Overview of Post-Katrina Surveys
By Rick Weil, LSU/Sociology

fweil@lsu.edu
www.fweil.com
(http://www.lsu.edu/fweil/KatrinaResearch)

Status as of: May 21, 2008

2 Sets of Surveys
Both supported by the National Science Foundation

1. Baton Rouge: Impact on the Community
   a. Total Interviews = 2,960.
   c. Normal telephone sample.

2. Greater New Orleans: Return and Rebuilding
   a. Total Interviews = 2,500, and growing.
   c. Sampling: was somewhat unusual.
      i. Normal polling is very difficult and expensive.
      ii. We had no money till summer 2008.
      iii. Representative of various communities.
      iv. Includes many respondents who have not (yet) returned.
      v. Post-weighted to be representative of the region.
      vi. Multi-method, including door-to-door, at community gatherings, telephone, internet, other.

June 11, 2008
The impact of Hurricane Katrina on Baton Rouge,
The closest large place of Evacuation
(research supported by NSF)

- Half the households in Baton Rouge housed evacuees… almost entirely relatives and friends.

**Factoid:** Southern Louisiana has some of the densest social networks in America.

**Question:** Where would disaster evacuees have gone if this had happened some other place? ...The authorities would probably have had even more difficulty than in southern Louisiana.
- **Two thirds** of people in Baton Rouge did volunteer relief work – most more than once. Most of them volunteered with Religious Organizations.

**Did Volunteer work to Help Evacuees**

- No: 34%
- Once: 12%
- More than Once: 54%

**Did Volunteer work to Help Evacuees - with Religious Organization**

- None: 37%
- Worked, but not w Church: 30%
- Once with Church: 7%
- More than Once with Church: 24%
- No answer: 2%
• **Social Capital and Stress.** Ordinarily, people with the *best social networks* handle stress better. But in Baton Rouge immediately after the storm, stress levels for the socially involved soared, because these people were most involved in relief work. Yet these same people also recovered the fastest after an initial spike in stress.

![Afraid to Walk Alone at Night](chart1.png)

*Time series from before and after the storm.*

![Feel Depressed, Angry](chart2.png)

*Time series from after the storm, only.*
**Greater New Orleans: Studies of Community Resilience, in Partnership with Community Leaders**  
*(research supported by NSF)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Community Samples: Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Faith-Based membership groups | Catholic Archdiocese. Endorsed survey and put a notice in weekly bulletin to parish church leaders. Varying partnership with individual parish churches, including very close with large churches in Lakeview and Chalmette, and moderate with churches in Metairie and Gentilly.  
Jewish Federation. Active support and assistance by Federation and Synagogues. Rs contacted by email, answered on web.  
Various African-American churches & organizations, e.g., Operation Brother’s Keeper.  
Other denominations, incl Episcopal Diocese and United Methodists. New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has discussed cooperation. |
| Other Faith-Based Groups | Operation Nehemiah volunteers went door-to-door, conducting face-to-face interviews.  
Congregation B’nai Israel Hurricane Relief Committee, partnered with resident leaders and volunteers at Renaissance Village and other trailer villages. |
| Service Providers, Nonprofits, and Volunteer Agencies | Catholic Charities of N.O. and Baton Rouge, through their Community Centers and case managers  
Americorps, Hands-On, Student Hurricane Network, and others. Generally, partner with community organizations to utilize volunteer assistance.  
Sweet Home New Orleans, an agency that assists New Orleans musicians. |
| Community Groups and Neighborhood Associations | Broadmoor Improvement Association has distributed survey by email, on website, at neighborhood meetings, and door-to-door.  
Fr. Nguyen The Vien and Mary Queen of Vietnam Catholic Church and Community Development Corp. Questionnaire translated into Vietnamese; interviews currently being done, directed by community leadership.  
A couple dozen Neighborhood Assns, including in Lakeview, Pontilly, eastern New Orleans, Central City, Gert Town, Holy Cross/Lower 9th Ward, Tremé/Lafitte. |
| Advocacy Groups | ACORN. Telephone interview among Acorn members from the Acorn offices and face-to-face interviews at Acorn-sponsored community meetings.  
PolicyLink. We are conducting surveys with Church & community leaders in Orleans & Terrebonne Parishes. |
| Rs Reached directly, without Associations | New Orleans Times-Picayune: their nola.com community forums posted a link to the survey. |
| Indirect Assistance | Steven Bingler, Concordia LLC and the Unified New Orleans Plan. He also organized the Community Center Consortium, which led to other contacts |
| Government Agencies and Agency Contracts | Providence Community Housing. Commissioned to build mixed-income housing to replace housing developments. We have submitted joint proposal with PCH to do surveys & damage assessments in the Tremé/Lafitte area.  
Various Schools are sending the paper questionnaire home with students to their parents to fill in and return.  
Also: partnership with FEMA VALs (Voluntary Association Liaisons), several New Orleans City Council members, the Baton Rouge Mayor’s office, Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA), and others. |
• *Images of Data Collection*: Two Examples

  o *Renaissance Village, FEMA Trailer Park*. We worked with the resident leaders of Renaissance Village, served a Jambalaya dinner, brought in a New Orleans brass band … and conducted the survey with the help of 30 resident volunteers.

  ![Image of Renaissance Village, FEMA Trailer Park](image1)

  ![Image of Renaissance Village, FEMA Trailer Park](image2)

  o *Pontchartrain Park & Gentilly Woods (Pontilly)*. We worked with the Pontilly Neighborhood Association, who brought in 40 law student volunteers from around the country. We went door-to-door with them, doing the survey, and shared the results with the community.

  ![Image of Pontchartrain Park & Gentilly Woods (Pontilly)](image3)

  ![Image of Pontchartrain Park & Gentilly Woods (Pontilly)](image4)
• **Location of Interviews (partial):** We have good coverage of the region, and we are now filling in the gaps.
• **Some Demographic Characteristics** of the Sample, together with a few examples of hard-hit communities.
• **Storm Damage** mostly corresponds to flooding
- **People Want to return to live in New Orleans**, despite of the level of damage they sustained

![Bar chart: Want to live in Greater New Orleans](chart1)

![Bar chart: Want to live in neighborhood before Katrina](chart2)
- **People are optimistic** that their neighborhood *can be* protected from flooding
- **But they are more cautious** about how long it will take
- *Degree of Hurricane Recovery* follows the flooded area to some extent – but not completely.
  
  - *What else plays a role?* This is part of what our research sets out to determine.
  - We believe that social support and community organization and strategies plays a role.
• **What People Need** in order to Return and Rebuild. Health Care and Rebuilding Help are two of the most important things.

**Health care**

- Very Important to make me decide to stay
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important for me

**Building repair or restoration help**

- Very Important to make me decide to stay
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important for me
• **People are More Worried about Health Care in the East**, where there are fewer Medical Facilities

  o **Policy Suggestions:**

  a. Install a Primary Care Clinic in rooms at one of the Universities in **Gentilly**: UNO, Southern, or Dillard. This will be a cost-effective means of providing health care quickly.

  b. Install another Primary Care Clinic in **Village de l’Est**, to anchor the eastern edge of the area.

Source of data on Medical Facilities: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, [www.gnocdc.org](http://www.gnocdc.org)
• Indeed, these are some of the **same areas that are re-populating more slowly**, as indicated by residential addresses actively receiving mail in February 2008. Lack of medical facilities may be one factor that is keeping people away.

Source of Repopulation data: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, [www.gnocdc.org](http://www.gnocdc.org)
- People have a lot of Stress

![Stress Symptoms Chart]

- Depressed (self-described)
- Angry (self-described)
- Fearful, Anxious (self-described)
- Trouble sleeping
- Tired all the time; loss of energy
- Trouble concentrating
- Worrying about everyday things
- Eating too much, gaining weight
- Nervous, excitable; trouble settling down
- Afraid that something terrible could happen
- Don’t want to see people, staying at home

June 11, 2008
• **Social Support Reduces Stress:** Church Attendance is the most effective form of social support we have found in our data.

![Graph showing the relationship between social support and stress levels.](image)

- **Angry**
  - Graph showing the percentage of people feeling angry by flood damage level and church attendance.

- **Trouble concentrating**
  - Graph showing the percentage of people having trouble concentrating by flood damage level and church attendance.

June 11, 2008
- People have derived mostly warm and supportive feelings from their faith. They do not feel they are being punished.
People feel that all levels of Government did a Bad Job responding to the Hurricane – regardless of how much damage their own community sustained.
- People feel that **Faith-Based and Community Organizations did a good Job responding to the Hurricane** – again, regardless of how much damage their own community sustained.

![Leadership of your congregation job responding to Katrina](chart)

![Your Neighborhood Association job responding to Katrina](chart)
Some communities have begun meeting and comparing notes on Recovery Strategies.

- Vietnamese and Jewish Community Leaders meeting below.
- Item: It’s not all “culture.” Lots of it is strategy and planning that others can adapt.