone lines, flooding in the switch offices that route calls, and overwhelmed phone lines resulted in a defunct phone system. Hurricane Katrina became, unwittingly, an acid test of communication during and after a disaster involving all modes of communication technology. Some of this can be attributed to poorly mapped channels of communication flow at local, state, regional, and particularly federal levels, and some of it was due to equipment damage and malfunction. Emergency services radio towers in the area, built to resist sustained winds within the MPH range, largely remained functional. Cell phone services broke down due to tower, antennae, and equipment damage. Cell on Wheels, a mobile cell service, was not properly deployed. Text messaging on cell phones however, worked remarkably well. Radio and TV stations, for the most part, successfully stayed on the air, often employing satellites. But who was listening? The major BellSouth Internet hub in New Orleans went remarkably unscathed, but there were serious problems at the user-connect end. Head-ends, the cable boxes that house DSL circuitry, situated only a few feet off the ground, were submerged; many corporate and office systems were shut off to prevent short circuiting. In areas that sustained power outages, DSL likewise went down. BellSouth had not installed battery backup, knowing batteries would be insufficient to power a system of such magnitude. Needless to say, it took a few days for communication systems to minimally be resurrected. In spite of that, there were immediate and sustaining communication successes, particularly on the Internet. The following examples are representative of these. Some of these sites are no longer functioning in the same capacity as directly after the disaster, but for interested parties, the WayBack Machine at the Internet Archives [[http:](http://) The other option is an alphabetized list of all hundreds, perhaps thousands the URLs crawled. So while the site undoubtedly contains

extremely valuable information, ferreting it out is hardly intuitive. Obviously, the major Web search engines such as Google and Yahoo! Using this extremely useful feature to track blogger storm coverage, we found one Hurricane Katrina blog post on Aug. This site is an example of how an online community can respond and also how to generate relief from outside the disaster area. At present, Relief Connections [[http:](http://) Social networks such as Gather [[http:](http://) Blogs and Citizen Journalists Bloggers are beginning to understand and crystallize their role in emergency response to the point in which Rex Hammock of [http:](http://) One of the more interesting shifts experienced during the Katrina disaster occurred when many bloggers found themselves impeded by power and communication disruptions while major news outlets began adopting blogging and bulletin board functions. The number of blogs that have featured, or currently feature, sections pertaining to the Katrina disaster is staggering. Obviously, many are duplicate sites, but a substantial number are not. And the range of blog topics is remarkable — restaurants, boat owners, dancers, and education, in addition to personal and relief organizations. The following represent some of those efforts. Blog for Relief Weekend, which took place from Thursday, Sept. The event was open to any blogger who wanted to raise awareness and contributions for relief. Bloggers selected their favored charity from an extensive screened list of legitimate charities. Bloggers are a great source of amateur eyewitness reporting, as demonstrated by Bobbysan [[http:](http://) The Interdictor [[http:](http://) The Eye of the Storm [[http:](http://) One of these links is the Mississippi Renewal site [[http:](http://) The New Orleans-based Katrina Aftermath blog [[http:](http://) While the normal voice circuits have been down completely in New Orleans or clogged in Baton Rouge , text messages have been getting through even to those completely cut off in every other way. Arizona Daily Star reporter Stephanie Innes and photographer Kelly Presnell, along with many other journalists, covered the aftermath in a paper-sponsored blog. Metroblogging New Orleans [[http:](http://) The observations, insights, analysis, and commentary are wry, lively, and diverse. Hurricane Katrina Direct Relief [[http:](http://) The unique and valuable perspectives offered by sites like these demonstrate the incredible capabilities of the Web. It allows visitors to move over a Google map of the affected areas of the Gulf Coast and to read information on specific sites denoted by red, purple, and green teardrops. Citizens who live in the areas described submitted the information. As with all wikis, the information provided though usually useful and accurate is open to anyone to modify. However, the collaborative and real-time nature of this wiki lends itself well to those seeking information about specific areas. There was no Tuesday text-based paper, but the staff was determined to continue collecting and disseminating news. A member team traveled to Houma, La. Rudimentary though it was, the paper contained breaking news — 17 articles, one editorial, and 12 photographs — and was a triumph of field journalism. By Thursday, this group rejoined the rest of the staff in Baton Rouge, where, by Friday, they published the paper in print 50, copies , but still continued the PDF version. The NOLA Web site is still an excellent source for post-hurricane rebuilding and resettling information. Most other national newspapers, too numerous to name, hosted special Katrina sections that carried updates and links to additional and supplemental information. The majority of these have a Web presence and, since these papers were not affected by immediate damage, often did a good job of coalescing and editing the spotty information feeds emerging from the area. Offering an invaluable and under-represented perspectives, New Orleans IndyMedia [[http:](http://) Getting Help While many of the sites already mentioned assist people affected by the storm in obtaining assistance, the sites mentioned below are some of the more authoritative sites in terms of comprehensiveness of focus, usability, and access. Again, the number of sites that contain information useful to Katrina victims is almost unwieldy. Interestingly, government sites such as FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency , typically the first place Internet-savvy people would turn for information, did not keep up with the information flow and became suspect as reliable sources of information. The links at this site have been screened and organized by the federal government, but include regional, local, and organizational sites as well. Given this, and given the prominence of Katrina compared to all other recent disasters, Katrina information on its Web site is rather dissolute and scattered. First and foremost is a registration form whereby one can apply for disaster assistance online. The site also features news relating to FEMA, which, when we last checked, concerned FEMA responding to a court order about extending housing for hurricane victims. The Hurricane Katrina Information link provides the richest source of information. This page also includes what states and counties have been

designated for assistance with related news and photos; a map of the U. The information behind these links is detailed and useful. For example, the Housing link takes the user to a page covering shelters, transitional housing, rental properties, and financial assistance and loans available from a number of agencies. Most of this information is simply written and appended with instructions and suggestions for obtaining aid. Much of the other information, we suspect, including flood maps and disaster declarations, are provided for, among other things, insurance purposes. The National Hurricane Center also conducts an outreach and education program for emergency managers. The site includes a news archive that provides extensive Tropical Cyclone Reports for the Atlantic hurricane season and links to hurricane preparedness and awareness resources. There are links to Hurricane History that include categories such as Deadliest, Costliest, and Most Intense tropical cyclones up to With its links to other government resources, such as the Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services, this site is a good first resource for anyone wanting to keep track of severe weather anywhere in the U. In fact, when it comes to reporting on current conditions, this is probably the source the news media turn to first. This extremely detailed and comprehensive site features information on nearly every aspect of disaster response. Some of the more unique features of the site include information on insurance, price gouging, and jobs, in addition to maps and a section entitled Louisiana Heroes, featuring stories of courage and selflessness. NGOs NGOs nongovernmental organizations and private disaster relief organizations were put to the test attempting to organize and coordinate disaster relief on a massive scale on their own home turfs. Most, if not all, of these organizations have an Internet or Web presence. It has a list published on its Web site with links to all member organizations responding to the hurricane. An accompanying list carries addresses and phone numbers.

3: Hurricane Katrina - Politics After Katrina

After hurricane Katrina, nearly all demographics altered their view of American government, thus solidifying the evolution of dependency on government to a larger role played by faith and community based organizations (Dawson,).

Consequently, most of those stranded in the city were the poor, the elderly, and the sick. It has been stated in the evacuation order that, beginning at noon on August 28 and running for several hours, all city buses were redeployed to shuttle local residents to, "refuges of last resort," designated in advance, including the Louisiana Superdome. Brown was greatly surprised by the much larger numbers of people who turned up seeking refuge and that the first wave of supplies were quickly depleted. Had contra-flow on highways been initiated sooner and more buses begun evacuating families including the idle school buses that were not used at all the numbers of stranded New Orleans occupants would have been significantly less, making the initial wave of FEMA supplies adequate and even excessive. FEMA sent hundreds of firefighters who had volunteered to help rescue victims to Atlanta for 2 days of training classes on topics including sexual harassment and the history of FEMA. Local police and other EMS workers found the situation traumatic; at least two officers committed suicide, and over deserted the city after gang violence and "turf wars" erupted around the city. The federal response was often constrained by lack of legal authority or by ill-suited eligibility and application requirements. In many instances, federal staff and national organizations did not seem to have the flexibility, training, and resources to meet demands on the ground. Bush was criticized for not returning to Washington, D. Blanco decided to evacuate the city in response to that request. On the night of August 30, and again the next morning, he personally called the manager of the Southern Pines Electric Power Association and ordered him to divert power crews to electrical substations in nearby Collins, Mississippi, that were essential to the operation of the Colonial Pipeline, which carries gasoline and diesel fuel from Texas to the Northeast. As we renew the promise of our institutions, let us also show the character of America in our compassion and care for one another. Yet as we meet these immediate needs, we must also address deeper challenges that existed before the storm arrived. In New Orleans and in other places, many of our fellow citizens have felt excluded from the promise of our country. The answer is not only temporary relief, but schools that teach every child, and job skills that bring upward mobility, and more opportunities to own a home and start a business. As we recover from a disaster, let us also work for the day when all Americans are protected by justice, equal in hope, and rich in opportunity. Many people criticized Bush for failing to mention hurricane recovery in his State of the Union Address. According to many media outlets, as well as many politicians, the response to the disaster was inadequate in terms of leadership and response. This is really one which I think was breathtaking in its surprise. There has been, over the last few years, some specific planning for the possibility of a significant hurricane in New Orleans with a lot of rainfall, with water rising in the levees and water overflowing the levee. And although the planning was not complete, a lot of work had been done. But there were two problems here. The Department of Homeland Security, along with other Departments, will be part of the task force and will assist the Administration with its response to Hurricane Katrina. Brown responsible for federal action. Nor would they explain why Bush felt the need to appoint a separate task force. The goal of the National Response Plan is to provide a streamlined framework for swiftly delivering federal assistance when a disaster "caused by terrorists or Mother Nature" is too big for local officials to handle. We are ready to provide considerably more help than they have requested. We are just waiting for the call. Just get it done. For example, Michael D. Brown, the head of FEMA, on August 29, urged all fire and emergency services departments not to respond to counties and states affected by Hurricane Katrina without being requested and lawfully dispatched by state and local authorities under mutual aid agreements and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. Federal officials commandeered the buses, and told the guests to join thousands of other evacuees at the Ernest N. Aircraft operators complained that FEMA waved off a number of evacuation attempts, saying the rescuers were not authorized. One hospital CEO stated that three months after the storm, the hospital staff still could not locate some of their patients who had been evacuated. Forest Service had water-tanker aircraft available to help douse the fires raging on our riverfront, but FEMA has yet to accept the aid. When Amtrak offered trains

to evacuate significant numbers of victims—far more efficiently than buses—FEMA again dragged its feet. Offers of medicine, communications equipment and other desperately needed items continue to flow in, only to be ignored by the agency. But perhaps the greatest disappointment stands at the breached 17th Street levee. Touring this critical site yesterday with the President, I saw what I believed to be a real and significant effort to get a handle on a major cause of this catastrophe. The good and decent people of southeast Louisiana and the Gulf Coast—black and white, rich and poor, young and old—deserve far better from their national government. The "single, lonely piece of equipment" was one power shovel, a bulldozer, and two dump trucks. Video did not show the work area a few hundred feet away at the start of the roadway. USACE photos show a variety of equipment at that site the following day. Federally contracted truck drivers instead received orders from FEMA to deliver the ice to government rented storage facilities around the country, as far north as Maine. And so they mopped, while people died around them. Brown a question about them live on the Nightly News. Even as refugees were evacuated, more kept arriving every hour. Brown continues to deny these charges. And, in fact he had limited authority to order federal agencies into action until about 36 hours after the storm hit, when Chertoff designated him as the "principal federal official" in charge of the storm. Chertoff was the one with the authority. Allen, chief of staff of the United States Coast Guard. This policy was met with much criticism by the media, and compared to censorship. On September 9, Army Lt. What was meant by that was that reporters would not be embedded with recovery teams, but would still have free access to any public area in the city. CNN filed a lawsuit regarding the situation, and U. District Judge Keith Ellison issued an order preventing officials from blocking media coverage. Kenyon was the only disaster management company capable of handling this kind of large-scale event. Kenyon received the government contract due to the nature of the incident and their extensive knowledge and previous experience of working mass fatality events. The federal government has been highly criticized for the hiring of Kenyon for several reasons, including the availability of volunteer morticians from in and around New Orleans, the questionable usage of federal funding, the ineffectiveness of the organization in carrying out its duties leaving bodies to be found up to a year after Katrina made landfall, an extensively checkered past that the Bush Administration was aware of and accused of covering-up, and the length of time it took to identify victims once their bodies were recovered. FEMA Firefighters When FEMA called for firefighters for "community service and outreach," highly trained firefighters showed up in a staging area in an Atlanta hotel, believing that their skills would be used, or would better be used, for search and rescue operations. Bush and mother of George W. Bush, generated criticism after comments on hurricane evacuees and a donation. Everybody is so overwhelmed by the hospitality, and so many of the people in the arenas here, you know, were underprivileged anyway, so this is working very well for them. National Guard Bureau on the 30th of August, additional National Guard troops from other states to supplement the Louisiana National Guard, but approval did not occur until September 1. Notably, federal troops are generally prohibited from directly enforcing state laws. The President can assume command of state troops under the Stafford Act, but in this "federalized", or "Title 10" status, the federalized National Guard troops become unable to enforce laws directly, just like other federal troops. However, the Posse Comitatus Act does not apply to National Guard troops under the command of a state governor. Shortly before midnight on Friday, September 2, the Bush administration sent Governor Blanco a request to take over command of law enforcement under the Insurrection Act one of the exceptions to the Posse Comitatus Act, but this request was rejected by Blanco. Governor Blanco did make a request to the Federal government for additional National Guard troops to be under her command to supplement the 5, Louisiana National Guard troops available in Louisiana at the time. The request process proceeds similarly from the county to the state to the federal government as additional resource needs are identified. Many of the problems that arose developed from inadequate planning and back-up communications systems at various levels. One example of this is that the City of New Orleans attempted to manage the disaster from a hotel ballroom with inadequate back-up communications plans instead of a properly staffed Emergency Operations Center. Press reports indicate that there were other failures at the state and local level in expediting aid and social services to the stricken area. It would have been great if we could have The nonpartisan Congressional Research Service has concluded, that Blanco did submit requests for shelter, counseling and provisions in a

timely manner, but there is no mention that she requested assistance with evacuation. However, the mandatory evacuation order was issued by Mayor Nagin [75] and, as the White House reconfirmed the timeline, it is unlikely the Bush call was decisive in the making of the order. Jefferson D - Louisiana a Representative for Louisiana from the New Orleans area, was criticized when he had misused National Guard resources to check on his personal belongings and property on September 2, during the height of the rescue efforts. He used his political position to bypass military barricades and delay two heavy trucks, a helicopter, and several National Guard troops for over an hour to stop at his home and retrieve, "a laptop computer, three suitcases, and a box about the size of a small refrigerator". Many have also criticized the local and state governments, who have primary responsibility for local disasters, including both Governor Blanco and Mayor Nagin. The city never deployed the buses, which were subsequently destroyed in the flooding. On Saturday August 27, several hours after the last regularly scheduled train left New Orleans, Amtrak ran a special train to move equipment out of the city. The train had room for several hundred passengers, and Amtrak offered these spaces to the city, but the city declined them, so the train left New Orleans at 8: It was not until late on August 31 that Blanco learned the FEMA buses were being sent from outside the state, and could not arrive in time. President Bush said that saving lives should come first, but he and the local New Orleans Government also stated that they will have zero tolerance for looters. White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan affirmed that looters should not be allowed to take food, water or shoes, that they should get those things through some other way. Blanco warned that troops had orders to shoot to kill, saying, "These troops are fresh back from Iraq, well trained, experienced, battle tested and under my orders to restore order in the streets. They have Ms and they are locked and loaded. These troops know how to shoot and kill and they are more than willing to do so if necessary and I expect they will. The downtown Charity Hospital had a number of critically ill patients die as a result of delays in evacuations. The destruction wrought by Katrina, and the flooding thereafter, severely damaged the roads and other infrastructure needed to deliver relief. We did not have the wherewithal to deal with these people. If we had opened the bridge, our city would have looked like New Orleans does now - looted, burned and pillaged. Army National Guard soldiers, and Deputy U. Marshals to confiscate all civilian-held firearms. Only law enforcement will be allowed to have guns. Konie stayed behind, in her well provisioned home, and had an old revolver for protection. A group of police entered the house, and when she refused to surrender her revolver, she was tackled and it was removed by force. On September 23, the U. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana issued a restraining order to bar further firearms confiscations.

4: Criticism of government response to Hurricane Katrina - Wikipedia

Chapter 7 Hurricane Katrina: The Governmental Body Politic (pp.) After our investigations of intense cases of the personal and group levels and the short- and mid-term temporal scales of bodies politic, we turn now to the civic and the long-term with our study of Hurricane Katrina.

Whether the US Army Corps of Engineers needs reform in their design and construction policies Whether Congress needs reform in the way flood protection projects are chosen and funded Whether policies that affect the poor, such as bankruptcy legislation, should be changed to make it easier for those in poverty to recover from such a disaster. If electoral district changes will occur due to large migration of displaced people e. Policies affecting hurricane defenses[edit] Main article: Hurricane preparedness for New Orleans Prevention and evacuation issues[edit] According to the National Response Plan , the Department of Homeland Security "will assume responsibility on March 1 [] for ensuring that emergency response professionals are prepared for any situation. This will entail providing a coordinated, comprehensive federal response to any large-scale crisis and mounting a swift and effective recovery effort". It was known that many residents of New Orleans lacked cars. It is also believed that many citizens, having survived previous hurricanes, did not anticipate the impending catastrophe and chose to ride out the storm. These factors may have prevented many people from being able to evacuate on their own. Consequently, most of those stranded in the city are the poor, the elderly, and the sick. State and city evacuation plans [10] Part 1 Section C and part II-2 mention use of school buses for evacuation. With the following language: School and municipal buses, government-owned vehicles and vehicles provided by volunteer agencies may be used to provide transportation for individuals who lack transportation and require assistance in evacuating. It is not clear whether these buses were owned by the city or by a private contractor to which the city had outsourced school bus services. Mayor Nagin testified in his hearing in Washington that those buses were owned by the school board and that he had no control over them. The precise number of buses available has been cited anywhere from a few hundred [11] [12] to a likely exaggerated 2, During an emergency any driver is suitable as long as approved by the governor. Coordination of transportation from outside the Parish is the responsibility of the governor according to the State Evacuation Plan Part 1 Section D. Some evacuees report that the drive from New Orleans to Baton Rouge took anywhere from five hours to nine hours; this drive usually takes up to an hour. New Orleans flood defenses[edit] Early questions arose on why the flood protection system designed and built by the US Army Corps of Engineers failed catastrophically in 53 different places in metro New Orleans. Local municipalities were designated the responsibility for maintenance once the projects were complete source: GAO testimony summary attached. When authorized, this Congressional mandate was projected to take 13 years to complete. This decision was made by the Corps decades ago "based on a cost-benefit analysis", according to Lt. Questions have been raised about proper funding for the Corps of Engineers, which is in charge of many hurricane-protection programs across the United States. As a result, Blumenthal said, the Corps had performed only last-minute and substandard reinforcement of levees, some of which subsequently failed. Berkeley and Team Louisiana cite inadequate design throughout the entire levee system. Louisiana has a long history, under both parties, of approving private developments in wetlands with consequent destruction of wetlands across coastal Louisiana. They also absorb hurricane storm surges. Scientists estimate that every 2. Prior to the hurricane, Louisiana was one of a handful of states projected by the U. Census department to become a minority-majority state within the next two decades. Because a majority of displaced Louisiana residents are black, this occurrence will likely be delayed in Louisiana, but accelerated in nearby Florida , Georgia and Texas. It has been noted that the displacement of a significant portion of African Americans from Louisiana is likely to shift the politics of that state in a more conservative direction. FEMA, which was elevated to cabinet-level status under Bill Clinton and later incorporated into the Department of Homeland Security, which placed high priority on counter-terrorism and disaster preparation. Some members of the International Association of Emergency Managers had predicted that FEMA could not adequately respond to a catastrophe due to the integration and staffing overlaps. President Bush was criticized for appointing Michael D. Brown as FEMA head. Prior to

joining FEMA, Brown had no experience in disaster relief and had even been fired from his previous job as a supervisor of judging at the International Arabian Horse Association. FEMA funding was affected by Hurricane Katrina by the proposal and passage of the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act , which requires states seeking FEMA assistance to accommodate pets and service animals in their plans for evacuating residents facing disasters. Other no-bid contracts were awarded to the Fluor Corporation , a disaster recovery specialist company based in southern California, and The Shaw Group of Baton Rouge, La. Shaw is a client of Joe M. Allbaugh , a consultant with extensive emergency disaster training and was a former FEMA director. On , officials vowed investigation of possible fraud and waste. The Shaw Group, Inc. Blanco and other Major Louisiana Democrat politicians. Bernhard has since resigned as his position as the Louisiana as chairman of the Louisiana Democratic Party. Even more fanciful speculations came from a few who held outspoken fundamentalist religious views, asserting the hurricane was divine retribution for any number of provocations, including politically-charged issues such as the War in Iraq , [38] U.

5: Hurricane Sandy's Political Impact

The response to Hurricane Katrina involved an inter-governmental (federal, state, and local) and cross-sectoral (public, private and non-profit) network of actors. The introduction of a National.

Published by Jt Elliot Societal structure is put to the utmost test during times of crises, such as wars, natural disasters, and other devastating events. Despite government warnings and evacuation plans, many residents of New Orleans decided to stay in their homes, and hope to wait out the storm. This resulted in thousands of citizens being stranded amidst massive flooding and millions of dollars in damages caused by the hurricane. These citizens, who eventually became refugees, were dependant upon government aid, and when the United States government did not satisfy their needs, the national political structure was altered. In sum, Hurricane Katrina caused a shift in government to higher dependency on faith-based organizations, and was also extremely influential on the national political realm. The United States government, and its immensely large bureaucracy thought they were prepared to deal with any disaster that occurred within its borders. FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency was created and staffed with federal employees whose sole responsibility was to respond to any disaster that hit the United States. However, on the morning of August 29th, FEMA saw a disaster that was historically unparalleled, and the inefficiencies of the organization became very blatant. FEMA, much like any government agency is simply not large enough to handle a situation such as Hurricane Katrina effectively. And they have a human touch: Never before had a president told the American people that they should not turn to the government in time of need, and should turn to community organizations because they were more efficient and provided better results. In the wake of hurricane Katrina, these faith based and community based organizations embraced their role as the primary caregiver in the gulf region. Not surprisingly, the report concluded that faith based and community based organizations were more efficient than government organizations in nearly every characteristic of aid after hurricane Katrina. After hurricane Katrina, nearly all demographics altered their view of American government, thus solidifying the evolution of dependency on government to a larger role played by faith and community based organizations. Dawson, The dominance of these organizations will forever alter the political landscape because citizens and government alike now recognize the inefficiencies in the government, undermining the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of the American people. George Bush at Katrina press conference. The delayed and ineffective aid provided by FEMA in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina also translated to the national political realm. Following hurricane Katrina, then president George W. Bush saw a rapid slump in his approval rating. As a result of the slow response, and millions of citizens seemingly abandoned by the United States government in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina, Bush was not able to regain the popularity needed to substantiate his political agenda. In addition to government ineffectiveness, hurricane Katrina revealed the massive influence special interest and lobbying groups hold over Washington. Its difficult to imagine that even on an issue of where government contracts are awarded, special interest groups have the power to delegate government decisions. In determining where government contracts would be awarded, three variables were taken into consideration: As expected, experience proved to be a large predictor of whether or not a company would receive a contract. If a company had been previously awarded a contract, they were 11 times more likely to receive another. The other two variables, however, highlighted the corruption that exists in American government. Colorado State University found that larger lobbying contributions resulted in a company being five times more likely to receive a contract, and the power of a given special interest group made a given company three times more likely to receive a contract. Hogan, Hurricane Katrina resulted in millions of displaced citizens across the southeastern United States, and billions of dollars in damages. Bibliography Clarke, K. Katrina leaves new Orleans political landscape looking whiter. Campaign contributions, lobbying, and post Katrina contracts. Disaster, 34 3, Retrieved November 3, from Academic Search Premier. Race, retrospective voting, and disasters: Urban Affairs Review, 44 5, The politics of disaster: Retrieved November 3, from Academic Search Premier. The role of faith based and community organizations in providing relief and recovery services after hurricane Katrina Washington, DC:

6: Hurricane Katrina: The Black Nation's 9/11!

The Hurricane Katrina fiasco was all about DEADLY FLOOD ZONE ZONING POLICY that allowed thousands of poor people to be stranded after they failed to take heed of the evacuation order. People seek to make 30 years of failed policies into 5 days worth of a "Bush Created Disaster". One only needs to.

7: Will the Bush library whitewash Hurricane Katrina? : POLITIC

The government's response to Katrina was a failure of imagination. and examines President Bush's response to Hurricane Katrina. Then she spotted her first dead body.

8: The Government Response to Katrina: A Disaster Within a Disaster

A concept of bodies politic --Above, below, and alongside the subject --Bodies politic --Bodies politic as organisms --The organism in Aristotle and Kant --The anorganic body in Deleuze and Guattari --Love, rage, and fear --Terri Schiavo: the somatic body politic --The Columbine High School massacre: the transverse body politic --Hurricane.

9: Project MUSE - Political Affect

The government was unprepared for Katrina even though it was widely known that such a hurricane was probable, and weather forecasters had accurately predicted the advance of Katrina before landfall.

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