

# Harvey racial optics much different than Katrina

## Tale of two hurricanes

By ERRIN HAINES WHACK  
Associated Press

The charges of racism that swirled after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans 12 years ago have yet to surface as Houston recovers from the floods unleashed by Harvey.

Houston was hit as the nation roiled from a white supremacist rally that turned deadly Aug. 12 in Charlottesville, Virginia. The violence left in its wake deep divisions primed by President Donald Trump's assertion that "many sides" were to blame, producing heated debates about Confederate statues and whether they are important historical markers or symbols of hate that should be removed.

Those raw tensions didn't boil over even as Trump provided another potential spark by pardoning Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who was convicted of ignoring a judge's order to stop targeting Latinos suspected of being in the country illegally. Trump made the move just as Harvey made landfall Aug. 25 and took aim at Houston, where Hispanics make up about 44 percent of the population.

When Katrina struck on Aug. 29, 2005, New Orleans had 500,000 residents, nearly 70 percent of them black. Americans were horrified by images of people stranded on rooftops and scrounging for food and water. There were appalling conditions in the Superdome, the shelter of last resort for thousands and a hell-scape for those too poor to leave ahead of the storm.

The face of Katrina was largely black and poor. Within days, Katrina's death toll was into the hundreds. By contrast, Harvey's death toll hovered around 60, though it's expected to rise as waters recede.

Many cited the heavy death toll following Katrina, and the slow, inadequate government response, as evidence that New Orleans' poor, black residents were considered disposable. "I hate the way they portray us in the media," rapper Kanye West declared during a Red Cross telethon, adding that President George W. Bush "doesn't care about black people," a sentiment that resonated with many African-Americans.

### Racially diverse

By comparison, Houston — a sprawling city of more than 2.4 million — is more racially diverse, with blacks and whites each accounting for about a quarter of the population. Because there was no mandatory evacuation, people of all races and classes remained in the storm's path, not just folks who couldn't afford to leave.

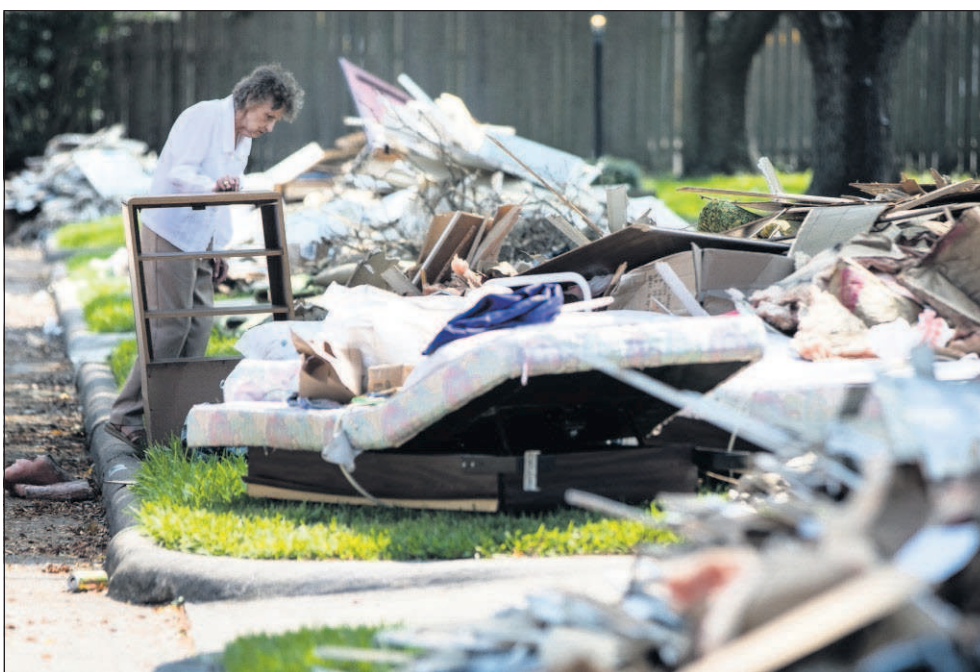
That made for diverse images in the scenes of boat rescues and families huddling in shelters, said New Orleans native Mtangulizi Sanyika, a retired professor and social activist who left his New Orleans neighborhood the day before Katrina hit and now lives in Houston.

"In New Orleans, we had a human tragedy on our hands that obviously, black people were the primary victims," Sanyika said. "The flood here ... was an equal opportunity flood."

George Washington University sociologist Gregory Squires said "there's no question the optics feel different" in Houston.

"What we're not seeing in Houston are the hundreds of black people being stuck in a building or stopped on a highway and blocked from getting out of the city," said Squires, co-editor of the book, "There Is No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster: Race, Class and Katrina." "Nobody is saying that Donald Trump doesn't like black people."

In New Orleans, as the levees broke, the water rose and people struggled to survive as media reports of looting depicted storm victims as criminals. Those who were eventually able to relocate to other cities were labeled "refugees," a term usually reserved for people fleeing one country for another.



AP Photo/Matt Rourke  
Antoinette Porcarello views her flood-damaged possessions piled in the front yard in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey in Houston.



AP Photo/David J. Phillip  
In this photo combination, evacuees wade down Tidwell Road in Houston on Aug. 28, 2017, top, as floodwaters from Tropical Storm Harvey rise, and a car drives down the same road on Tuesday, bottom, after the water receded.



AP Photo/Gerald Herbert  
Members of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the Louisiana National Guard help rescue with elderly people from the Golden Years Assisted Living home, which was flooded from Hurricane Harvey in Orange, Texas.

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**Devin Coleman**

34-year-old who moved to Houston from the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans just before Katrina hit

### Urban sprawl

The narrative around Katrina was urban neglect — years of disinvestment in infrastructure affecting a largely minority population. With Harvey, the focus is more on urban sprawl and how development may have compounded a natural disaster.

"Katrina was kind of a crime scene, with implications against local, state and federal government on how they were failing poor people; in Houston, it's kind of universal," said Rice University historian Douglas Brinkley, author of "The Great Deluge: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast."

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, who is black and grew up in a lower-income area of the city, noted that the George R. Brown Convention Center where 10,000 people took shelter was far different from what those in New Orleans encountered.

"I think people have felt comfortable," he said. "This is not their place of choice. They would rather be at home. But we try to treat people with respect. They are our guests. They are our fellow Houstonians."

Devin Coleman, 34, moved to Houston from the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans just before Katrina hit. He lost his aunt and his grandmother in the storm. He was sheltered at Houston's convention center for nearly a week and was amazed at how helpful people were.

"If you weren't white or had your own money, it's almost as if they didn't want you there," Coleman recalled of the environment during Katrina. "In Harvey, nobody is talking about race. It's just, 'What do you need?'"

Al Sistrunk, 67, echoed Coleman's sentiments, praising the city's response to Harvey while waiting in line to file a claim with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"Here in Houston, it's everybody," Sistrunk said. "We're getting housing, people are getting food, people are getting material they need for their houses. They rescued everybody, they weren't rescuing white people first or black people first, at least that's what they show on the news."

### Financial disparities

Texas Southern University urban planning professor Robert D. Bullard warned what happens next could uncover racial disparities.

Homeowners of color may lack the financial resources or networks to rebuild as quickly, if at all, he said. On the city's more affluent and white west side, Bullard noted people are "hiring contractors and starting to rebuild."

Bullard, regarded as the father of "environmental racism," also pointed out that poor and minority residents were most likely to have lived in proximity to the industrial areas affected by the storm. Pollution and chemical spills could affect those communities disproportionately.

Squires predicted as the scope of the damage is surveyed the racial impact will grow.

"Rich and poor alike were affected by the storm, but I strongly doubt that these groups were affected equally," he said. "The optics clearly are not as racial here as they were in New Orleans. But I think we need to distinguish between the optics and the reality."

Juliet Linderman and Juan A. Lozano contributed to this report from Houston. Whack reported from Philadelphia.

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Evening listings  
THURSDAY

THURSDAY EVENING												SEPTEMBER 7	
A	L	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
2	KATU	(2) KATU News at 6 (N)		Jeopardy!	Wheel of Fortune	Battle of the Network Stars	Battle of the Network Stars (N)	Battle of the Network Stars (N)	The Gong Show (N)			KATU News (N)	(35) Jimmy Kimmel
3	KOMO	(4) KOMO 4 News (N)		Wheel of Fortune	Jeopardy!	Battle of the Network Stars	Battle of the Network Stars (N)	Battle of the Network Stars (N)	The Gong Show (N)			KOMO 4 News (N)	(35) Jimmy Kimmel
5	KING	(5) (5:00) NFL Football Kansas City Chiefs at New England Patriots Site: Gillette Stadium (L)		Extra	Ent. Tonight	Big Bang Theory	Mom	Big Brother (N)	Zoo "Cradles and Graves" (N)			KING 5 News	(35) Tonight Show
6	KOIN	(6) KOIN Local 6 (N)	Evening News (N)	Extra	Ent. Tonight	Big Bang Theory	Mom	Big Brother (N)	Zoo "Cradles and Graves" (N)			KOIN 6 News (N)	(35) Colbert
7	KIRO	(7) KIRO 7 News (N)	Evening News (N)	The Insider	Ent. Tonight	Big Bang Theory	Mom	Big Brother (N)	Zoo "Cradles and Graves" (N)			KIRO News (N)	(35) Colbert
8	KGW	(8) (5:00) NFL Football Kansas City Chiefs at New England Patriots Site: Gillette Stadium (L)		Extra	Ent. Tonight	Big Bang Theory	Mom	Big Brother (N)	Zoo "Cradles and Graves" (N)			KGW News (N)	(35) Tonight Show
9	KRCW	(9) Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	Modern Family	Modern Family	Penn&Teller "I Dream of Genie Tube"	Whose Line (N)	Whose Line Is It?	News at 10 (N)	Two and a Half		Two and a Half	Met Your Mother
10	KOPB	(10) Mickela Mallozzi	Business (N)	PBS NewsHour (N)		Oregon Field Guide "Farewell to Steve Amen"		Oregon Revealed	An Oregon Field Guide Special			Great German Cities	
12	KPTV	(12) 6 O'Clock News (N)		Family Feud	Family Feud	Beat Shazam "Episode Thirteen" (N)	Love Conn. "Episode Fourteen" (N)	10 O'Clock News (N)				News (N)	Raising Hope
13	KPDQ	(13) Mike & Molly	Mike & Molly	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	FOX 12's News (N)	9 O'Clock News (N)	Family Guy	Family Guy			American Dad!	Cleveland Show
14	KCPQ	(14) Modern Family	Modern Family	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Beat Shazam "Episode Thirteen" (N)	Love Conn. "Episode Fourteen" (N)	Q13 News at 10 (N)				Q13 News (N)	The Simpsons
20	TBS	(20) Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Big Bang Theory	The Guest (N)			Conan "Comic-Con 2017"	
22	KZJN	(22) Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	Friends	Friends	Modern Family	Modern Family	Q13 News at 9 (N)	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Two and a Half	Two and a Half	Two and a Half
29	ESPN	(29) (4:00) ITF Tennis U.S. Open (L)				SportsCenter (N)		SportsCenter With Scott Van Pelt (N)	SportsCenter (N)			SportsCenter	
30	ESPN2	(30) (5:00) WNBA Basketball Playoffs (L)		WNBA Basketball Playoffs (L)				Nación ESPN (N)				Jalen & Jacoby (N)	30 for 30 "Trojan War"
31	NICK	(31) The Loud House	Henry Danger	Henry Danger	The Thundermans	To Be Announced						Nashville	
32	DISN	(32) Jessie	Bunk'd	K.C. Undercover	K.C. Undercover	Raven's Home	Stuck in Middle	Bizaardvark	Bizaardvark			Live and Maddie	K.C. Undercover
34	FAM	(34) (5:05) *** Forrest Gump ('94, Comedy/Drama) Sally Field, Gary Sinise, Tom Hanks. (c:20) *** Crazy, Stupid, Love. (2011, Comedy/Drama) Ryan Gosling, Julianne Moore, Steve Carell.										The 700 Club	
35	FMC	(35) (5:00) The Lorax	(c:45) *** The Lorax									*** The Watch (2012, Comedy) Vince Vaughn, Ben Stiller.	
36	LIFE	(36) Grey's Anatomy "Yesterday"		Runway "An Unconventional Recycling"	Runway (N)							(c:45) Runway "We're Sleeping Wear?"	(c:45) P.Runway (N)
38	ROOT	(38) (4:00) MLB Baseball Houston vs Seattle		H.S. Football (L)								H.S. Football	H.S. Football
39	FS1	(39) (4:00) UFC UFC 191		Main Event "Johnson vs. Horiguchi" (N)		MLB Whiparound (L)		Speak for Yourself				Skip and Shannon: Undisputed Opinions on the biggest sports topics of the day.	
43	COKE	(43) (4:30) Limitless ('11) Bradley Cooper.		*** It (1990, Horror) Harry Anderson, Dennis Christopher, Tim Reid. A group of adults reunite to battle a demonic creature from their childhood.								Limitless ('11)	
44	SP1	(44) South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	The Daily Show (N)	The Daily Show
45	HIST	(45) Mountain "Only the Strong Survive"		Mountain Men "Waste Not, Want Not"		Mountain Men: Fully "Long Shot" (N)		Mountain Men (N)	(c:05) Ice Rd. Truckers "Helter Melter" (N)	(c:05) Mountain Men		(c:05) Mountain Men	
46	A&E	(46) First 48 "Fast Friends/ The Thin Line"		Murder of Laci P "Missing in Modesto"		Murder/Laci Peterson "Media Frenzy"		Murder "Most Hated Man in America"	Laci Peterson "The Trial Begins" (N)			(c:05) Murder/Laci Peterson "Missing in Modesto"	
47	TLC	(47) Say Yes-Dress	Say Yes-Dress	My 600-lb Life "Penny's Story"		My 600-lb Life "Olivia's Story"		My 600-lb Life "Tracey's Story"				My 600-lb Life "Penny's Story"	
48	DISN	(48) Naked and Afraid "Double Jeopardy"		Naked and Afraid "Wrath of Nature" (N)								Naked and Afraid "Melt Down Under"	
49	NGEO	(49) Nasca Lines: The Buried Secrets		Wild Colombia		Great Migrations "Born to Move"		Great Migrations "Feast or Famine"				Fight for Life "Bad News Black Bears"	Fight for Life "Slum Monkey"
50	TNT	(50) Bones "The Princess and the Pear"		Bones "The Bones That Foam"		*** American Sniper (2014, War) Sienna Miller, Luke Grimes, Bradley Cooper.						Miracle (2004, True Story) Kurt Russell.	
51	AMC	(51) (5:30) *** Twister (1996, Action) Bill Paxton, Jami Gertz, Helen Hunt.		*** Independence Day (1996, Sci-Fi) Bill Pullman, Jeff Goldblum, Will Smith.								AVP: Alien vs. Predator Sanaa Lathan.	
52	USA	(52) NCIS "Iceman"		NCIS "Grace Period"		NCIS "Rogue"		NCIS "Being Bad"				NCIS "Privileged Information"	The Sinner "Part VI"
53	FOOD	(53) Beat Bobby Flay	Beat Bobby Flay	Chopped "Meatball Madness"		Chopped "Viewers' Vengeance"		Chopped "Wild Times"				Beat Bobby Flay	Beat Bobby Flay
54	HGTV	(54) Love It/ List It "Not Enough Bedrooms"		Love It/ List It "Opportunity in the Attic"		Flip or Flop		Flip or Flop				House Hunters (N)	House Hunters (N)
55	FX	(55) (5:00) *** Fuoco 7 (2015, Action) Paul Walker, Jason Statham, Vin Diesel.		*** Snow White and the Huntsman (2012, Action) Chris Hemsworth, Charlize Theron, Kristen Stewart.								House Hunters (N)	House Hunters (N)
57	CNN	(57) Anderson Cooper 360		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		Anderson Cooper 360				CNN Tonight With Don Lemon	
58	FNC	(58) The Five		Hannity		Tucker Carlson Tonight		The Five				Hannity	Tucker Carlson Tonight
61	CNC	(61) Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Filthy Rich Guide	Filthy Rich Guide	Filthy Rich Guide	Filthy Rich Guide	Filthy Rich Guide	Filthy Rich Guide	Filthy Rich Guide	Filthy Rich Guide
63	BRVA	(63) Million Dollar Listing New York "Seaportlandia"		WatchWhat		Below Deck		Flipping "Welcome Home, Monroe" (N)				WatchWhat (N)	Flipping Out
64	TCM	(64) (5:00) Fitzcarraldo ('82, Dra) Claudia Cardinale, Klaus Kinski. (c:45) Stroszek (1977) Eva Mattes, Clemens Scheitz, Bruno S.										*** Aguirre: Wrath of God ('73) Dan Ades, Klaus Kinski. (c:45) Cobra Verde	
65	SYFY	(65) (4:30) Priest ('11)		*** Charlie and the Chocolate Factory ('05, Adventure) Freddie Highmore, David Kelly, Johnny Depp.		*** The Princess Bride ('87, Rom) Robin Wright, Chris Sarandon, Cary Elwes.						(c:20) The Princess Bride Cary Elwes.	
69	RFD	(69) SF Machinery	Small Town	Rodeo Cody Stampede		Steve Lantvit	Rural Eve. News	Market Journal	GA Farm Monitor	SF Machinery	Small Town	Time Life Library	