

Flooded Communities: Explaining Local Reactions to the Post-Katrina Migrants

Political Research Quarterly
XX(X) 1–17
© 2011 University of Utah
Reprints and permission:
sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav
DOI: 10.1177/1065912911398050
http://prq.sagepub.com


Daniel J. Hopkins¹

Abstract

This article uses the post-Katrina migration as an exogenous shock to test theories of racial threat while minimizing concerns about selection bias. Drawing in part on a new survey of 3,879 respondents, it demonstrates that despite the national concern about issues of race and poverty following Katrina, people in communities that took in evacuees became *less* supportive of spending to help the poor and African Americans. The results suggest a novel hypothesis that threatened responses to newcomers hinge on both local conditions and the frames that develop around their arrival.

Keywords

political methodology, public opinion, political participation, race, ethnicity, politics

Before Hurricane Katrina, one town in rural Arkansas had fewer than one thousand residents and a single African American. According to a state official, the Ku Klux Klan was active nearby. Yet for a short while, Hurricane Katrina changed those demographics dramatically. Overnight, a local church camp became a shelter to 350 evacuees, almost all of whom were poor African Americans. In the words of one community leader, “The majority of the people here in [town] . . . were very angry with us. In the beginning, people were very prejudiced. Once these people got to know them, everyone’s outlook totally changed.” This town was far from unique. In the weeks following the storm, Katrina evacuees were scattered across the nation. Treating the post-Katrina migration as an exogenous shock, this article investigates how people’s political attitudes changed in response to the sudden demographic shifts in their communities that followed in the storm’s wake.

Since at least the work of Key (1949), scholars in the racial threat tradition have been interested in how the racial, ethnic, partisan, and class composition of one’s surroundings shapes one’s social and political views. Scholars have been interested as well in the extent to which direct contact across lines of race or class can influence intergroup attitudes (Pettigrew 1998). Yet past work in these traditions has faced significant methodological challenges. On account of geographic mobility, it is impossible to know whether observed correlations result from contextual effects or from individuals’ self-selection

into differing environments.¹ The post-Katrina migration provides an unusual opportunity to test theories of racial threat and intergroup contact in a case where those encounters could not have been anticipated.

The next section details these two long-standing theoretical approaches and also identifies a theoretical challenge common to both. If it is true that Americans think about politics in terms of collective evaluations and outcomes, then it is unclear what role local experiences play in shaping political views. Information gleaned from contact or from one’s immediate environment, while readily available, might remain separate from one’s political or social attitudes. In response, that section develops an alternative one might term “constructivist” emphasizing the interplay of local conditions and the frames that journalists and community members develop to make sense of those conditions. Local conditions do not give rise to any immediate political conclusions until they are framed in politically relevant ways. Put differently, *the changing demographic environment and salient frames interact to produce contextual effects*. This “politicized places” approach explains not just the valence of individuals’

¹Georgetown University, Washington, DC, USA

Corresponding Author:

Daniel J. Hopkins, Georgetown University,
Department of Government, Washington, DC 20057
Email: dh335@georgetown.edu

responses to contact or local contexts but the specific attitudes that change.

To test the competing predictions, this article's third section introduces the 2006 Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, a study of 3,879 southern respondents with oversamples in heavily affected communities such as Harris County, Texas (Houston), and East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana. The exogenous variation in community demographics induced by the hurricane gives researchers an unusual opportunity to confront concerns about self-selection since residents could not have chosen their cities knowing that they would later become home to the evacuees.² This research design also provides unusually good balance on many covariates (or independent variables), as there are many surveyed individuals who are highly similar but for the city in which they happen to live. To provide additional information about a key counterfactual—what people's attitudes would have been absent the post-Katrina migration in Harris County—this article turns to supplemental evidence from the General Social Survey (GSS). As discussed in the subsequent section, the core results prove robust to multiple estimation techniques including matching. These additional tests indicate that the results are not dependent on the specific statistical model or missing data strategy used. This research represents a rare test of theories of framing with real-world events rather than survey experiments.

The study's design maximizes its leverage over the problem of self-selection. None of the prior research cited here exploits exogenous demographic shocks.³ By comparing survey respondents in Harris County and Baton Rouge with those from more than 700 zip codes and 312 counties in unaffected areas, this article can convincingly demonstrate attitudinal differences between affected and unaffected areas.⁴ However, determining *why* communities responded in particular ways is a harder problem. While the evacuees' arrival was exogenous, the local frames, media coverage, and other responses were not. Moreover, the evacuees in Houston and the surrounding Harris County were not identical to those in Baton Rouge: the latter group included more middle-class evacuees. The article thus introduces a wide range of additional evidence to rule out alternative explanations. Key propositions are reinforced with fifty-nine in-depth interviews. In places, the article draws on data about crime rates and the geographic distribution of homicides. Elsewhere, it draws on other surveys of the affected communities to trace trends before and after Katrina. Its fifth section presents a content analysis of local television and newspaper coverage.

Based on the remarks of the relief worker above, we might expect that the demographic shocks after Katrina increased support for assistance to the needy or to blacks. The presence of a visible natural disaster—as well as the

halting governmental response—made it clear that the victims were not to blame for their predicament.⁴ In some respects, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina was a likely case for positive contextual influence given the highly public ordeal suffered by the evacuees. And indeed, in the days after the storm, residents of the host communities mounted a tremendous response that undermines simplistic notions of racial threat (see also Aldrich and Crook 2008). One church leader was told by an evacuee, "We didn't know white people could love us."

Yet this extraordinary volunteerism makes the central finding of this article all the more puzzling: Why was it that during a period of unusual altruism, attitudes toward African Americans and the poor actually hardened in some places? As this article demonstrates, residence in host communities like Baton Rouge led to reduced support for spending on the poor and more negative affect toward African Americans. Meanwhile, in Harris County, the influx of evacuees led to increased demand for anti-crime spending. The anticrime results do not appear to reflect preexisting differences since no such attitudinal differences are detected in prior surveys. Nor do they appear to be direct responses to rising crime since the spikes in violent crime were similar in both places. The sixth section probes alternative explanations. Comparing 2002 and 2006, it shows that Houston residents became more worried about lower levels of crime.

The challenge is to explain the negative attitudinal response and the differing forms it took. As this article illustrates, those who had direct contact with evacuees did not have more positive attitudes, ruling out the notion that these effects were driven by interpersonal contact. Since political elites in the host communities studied here received acclaim for their efforts on the evacuees' behalf, it seems unlikely that they led any visible effort to demonize the evacuees.⁶ Instead, the sudden change in local demographics appears to have interacted with frames about evacuee benefits, joblessness, and criminality to produce marked changes in many community members' views. In Harris County, prominent frames linked the evacuees to crime, and residents responded to their changing context by becoming more anticrime. In Baton Rouge, a dominant frame associated the evacuees with government benefits, again suggesting an explanation for the specific attitudes that changed. In both places, the combination of physical proximity and framing appears to have produced contextual effects. The next section provides the theoretical background for these claims.

Theorizing Contexts

Scholars developed contextual theories primarily to explain how Americans respond to local racial demographics. The dominant "racial threat" approach contends

that local contexts can induce feelings of threat, either by triggering prejudice or by generating zero-sum competition for scarce resources (Gay 2006; Taylor 1998; Giles and Hertz 1994; Glaser 1994; Blalock 1967; Key 1949). Another prominent theoretical approach claims that intergroup contact generates more positive attitudes toward out-groups (Tropp and Pettigrew 2005; Welch et al. 2001; Pettigrew 1998). Under certain conditions, contact theory expects that interpersonal encounters with members of another group will provide new, stereotype-defying information. These two theoretical approaches are not necessarily contradictory (Stein, Post, and Rinden 2000; Oliver and Wong 2003). In fact, they share the core assumption that people readily integrate their local or interpersonal experiences with their political attitudes.

The “politicized places” hypothesis challenges that assumption, and in doing so it moves beyond the theoretical dualism of racial threat and intergroup contact. The politicized places approach begins with the contention—grounded in studies of public opinion—that local or interpersonal experiences rarely have obvious political implications. Consider the wife of one interview participant, a woman who worked closely with the Katrina evacuees. She sometimes “really sympathized with the evacuees” and “sometimes thought they were a lazy bunch of jerks.” Having volunteered in a shelter, she had anecdotes to support either view. This observation encourages us to explain why *some* local experiences become politically relevant while others do not. It also implies that both contact and context effects might be more limited and conditional than past accounts acknowledge. Earlier statements of the politicized places hypothesis posited that national media and national political discourse can politicize local contexts, framing personal observations in politically relevant ways (Hopkins 2010, forthcoming). Here, we extend the hypothesis by noting that local journalists or social processes could politicize people’s day-to-day experiences as well. Throughout, this section emphasizes information, a potential mechanism through which contexts could operate.⁷

The Ambiguity of Contact and Threat

Not all contact has an equally positive influence on intergroup attitudes. As Allport (1954) theorized, four conditions facilitate contact’s positive effect: that the groups have equal status, that they have common goals, that they have the support of local authorities or institutions, and that the situation requires intergroup cooperation.⁸ These conditions influence both the probability that an individual will obtain stereotype-defying information about an out-group and the likely salience of that new information. *To be sure, the unequal terms of the contact mean that the post-Katrina evacuation is not a strong test of*

contact theory. Nonetheless, given the sustained interaction between the evacuees and their hosts, it is worth testing contact’s influence.

Many of the in-depth interviews with local leaders suggest that contact might have been a positive influence in the weeks after Hurricane Katrina. Consider the words of a church leader from rural Arkansas, who explained, “I found it very positive. I had the opportunity to meet people I never would have met.” In some cases, the contact was intense, as hosts and residents lived together in shelters. The evacuees often wanted to tell their stories, providing further grounds for empathy. Yet the contact was usually brief and was decidedly not on equal terms. These ambiguities raise a fundamental question for contact theory. Given a variety of personal experiences, some positive and some negative, how do people choose which to draw on in updating their political attitudes? A parallel question faces theories of racial threat (e.g., Putnam 2007; Taylor 1998; Blalock 1967; Key 1949).

A few variants of racial threat appeared often during the in-depth interviews. One was the concern that the evacuees would drain public resources. Mimicking the conventional view, one Houston official asked, “Why can’t they get a job? Why are my taxes paying for their free rent?” Many longtime residents saw the evacuees as recipients of undeserved assistance and borrowed from antiwelfare rhetoric to express this view. During an August 2006 community meeting, a Houston resident triggered sustained applause by asking the mayor, “Where do you stand on stopping the FEMA and the welfare money, on stopping the giveaways?” (Kilday and Villafranca 2006). The interviews uncovered the same sense of strain on public resources repeatedly. When presented with a novel and sometimes tragic situation, many people responded with familiar frames about welfare and dependency (Gilens 1999).

Another type of threat, tapping both prejudice and group conflict, concerns personal safety. Some of the evacuees were believed to be criminals, leading the host communities to equate the evacuees with crime. A Houston social worker who assisted the evacuees noted that he himself had been robbed while in a neighborhood that housed many evacuees and said that “since they got here, there’s nothing but crime.” Still another variant of intergroup threat emphasizes its impact on prejudice (e.g., Taylor 1998), and that certainly might have been an underlying factor shaping post-Katrina attitudes.

There is preliminary evidence, then, of threat-style responses in host communities. Yet when we consider the likely mechanisms that underpin theories of racial threat, it becomes apparent that the theories face important challenges. Many social and political attitudes have their origins in childhood socialization, partisan

identification, information gleaned from mass media, and information flowing from political elites (Kinder 1998; Mutz 1998; Zaller 1992). To the extent that experiences shape attitudes, collective experiences portrayed through the media typically outweigh individuals' personal experiences as a source of opinion change (Books and Prysby 1999; Mutz 1994, 1998; Mutz and Mondak 1997; Kinder and Kiewiet 1981; but see Gamson 1992). Certainly, people's day-to-day contexts contain significant amounts of information with potential political relevance. But without clear connections between that information and politics, people are unlikely to connect the two, and the personal experiences might remain apolitical or "morselized" (Mutz 1994, 1998). There is also the possibility that people screen information derived from their locality so as to reinforce whatever attitudes they already hold, just as they do with messages conveyed by partisan elites (Zaller 1992). Social scientists' conceptions of collectively oriented (or "sociotropic") thinking and partisan filtering both cut against the possibility that local contexts exert a consistent influence on adults' attitudes.

The Politicized Places Hypothesis

Both theories of contact and intergroup threat need to explain how specific local experiences become politically relevant. The hypothesis proposed here does so. *It first claims that rapidly changing contexts attract residents' attention.* Psychological research has demonstrated that in filtering the tremendous amount of available information, people are especially attentive to change (Kahneman and Tversky 1979). This could be true in communities as well. Case studies on ethnic and racial transition underscore the key role of demographic change in catalyzing ethnic and racial contention (W. J. Wilson and Taub 2006; Kruse 2005). In addition, a change in the minority population is a strong predictor of racially motivated crimes (Green, Strolovitch, and Wong 1998), indicating the processes of neighborhood defense that follow the arrival of an out-group. Given that, there is good reason to suspect that changes in demographics, more than any absolute level, could command residents' attention.

Still, faced with a changing community, what specific political narratives do residents attach to that change? Here, we turn to research on framing. A frame is an organization of thought or argument; it "define[s] what the problem is and how to think about it" (Kinder 1998, 170).⁹ As people try to make sense of the wealth of available information, frames play a critical, simplifying role. They organize information into compelling narratives (Berinsky and Kinder 2006), calling our attention to some aspects of an issue and away from other aspects. Thus,

the second part of the hypothesis stipulates that people draw on available frames to interpret their changing environments.

One source of frames is the news media. Information conveyed through the media is often framed in ways that make it directly relevant to politics (Kinder 1998; Mutz 1994, 1998; Iyengar and Kinder 1987).¹⁰ This sets it apart from other forms of information. As past research has found, information provided through the media can interact with people's personal circumstances: "[N]ews appears to be most effective in telling people what to think about when the stories it presents reinforce and ratify the experience of ordinary life" (Kinder 1998, 179). What was once a personal and contextual experience becomes politicized once it is mentioned by the media.

Recent work on "politicized places" has focused on the role of the *national* media (Hopkins 2010, forthcoming), but local media could play a framing role through the same mechanisms. In fact, for events that have a concentrated impact on certain places, we should expect locally generated frames to be of central importance. As we move from national to local geographic scales, we should be attentive to the possibility that frames might be conveyed through interpersonal encounters as well. Certain collective understandings could emerge in part through the conversations of neighbors or acquaintances, a possibility that is more plausible in geographically bounded spaces. Still, while the politicized places approach calls attention to the role of frames in interpreting local experiences, it does not require that the salient frames have any particular source.

Several predictions emerge from this set of observations. *First, sudden changes in demographics provide a powerful opportunity for demographics to influence attitudes. Second, that influence is more likely when salient frames call attention to the changes and provide ready-made ways of relating them to politics.* Demographic change is most likely to affect attitudes on those issues that are explicitly connected to it by salient frames in the media and in interpersonal conversations. The politicized places hypothesis also implies that contextual effects are potentially fleeting—and that people could respond to the same local demographics or conditions very differently depending on the issues that are currently salient. It further suggests that two distinct levels of geography matter when it comes to contextual effects: the neighborhoods where people interact with and observe others and the media markets or other broader communities in which frames are developed. This theoretical approach suggests as well that media messages, elite rhetoric, and collective frames will be more persuasive when they relate to people's day-to-day experiences.

Survey Data and Method

In the ideal test of the politicized places hypothesis, one would observe a single population that is randomly sent to communities that differ only in whether they receive an influx of newcomers and in how that influx is framed locally. In actuality, place of residence and frames are almost never assigned randomly, and large, homogeneous populations rarely move to multiple communities at the same time. While the post-Katrina migration was not a randomized experiment, it does have features that offer researchers unusual leverage. The process through which evacuees were dispersed was sufficiently haphazard that thousands of poor, suddenly homeless evacuees found themselves in Baton Rouge (LA), Harris County (TX), and elsewhere. Their destination often depended on which bus they happened to board at the Superdome. The evacuees were not randomly assigned to host communities, but the resettlement process was driven primarily by host communities' distance from New Orleans. Conditional on a variety of covariates, there is no reason to think that two people living at different distances from New Orleans should hold different political views except on account of the post-Katrina migration. Because of the possibility of lingering southern exceptionalism as a confounding variable, the analysis is limited to residents of the South, defined following the U.S. Census Bureau.¹¹ This section outlines the survey data and statistical methods used.

Survey and Treatments

Conducted between January 4 and August 15, 2006, the second Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey (SC06) is a cross section of 12,100 Americans, including 3,879 southerners. It included a nationally representative sample and clustered samples in communities such as Harris County, Texas; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Sarasota County, Florida; Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and Greensboro, North Carolina. The first two communities took in substantial numbers of evacuees, while the latter three did not. To increase variation in the communities that hosted evacuees, the 2006 survey also sampled 100 people in four Arkansas communities: Jonesboro, Little Rock, Siloam Springs, and Pine Bluff. Of the 2006 national respondents, 979 lived in the South as well, providing additional leverage. The survey asked respondents a battery of questions about community participation, politics, and intergroup relations.

There are two main treatments of interest: whether a respondent lived in a community that hosted evacuees and whether a respondent had direct contact with evacuees. For the former, this article uses Harris County, Texas, and East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, as "treated"

communities and uses change-of-address data from the U.S. Postal Service as of December 31, 2005, to identify "control" communities that did not take in many evacuees. Communities with ratios of less than one new person from New Orleans for every two hundred existing residents are considered to be unaffected and are eligible control units. To measure contact, the survey asked respondents in Harris County, Baton Rouge, and Arkansas, "Did you have any direct personal contact with Katrina evacuees, for example through hosting them, cooking meals, providing direct service, etc.?" In communities with few evacuees, we can safely impute a zero with only small measurement error.¹²

An additional concern relates to the oft-overlooked distinction between the evacuee population overall and the poor, predominantly African American population that was at the center of post-Katrina coverage. Yet because the survey oversampled precisely those areas whose evacuees came from the Superdome by bus, and because we interviewed local leaders in the oversampled communities, we can be confident that our indicator of evacuee presence is a valid measure of evacuees who are African American and often poor. The state of Texas estimated that 81 percent of its "new residents" were African American, for instance, and that 61 percent lived in households making less than \$20,000 per year.

Methods

This article couples an analysis of surveys with in-depth interviews, in large measure because the strengths of each approach help compensate for the weaknesses of the other. The interviews provide texture and allow opinion leaders to indicate their thinking without the limitations of a preset agenda.¹³ They proved useful in targeting the communities that were most affected by the evacuees as well. By contrast, the phone survey allows us to compare responses to identically posed questions across many individuals and to generalize more widely.

This article adopts the same approach to its statistical analyses by using diverse techniques to ensure that the findings are not dependent on a specific statistical model. Its primary findings are cross-sectional and rely on the assumption of no omitted variable bias. Put differently, the analyses assume that the independent variables fully account for any selection processes at work. But to confirm that the results do not come from preexisting differences between Harris County and comparable communities elsewhere in the South, the article presents results based on differences-in-differences. These analyses show that *the cross-sectional Harris County findings do not appear using pre-Katrina surveys* and suggest that this finding is indeed attributable to recent events. No other study of contextual effects cited in this article uses

differences-in-differences to isolate when contextual effects occurred.

This article also draws on two separate preprocessing techniques. One technique, matching, removes observations in the control group that are the most dissimilar from those in the treated group, limiting concerns about model dependence (Ho et al. 2007). The specific matching algorithm employed is genetic matching because of its effectiveness in finding balanced control groups (Diamond and Sekhon 2008), although many other matching techniques are available.¹⁴ After matching, the analyses then estimate linear models on the matched data sets and report the coefficients of interest. Conditional on the model, any covariate imbalance that remains after matching is removed at this second stage. Matching can be difficult or impossible with several partially observed covariates, so the matching analyses use listwise deletion. Separate analyses instead use multiple imputation to handle missing data (Schafer 1997; King et al. 2001) and do not match.¹⁵ They show that *the results are robust irrespective of whether one uses matching as a preprocessing step*, reducing the chance that these results are dependent on the assumptions underlying a specific statistical model (Ho et al. 2007).

Survey Findings: Varying by Place

This section examines a wide range of survey evidence to adjudicate among theoretical approaches emphasizing contact, threat, and politicization. It first considers whether respondents who made direct contact with the evacuees reported differing attitudes and then turns to the attitudes of those living in affected counties.

The contact hypothesis predicts that those who had direct contact with evacuees will emerge with less prejudiced views of the groups to which the evacuees belong: African Americans, the poor, and the working class. To test this hypothesis, the analysis began with the 381 respondents in Arkansas, Harris County, and Baton Rouge who reported direct contact with evacuees and responded to all relevant questions. Table 1a in the online appendix (available at <http://prq.sagepub.com/supplemental/>) shows a logistic regression predicting who reports contact with evacuees within the affected communities. Ideology and partisanship have no relationship with selection into contact whatsoever, a reassuring observation. At the same time, we see clearly that the well educated, the wealthy, and church attenders were much more likely to report contact with evacuees. While survey reports can always differ from actual behavior, it is also reassuring these factors overlap with the observations made during the in-depth interviews.

The first analysis of contact uses genetic matching to find comparable control units from a pool of 1,224 people

in unaffected communities.¹⁶ Put differently, this analysis compares people who made contact with evacuees in affected communities to those who would have been likely to make contact had the evacuees gone to their community instead. For example, it compares a well-educated religious Protestant who volunteered in a Baton Rouge church to a counterpart in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. This design ensures that people are classified as “treated” or “control” based entirely on their place of residence rather than any active decision to assist the evacuees, reducing the self-selection problem plaguing past research. The covariates represent a standard set for attitudinal analyses, and also include three measures of religion and religious activity out of a recognition that churches played a central role in assisting the evacuees.¹⁷ Conditioning on the respondents’ religion also helps account for the cultural distinctiveness of Baton Rouge and southern Louisiana.

This procedure generates a matched data set where one control unit was matched to each of the 381 treated respondents with replacement. In all, 284 of the 1,224 control units were matched.¹⁸ As Table 2a in the appendix illustrates, this approach provides excellent balance on the observed covariates, including everything from political ideology to religious attendance. (Unless otherwise noted, these thirteen independent variables are those used in all of the statistical models.) Indeed, one advantage to studying exogenous events that affect a particular area is that comparable individuals in other areas are available as controls. To show that the results are not dependent on matching, separate analyses use the same procedures on the full data set of 1,605 individuals who made contact or had no chance to do so. After preprocessing, we estimate ordinary least squares (OLS) models for each dependent variable with an indicator variable for whether the respondent made contact as well as the thirteen other covariates in the matching algorithm.

Figure 1 illustrates the results of OLS regressions for a variety of relevant attitudinal dependent variables scaled from zero to one.¹⁹ Consider the solid black lines, which indicate the coefficients and 95 percent confidence intervals from the matched data sets. For example, the “x” under “Spending on the Poor” indicates that the coefficient for having contact with the evacuees is $-.044$ ($SE = .029$) with a confidence interval that crosses zero. Few of the results are statistically significant, and the mean estimated coefficients (or point estimates) suggest that, if anything, contact’s influence is more likely to be negative than positive. One result is significant: those who made contact are on average $.038$ ($SE = .018$) lower in their affect toward African Americans. That impact is 16 percent of a standard deviation. As the dotted line underneath indicates, the coefficient is similar and significant for the full sample of 1,605 as well. This result is counterintuitive

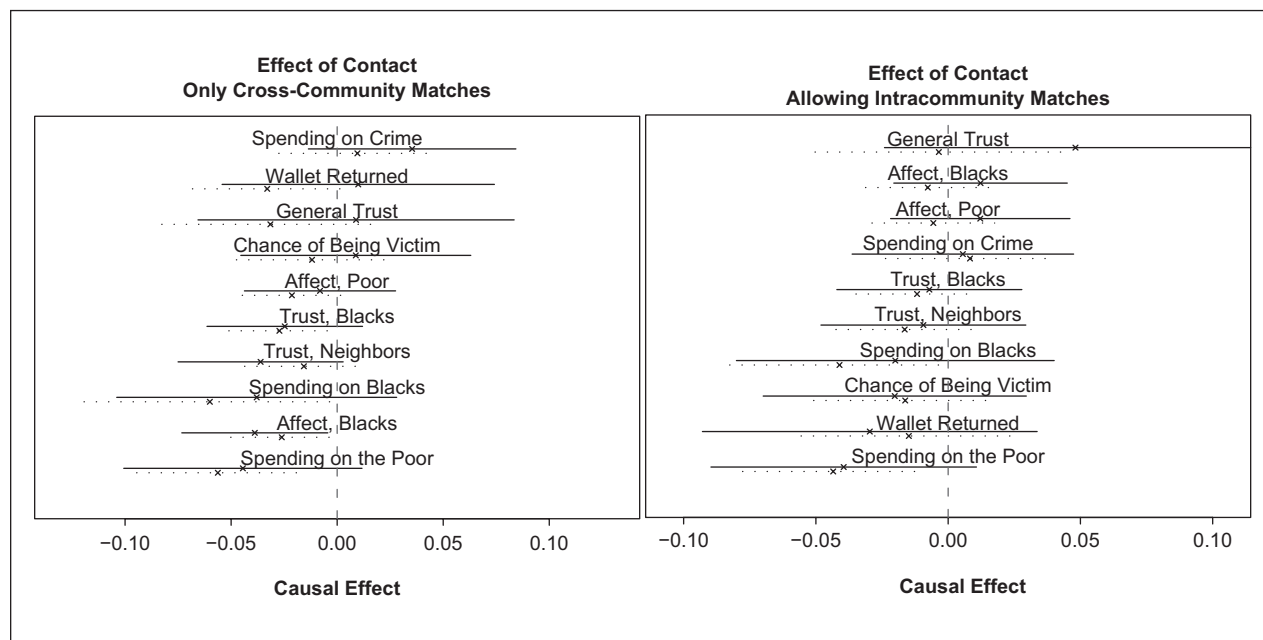


Figure 1. Relationship between contact with evacuees, political attitudes

Note: At left, this figure presents the causal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals of having direct contact with the evacuees conditional on the covariates listed in Table 2a in the online appendix? At right, the comparisons are partially within communities. The top line under each dependent variable is based on matched samples, while the bottom line is based on the full sample. Those who made contact appear more negative toward African Americans than comparable people living elsewhere, although few results are significant.

for a well-educated group, since such individuals might be especially attentive to antiracist norms (e.g., Mendelberg 2001). Other variables do not appear to be as strongly affected or are sensitive to the choice of data set, although the trend is negative. For instance, using multiple imputation, those who made contact with the evacuees are less supportive of antipoverty spending ($\beta = .056$, $SE = .019$), although using matching, the result is not significantly different from zero. Strong statements of contact theory are at a loss to explain such findings, since they predict more positive attitudes after face-to-face interactions. The positively signed impacts are chiefly those that indicate concern about crime.

Still, this analysis confounds differences in contact with differences in place of residence. All those who had contact were residents of Harris County, Baton Rouge, or Arkansas; those who did not were residents of Virginia, North Carolina, and five other southern states. The right side of Figure 1 reestimates the impact of contact after expanding the potential control population to include 485 residents of affected areas who did not come into contact with evacuees.²⁰ It also presents the impact for this enlarged sample without matching, again using dashed lines. As compared to the results above, these approaches are less likely to confuse the differing potential treatments but more prone to selection bias.

Fewer patterns are visible when allowing for intracommunity controls. As illustrated on the right side of Figure 1, the findings diminish in size and sometimes reverse sign. It does appear that those who made contact were less supportive of spending on the poor ($\beta = -.039$, $SE = .026$) in the matched analysis, but this is significant only for the imputed data ($\beta = -.043$, $SE = .017$). Not a single impact is statistically different from zero using both preprocessing strategies. Considering Figure 1 as a whole, one observation is that the ostensibly negative effects of contact appear to be slightly stronger when making comparisons exclusively across communities. This suggests that the differing attitudes could stem in part from community-level differences that would have affected both those who made contact and those who did not. Despite the expectations from the in-depth interviews, those who had contact with evacuees became *less* favorable toward African Americans. Since contact theory does not apply here with much strength, the coming section explores the possibility of community-level differences and the impact of framing.

The appendix considers an intermediate level of context: residential proximity. Specifically, it uses ZIP-code-level data in Houston to examine the impact of living near evacuees. While those living among many evacuees do not have many distinctive attitudes, they are more

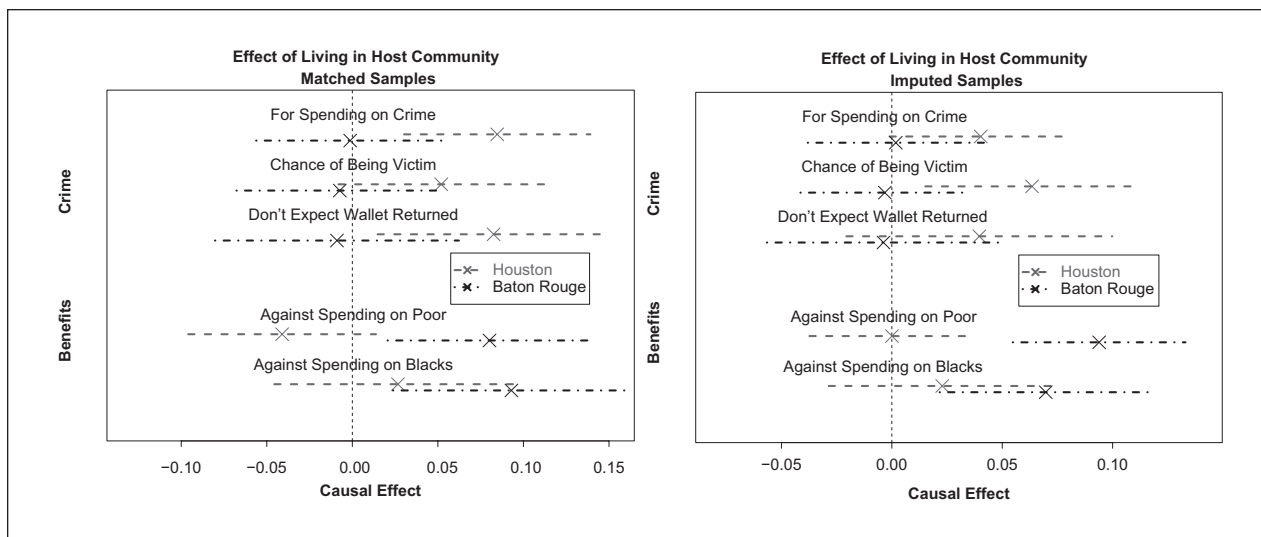


Figure 2. Relationship between Residence in Affected Community, Political Attitudes

Note: This figure presents the causal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals for the impact of living in Houston or Baton Rouge on several attitudes. The models condition on the covariates in Table 2a, in the online appendix, although direct contact is replaced by indicator variables for residence in Houston or Baton Rouge. The left figure presents results using matching, while the right figure presents results using multiple imputation. Those in Houston were more likely to support spending on crime and to think they might be victims of crime. Those in Baton Rouge were less supportive of spending on the poor and African Americans.

supportive of anticrime spending. This is not simply a response to higher crime rates: proximity to homicides has no such impact. Instead, Houston residents responded to the nearby newcomers in a specific way, shifting their attitudes to become more anticrime. The coming sections explore why.

Different Cities, Different Effects

The next analysis considers the possibility that sharing a locality with evacuees could reshape attitudes, even if the evacuees live in remote neighborhoods and do not interact with many longtime residents. The analysis first performed genetic matching to identify one-to-one matches for the 800 respondents in Baton Rouge and Harris County. The matches could come from any of the 2,981 respondents living in an unaffected community in the South. The same thirteen covariates as in the matching analyses above were employed (see Table 2a in the appendix). The outcome models are again linear models, with three caveats. First, these models also condition on whether the respondent is Catholic, the tract's population density, and the county's level of support for George Bush in 2000. The results are substantively identical without these covariates, but their inclusion eliminates alternative explanations based on urbanicity or local religious or political traditions. Balance statistics for Houston and Baton Rouge are provided in Tables 3a and 4a in the online appendix and show that matching produced highly

similar distributions across a broad range of covariates. Second, the standard errors were clustered by zip code. It is important to note that *this is a conservative specification: if we instead estimate the models with standard errors clustered by county, which better approximate the unit at which the treatment was assigned, the standard errors are typically smaller.*²¹ Third, all results for dependent variables with fewer than six response categories were confirmed with ordered probit models that relax the assumption of a cardinal relationship among the dependent variables' response categories.

The left-hand side of Figure 2 presents the results for the five most theoretically relevant dependent variables. Under each dependent variable, the figure provides the impact of living in Houston and then Baton Rouge for the matched data. The results demonstrate that the attitudes of respondents in affected communities were distinctive compared to other southerners—and to one another. In Houston, we see that people became more supportive of anticrime spending (.085), more worried about being victimized by crime (.052), and less sanguine about having a lost wallet returned (.083) than people in unaffected areas. Not only are those in Houston's high-evacuee zip codes distinctive because of their concern about crime, but so too are Houston residents overall. Baton Rouge shows evidence of a different response, since there support for spending on the poor was comparatively quite low (-.080), as was support for spending on African Americans (-.092). Although not shown, affect toward

African Americans is lower in both Baton Rouge ($\beta = -.044$, $SE = .019$) and Harris County ($\beta = -.041$, $SE = .019$) as compared to unaffected communities. No strong patterns are evident for the other twenty-seven dependent variables examined. As the right-hand side of Figure 2 illustrates, the results are quite similar when we instead use multiple imputation with a control population that includes all southerners living in unaffected areas. This is strong evidence that they are not artifacts of particular data selection decisions or modeling choices.

Harris County and Baton Rouge differ from elsewhere, but do they differ from one another? To test that possibility, we evaluate the claim that each coefficient β for living in one city is larger or smaller than the coefficient for living in the other. For all five of these dependent variables, there is such evidence. For spending on the poor, simulations show that Baton Rouge's coefficient is smaller than Harris County's approximately once per one thousand simulations, providing a p value of .001. For anticrime spending in Harris County, the comparable p value is .016. For both the analyses based on imputed data and the matching analyses, nine of the ten p values are below .10.²²

In short, we observe consistent differences in the specific form of the contextual effect. Harris County residents living near evacuees were more supportive of anticrime spending than their neighbors. Compared to people living elsewhere, Harris County residents also seem more worried about safety and reciprocity in their communities. Baton Rouge residents, by contrast, responded to the evacuees with declining support for spending to assist the poor and African Americans. This suggests that racialized attitudes about poverty and dependency were triggered by the arrival of the evacuees. Effects appear for those who live near the evacuees and for those who simply share a locality with them. The online appendix develops these findings by showing that those for Baton Rouge respondents are concentrated among newspaper readers. That is as we would expect if the mechanism were an interaction of local observations and media-driven frames.

If the politicized places hypothesis is correct, people respond to their personal encounters and changing neighborhood demographics only when there are available frames with which to understand the political impact of the demographic change. Having established variation in individuals' attitudinal responses across communities, we now turn to identifying the corresponding variation in the salient political frames.

Content Analysis of Coverage

The evacuee populations of Harris County and Baton Rouge overlapped. In many cases, the difference between

the evacuees in the two cities was simply a matter of which bus took them away from the Superdome. Yet the hosts' responses differed, as the evidence above makes clear. This section uses content analyses to show that the media framing of the evacuees corresponded with the attitudinal changes identified above.

Local television news remains Americans' primary source of political information, with 54 percent of Americans reporting that they regularly watch local news (Pew Research Center 2006). Thus, the first content analysis compared coverage of the evacuees by Baton Rouge's ABC-affiliated WAFB News to that of Houston's CBS-affiliated KHOU. Transcripts for these stations were not available, but web pages of these stations for all available days from December 1, 2005, through January 31, 2006, were obtained via the Internet Archive (www.archive.org).²³ The critical assumption is that website coverage follows on-air coverage closely. This was a formative period given that the modal SC06 interview in both places was conducted during February 2006.

The in-depth interviews indicated the two frames that were especially salient, those linking the evacuees to crime and those portraying the evacuees as dependent on government aid. To measure this systematically, the content analysis noted any prominent story that discussed the evacuees in connection with criminal activity, and separately noted stories linking the evacuees to poverty or government benefits. For instance, a story titled "3 on the Loose: HPD—11 Evacuees Linked to String of at Least 9 Murders" would very clearly be a connection to crime. Stories about benefits remained salient throughout this period, as FEMA and others covered some evacuees' rent, furniture, and hotel bills. In Houston, seven stories linked the evacuees to crime, and just three mentioned benefits. In Baton Rouge, by contrast, there were five stories connected to crime and eleven linked to benefits. This is initial evidence of a difference in the content of coverage between the two places, as illustrated in Figure 3. In this case, the difference in benefits coverage across the two cities is significant with a two-sided p value of .05. The difference in crime coverage trends in the expected direction but is not significant.

Of Americans, 40 percent reported reading a newspaper on the previous day (Pew Research Center 2006). To further explore the coverage of Katrina evacuees, we now turn to an analysis of newspaper articles from the Baton Rouge-based *Advocate* and the *Houston Chronicle* from October 1, 2005, to February 1, 2006.²⁴ Both are the lead newspapers in their markets, and among the only newspapers in these communities available through LexisNexis. These articles were a stratified random sample of the 467 articles in those two publications that used the words *evacuee* and *Katrina*, producing 99 coded *Chronicle* articles and 113 coded *Advocate* articles. The full coding

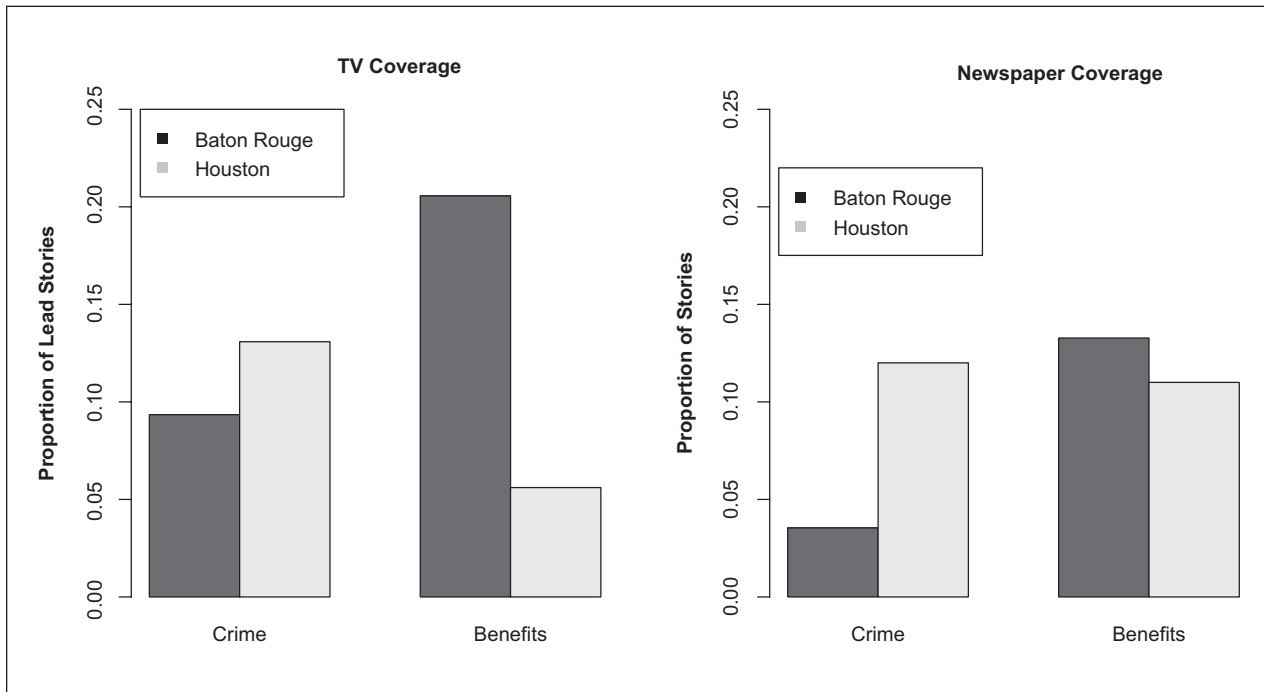


Figure 3. Media Frames of Katrina Evacuees by Community

Note: This figure presents the results of content analyses of coverage by two TV stations and two newspapers in the aftermath of the hurricane. Coverage of crime in Houston was comparatively high, as was coverage of evacuee benefits in Baton Rouge.

scheme is in the online appendix. Newspaper articles are typically structured to provide key information in the first paragraph, so the coding guidelines dictate that any tough cases be decided by using the first paragraph to determine what the author thought was most important. The results from newspaper articles, visible in Figure 3, reinforce those above. In Houston, 12 percent of all articles linked the evacuees to crime, a figure that was just 4 percent in Baton Rouge.²⁵ Two of the Houston articles about evacuee crime were front-page stories; none of the Baton Rouge articles were. The newspaper coverage of evacuee benefits was more even, with 11 percent of Houston articles and 13 percent of Baton Rouge articles falling into that category. For the newspapers, it is the difference in crime coverage that is statistically significant, with a two-sided p value of .04. The online appendix presents additional tests and extended data analyses from the same two newspapers.

For the politicized places hypothesis to operate, the residents of Harris County and Baton Rouge had to have been exposed to different frames. That was clearly the case with both crime and public benefits, a conclusion supported by multiple analyses of television and newspaper coverage. In Houston, the evacuees were framed as bringing crime to the city, whereas in Baton Rouge they were framed more as a population receiving substantial government benefits. This research also examined

newspaper coverage in the *Winston-Salem Journal* and the *Greensboro News and Record* to see if coverage of the evacuees was similar even in relatively unaffected communities elsewhere in the South. There, a total of just nineteen articles were written about evacuees in the period in question. Houston and Baton Rouge had roughly twenty-five times that number of articles. There was variation not just in the content of the coverage about evacuees but also in the salience of that coverage.²⁶ While it is difficult to know *why* the frames differed, a discussion below considers the role of local conditions in producing these frames. Moreover, the “politicized places” hypothesis is to some extent agnostic about the origins of frames: it holds irrespective of whether the frames detailed here first emerged from journalists’ decisions or from local conversations.

Alternative Explanations

Respondents in communities that took in evacuees differ from others in their attitudes, and those differences track the local framing of the evacuees. This fits with the politicized places approach, which contends that people respond to demographic changes by drawing on salient frames. Identifying the causal role of the media in generating these frames is beyond the scope of this article; for the politicized places approach to hold, what matters is

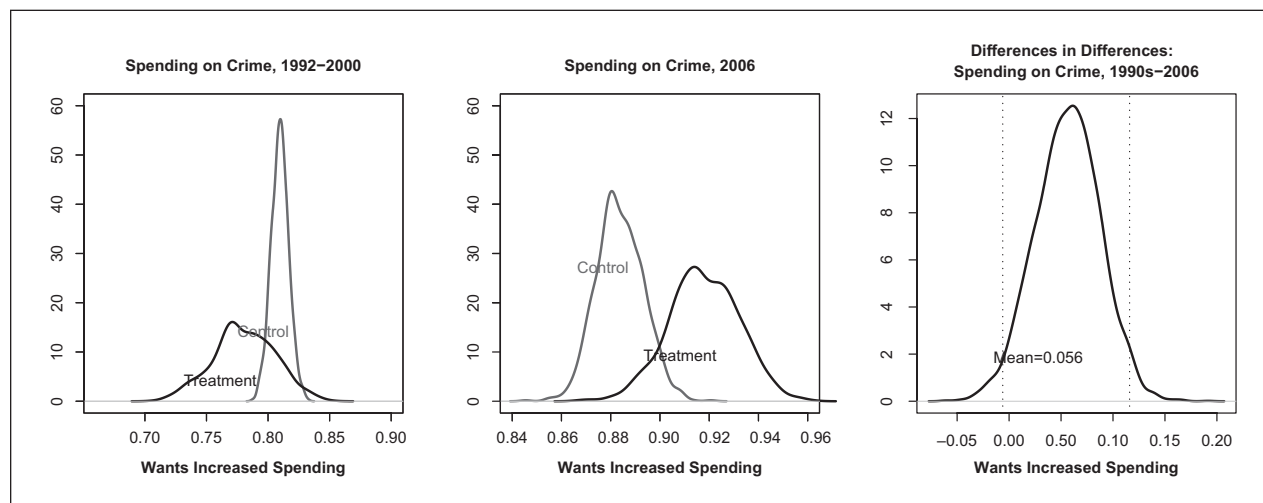


Figure 4. Anticrime Attitudes in Houston Before, After Katrina

Note: This figure presents the distribution of predicted differences-in-differences for attitudes on spending toward crime in Houston versus elsewhere. The left panel shows that prior to Katrina, Harris County residents were perhaps slightly less supportive of crime spending than other southerners. The center panel shows that they were decidedly more supportive of crime spending post-Katrina. The right panel presents the difference-in-difference estimate. The mean of .06 indicates that support for anticrime spending on a 0–1 scale increased by .06 in Houston relative to other communities.

that these frames were sufficiently salient as to be reflected in news coverage. Yet alternative explanations remain. Here, we consider two: that the attitudinal profiles detected above predate Hurricane Katrina and that survey respondents were reacting not to frames but to objective conditions in their communities.

As with any cross-sectional analysis, it is possible that these analyses simply reflect preexisting differences in these communities that affect both attitudes and media coverage. For instance, it is plausible that Houston residents have long been anticrime and that the focus on crime in the Houston media was more a reflection of those attitudes than an influence on them. To confront that possibility, an additional analysis used a difference-in-difference estimator to demonstrate that those differences were not present before the hurricane.

The same question about preferred levels of anticrime spending was included on the GSS conducted in 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, and 2000. During that time, the survey conducted 4,851 interviews in the South, including 154 in Harris County, Texas. The geographic unit is thus an exact match to that used in the post-Katrina analyses.²⁷ So we can estimate whether Houston residents had distinctive attitudes on anticrime spending as compared to other southerners during the 1990s, excluding residents of the highly affected states of Louisiana and Mississippi. The analysis used a linear model with covariates including the respondent's age, race, education, ethnicity, ideology, income, gender, party ID, religion, and religious attendance. GSS data are geocoded only at the county

level, so the model also included the county's logged median household income, its percentage black, and an indicator variable for respondents in Harris County.

The left panel of Figure 4 presents the distribution of predicted responses of Houston residents ("treatment") and other southerners ("control") under the model before Katrina. It shows that on a zero-to-one scale, other southerners average .808 while Houston residents average .790. Compared to southerners outside of affected areas, Houston residents in the 1990s and 2000 were slightly but insignificantly *less* supportive of anticrime spending.

We can estimate an identically specified model for the 2006 data, using only the 872 unaffected southerners in the nationally representative sample and the 410 respondents who lived in Houston or Harris County.²⁸ Given the results above, it is not surprising that in 2006 residents of Houston and Harris County were more supportive of anticrime spending than other southerners, as the middle panel of Figure 4 demonstrates. Using both of the models, we can then simulate the predicted average difference between Houston and the rest of the South for the 1990s and for 2006. Subtracting the two simulated vectors provides us with a difference-in-difference estimate of how much attitudes in Houston changed relative to attitudes elsewhere. The average differenced estimate is .056, with a 95 percent confidence interval from $-.004$ to $.117$ ($p = .07$, two-sided). In other words, *Harris County residents' comparatively high levels of support for anticrime spending were a new phenomenon.*²⁹ As a placebo test, this analysis was also replicated for the largest sample of respondents from a

largely unaffected community, which is the state of Alabama. No strong impact is detected there.³⁰

The post-Katrina experiences of Houston and Baton Rouge were obviously not identical, so another alternative explanation is that the differing objective conditions led to the differing attitudinal responses on their own. Here, we consider whether the objective conditions in the two cities differed in relevant ways. In the case of Baton Rouge and declining support for the poor, this claim is relatively easy to set aside. It was Houston's evacuee population, not Baton Rouge's, that was overwhelmingly poor. For a period, Houston was the primary destination for buses from the Superdome, and 61 percent of the evacuees in Texas reported incomes of less than \$20,000 per year. Baton Rouge officials did not have comparable demographic information about their evacuee population, but it was clear that the evacuees in Baton Rouge included many middle-class evacuees who had access to cars as well. Indeed, that is part of the reason why 8 percent of Houston and Harris County respondents but 41 percent of Baton Rouge respondents actually hosted an evacuee in their homes. If anything, given these population differences, we might have expected frames about government benefits to be more prominent in Houston. There were large numbers of poor evacuees in both cities, so evacuee poverty levels themselves are an insufficient explanation for the patterns we observe.

Similarly, we need to consider whether the media attention to crime in Houston was necessary in fostering anticrime sentiment or whether the rise in crime alone was sufficient. According to the FBI, in Houston there were 24,250 violent crimes in 2006, a 3.5 percent increase over 2004. This reflects a violent crime rate of 1,169 per 100,000 people. The increase in Baton Rouge was a much steeper 20 percent, from 2,444 to 2,954. In Baton Rouge, this meant a higher violent crime rate of 1,403 per 100,000 people.

The number and rate of violent crimes grew more quickly in Baton Rouge, undercutting the notion that attitudinal responses were a straightforward response to objective conditions. Indeed, Varano et al. (2010) show only small increases in murders and robberies in post-Katrina Houston and no discernible increases in auto theft, burglary, aggravated assault, or rape. Longitudinal data from Houston further reinforce this point. Even in 2006, the number of violent crimes and coverage of violent crimes in Houston were down from their peaks in 2002, when just 13 percent of respondents to the Houston Area Survey indicated that crime was Houston's most important problem. By 2006, that number had soared to 31 percent. *After the arrival of the evacuees, Houston residents were paying more attention to fewer crimes.*

The politicized places hypothesis does not claim that objective conditions play no role in shaping attitudes.

Instead, it contends that the interaction of local objective conditions and framing does so. With crime in Houston, and with government benefits in Baton Rouge, that is clearly what we see. In both cases, there were grounds to frame the evacuees as connected either to crime or to government benefits. But the dominant frames in the two places differed, and the attitudinal impacts did as well.

Discussion and Conclusion

The central results recur in several specifications, and they are counterintuitive. The initial predictions that Katrina would generate antipoverty activism proved entirely incorrect (see also Grusky and Ryo 2006). But beyond this sober rejoinder to conventional wisdom, the pattern of findings is instructive about the applicability of key theories. Some variants of contact theory suggest that people's direct experiences with the evacuees would shape their attitudes positively, but the analyses above find no such evidence, even though some of the prerequisites for contact were operating. The differences we do observe are typically *negative* reactions: those who had contact were more negative toward African Americans. Contact with the evacuees seems to have been politicized in specific ways.

For traditional theories of racial threat, the threat posed by the out-group is self-evident, whether it is a threat to jobs, political power, social status, or something else. Yet this theory, although clearly applicable, is not well suited to explain how similar populations of evacuees can produce different attitudinal changes in different communities. More generally, it cannot explain why the same group of people is not always construed as threatening in the same ways. For that, we turn instead to the politicized places hypothesis, which calls attention to the interaction of local encounters and salient frames. It provides a way to understand cross-sectional and temporal variation in contextual effects. To operate, contextual effects require a confluence of factors, an idea that could explain the inconsistent findings of past contextual research.

The evidence provides strong support for this "politicized places" approach. Despite the wide range of experiences with evacuees, only those experiences that fit with available frames appear to have shaped people's attitudes. In Houston, the evacuees were framed as bringing crime to the city. That helped produce two anticrime shifts in attitudes, one among people living near the evacuees and one among Houston residents overall. Personal encounters and proximity do matter under the right conditions. In Baton Rouge, the frame of public benefits was prominent, and those in Baton Rouge reported less support for spending on the poor and on blacks as well as more negative feelings toward those groups. Houston and

Baton Rouge were no strangers to racial and economic diversity before Katrina, but that did not stop a salient demographic change from reshaping attitudes. Through the politicized places hypothesis, we have an explanation for when and how contexts matter that amends theories of racial threat.

Those who worked with the evacuees had many kind things to say about them, but as the survey data show, those charitable thoughts did not influence their political views. Instead, to the extent that people's political views changed, they often responded to news of the evacuees' generous federal benefits by withdrawing their support for federal spending targeting blacks and poor people.³¹ Or, as in Houston, they responded to portrayals of the evacuees as criminals by becoming more anticrime. One interviewee captured this insight when he explained, "Heart-warming, good stories—they don't sell. The stories that sell are the one evacuee who uses a Red Cross [benefit] card in the Galleria, [a local mall]." The newspapers did print positive stories. In Houston, 35 percent of stories were either about host community accomplishments or evacuee accomplishments, and the figure for Baton Rouge was 42 percent. Making the best of a tough situation was a common story line. Yet the attitudinal changes were universally negative toward the evacuees, perhaps reflecting the fact that the success stories were not framed in politically relevant ways. No wonder one Houston evacuee told a survey, "The media blame New Orleans people" (R. K. Wilson and Stein 2006, 16). This pattern of findings is similar to the "double-edged sword" that Aldrich and Crook (2008) find in their study of post-Katrina trailer locations. It also encourages future research exploring the resonance of different types of frames (see also Chong and Druckman 2007a) and personal experiences. Future research could consider the role of social interactions in fostering frames as well. While frames conveyed through the media are easily observed, frames conveyed through conversations may prove influential.

Hurricanes such as Katrina are mercifully rare, and so too are the massive dislocations that Katrina brought to the Gulf Coast. But the hurricane did create a powerful opportunity to study contextual effects in a case where measurement error and selection bias are greatly reduced. Processes that often occur gradually and invisibly were in this case highly salient and easily measured. People who would otherwise never have met poor, lifelong residents of New Orleans spent weeks in close contact with them. This research design of identifying exogenous variation in local demographics, together with the robust results it uncovered, gives us confidence that living in a community that undergoes a rapid demographic change can reshape the political views of residents. But even where such a design is not possible, this research suggests that

to accurately identify contextual effects, we need information on more than just local demographics. We need to know about local elites, about salient events, and about salient frames. Responses to demographic change are shaped by the processes through which they become known to the public.

Acknowledgments

The author thanks Adam Delehanty, Zachary Elsea, and Colin Moore for assistance in conducting the field research, and Matthew Ericson for data. Douglas Kovel and Nick Hayes provided assistance with the content analysis. The author acknowledges advice or comments from Andrea L. Campbell, Claudine Gay, Elisabeth Gerber, Justin Grimmer, Jens Hainmueller, Jennifer Hochschild, Gary King, Stephen Klineberg, Robert D. Putnam, Tom Sander, Jasjeet Sekhon, Anton Strezhnev, Dara Strolovitch, Cara Wong, Rick Weil, the Geary Institute at University College Dublin, the Society for Political Methodology, and members of the American Politics Research and Applied Statistics Workshops at Harvard University. He is grateful as well to the fifty-nine officials and community leaders in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas who agreed to be interviewed and to the *Political Research Quarterly* editors and anonymous reviewers for all their work strengthening this research. The interviews were conducted with the approval of the Harvard University Committee on Human Subjects (F13271-101).

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the authorship and/or publication of this article.

Funding

This research was funded by the Center for American Political Studies, the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance, and the Multidisciplinary Program on Inequality and Social Policy at Harvard University. It also received institutional support from Yale's Center for the Study of American Politics and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Political Science.

Notes

1. Following Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995), this article defines contextual effects as the impacts of social interactions or observations within a bounded environment.
2. The "treatment" of living in a community alongside many evacuees was highly correlated with one's distance from New Orleans, meaning that the "as if random" assumption underpinning natural experiments (Dunning 2008) is not plausible and this is not productively thought of as a natural experiment. Instead, it is an opportunity to use exogenous variation to overcome the selection bias that commonly plagues research on contextual effects.
3. For an exception now in progress, see Enos (2011).

4. Although the article sometimes uses the term “Houston” for convenience, the empirical results pertain to the nearly four million residents of Harris County, approximately two million of whom live in the city of Houston.
5. For instance, in a Pew survey conducted in September 2005, significant majorities of both blacks and whites thought that those who stayed behind “didn’t have a way to leave” (Pew Research Center 2005). Large majorities also believed that President Bush could have done more to get relief efforts moving.
6. Elsewhere, there is ample evidence of such efforts, from the infamous police barricade preventing evacuees from entering Jefferson Parish to the marginalization efforts documented in *Desert Bayou*.
7. Information is defined as knowledge about a specific fact or event and could include answers to such questions as, “How are the evacuees affecting my community?” One can glean information from the immediate surroundings in many ways, including through one’s own observations, through interpersonal contact, through local news stories, and through conversations with other residents.
8. Recent research contends that these conditions are not strictly necessary, although each can facilitate contact’s capacity to reduce prejudice (Pettigrew 1998).
9. For more extended discussions of frames, including the interplay of competing frames, see Kinder (1998), Gamson (1992), Chong and Druckman (2007a), and Chong and Druckman (2007b).
10. Alongside these canonical findings is a growing literature on framing in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, including Ben-Porath and Shaker (2007), Iyengar and Morin (2006), Fong and Luttmner (2009), and Harris-Lacewell, Imai, and Yamamoto (2007).
11. This exclusion is an empirical choice that improves the credibility of the underlying comparisons. The analyses compare people in Houston to those in Dallas, not those in Detroit. Given the results of Hopkins (2010) and Hopkins (forthcoming), however, we know that the “politicized places” hypothesis applies beyond the South and beyond native-born blacks.
12. To prevent more substantial measurement error, these analyses omit respondents who lived in high-evacuee states but were not asked about their contact with the evacuees. Within the heavily affected communities, 1.8 percent of survey respondents (13) identified themselves Katrina evacuees.
13. The vast majority of interviews were conducted in person and were semistructured interviews of those individuals who had appeared most prominently in the post-Katrina news reporting in their specific communities. Sampled communities included eight in Arkansas as well as Houston and the surrounding Harris County and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and were chosen to maximize variation in local demographics prior to the hurricane.
14. Using propensity score matching instead generates the same substantive conclusions.
15. Item nonresponse means that without this correction, some 13 percent of the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey respondents would be deleted.
16. “Affected” means living in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas. This is a reasonable definition, in that after Oklahoma, the percentage of evacuees in the mean community drops by more than half, to just 1 evacuee for every 769 locals on average in Florida. In Baton Rouge, by contrast, the number was approximately 1 evacuee per 15 residents. In Houston, it was 1 evacuee per 133 residents.
17. The covariates used in matching include indicator variables for African Americans, males, Hispanics, Protestants, and members of religious congregations; the tract’s percentage black and median household income in 2000; the county’s percentage voting for Bush in 2000; the respondent’s income in dollars; the respondent’s education and age in years; a three-category measure of party identification; a five-category measure of political ideology; and a five-category measure of attendance at religious services.
18. The question of the appropriate standard errors using matching is not fully resolved. This article follows the approach of Ho et al. (2007) by including all of the independent variables in both the matching procedure and the parametric analysis.
19. In light of the content analyses below, the ten dependent variables most closely related to crime, safety, race, and poverty are presented. But the analyses were conducted on a total of thirty-three dependent variables. This provides a source of discriminant validity since the effects for those other measures are always small or null. They include attitudes on immigration, the wealthy, and the community. Of the key dependent variables, the measures of trust, fear of crime, and expectations about someone returning a lost wallet have four response categories. Preferred spending levels have three, and affect is measured using a 0–100 feeling thermometer. The online appendix, available at <http://prq.sagepub.com/supplemental/>, details the question wording for dependent variables; for independent variables, the codebook is available online at www.cfsv.org/communitysurvey.
20. Expanding the universe of controls can only improve covariate balance. In this updated matching, respondents who had contact with evacuees were matched to eighty-one respondents from Arkansas, fifty from Harris County, fifty-four from Baton Rouge, four from Kentucky, five from Maryland, ninety-one from North Carolina, two from South Carolina, eight from Virginia, and two from West Virginia.
21. For example, the standard error for the Houston crime spending estimate drops from .021 to .019. For spending on blacks in Baton Rouge, the estimate drops from .024 to .022.

22. For the multiply imputed analyses, the p value on the hypothesis that Baton Rouge residents are less likely to expect their wallets returned is .15.
23. Archived web pages are not available consistently for these stations before December 1, 2005. Nonetheless, other stations were not available with the same consistency. Baton Rouge's NBC 33, for example, provides archived web pages for only 10 percent of the days during this period.
24. Although Katrina struck at the end of August, in September, the term *evacuee* covered practically everyone who had lived in New Orleans, making October 1st a good starting date in understanding attitudes toward the predominantly poor and African American group that continued to need publicly provided shelter.
25. This finding is easy to double-check since one might also search for the joint appearance of the words *crime* and *evacuee*. Those searches brought up sixteen *Chronicle* articles and seven *Advocate* articles.
26. This is not to deny that national coverage of the evacuees shaped opinions. Separate analyses of national television coverage through the Vanderbilt Television News Archive demonstrate that the benefits frame was salient not just in Baton Rouge but across the country. Still, because national coverage acts relatively evenly across space, this section has focused on identifying local variation in coverage.
27. County-level geographic identifiers were obtained under a confidentiality agreement with the General Social Survey (GSS). The uses of the GSS data detailed here were specifically approved as well.
28. Of these 410 respondents, 10 were part of the national sample and 400 were part of the targeted oversample discussed above.
29. In the Baton Rouge case, we have a similar survey question administered in the 2004 National Election Study, but we do not have a sufficient number of respondents in Baton Rouge, so one must instead make an assumption about their views relative to others in their state. This assumption is sufficiently heroic that the results are not presented here, but they are available on request and do reinforce the claim that Baton Rouge became distinctive after 2004.
30. The GSS provides 232 Alabama respondents in the 1990s; the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey provides 44 in 2006. The difference-in-difference estimate comparing their crime spending attitudes to those of other unaffected respondents is .01 with a standard error of .06.
31. This response was not concentrated among a specific sub-population; other analyses found no interaction between living in a host community and an indicator for black respondents. Indeed, during a call-in show on a predominantly black radio station, a Houston official was surprised by the vehemence of the anti-evacuee sentiment from the black community. They were "identical to the white community, maybe even stating it more emphatically." This is striking given the racially polarized response to the

storm documented in Gross and Kohenak (2007); Frymer, Strolovitch, and Warren (2006); and Huddy and Feldman (2006).

References

- Aldrich, Daniel P., and Kevin Crook. 2008. "Strong Civil Society as a Double-Edged Sword." *Political Research Quarterly* 61:379-90.
- Allport, Gordon W. 1954. *The Nature of Prejudice*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books.
- Ben-Porath, Eran, and Lee K. Shaker. 2007. "Ethnicity and Episodic Framing in the Wake of Hurricane Katrina." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April.
- Berinsky, Adam J., and Donald R. Kinder. 2006. "Making Sense of Issues through Media Frames: Understanding the Kosovo Crisis." *Journal of Politics* 68:640-56.
- Blalock, Hubert M. 1967. *Toward a Theory of Minority-Group Relations*. New York: John Wiley.
- Books, John, and Charles Prysby. 1999. "Contextual Effects on Retrospective Economic Evaluations: The Impact of the State and Local Economy." *Political Behavior* 21:1-16.
- Chong, Dennis, and James N. Druckman. 2007a. "Framing Public Opinion in Competitive Democracies." *American Political Science Review* 101:637-55.
- Chong, Dennis, and James N. Druckman. 2007b. "A Theory of Framing and Opinion Formation." *Journal of Communication* 57:99-118.
- Diamond, Alexis, and Jasjeet Sekhon. 2008. "Genetic Matching for Estimating Causal Effects: A General Multivariate Matching Method for Achieving Balance in Observational Studies." <http://sekhon.berkeley.edu/>.
- Dunning, Thad. 2008. "Improving Causal Inference: Strengths and Limitations of Natural Experiments." *Political Research Quarterly* 61:282-93.
- Enos, Ryan D. 2011. "What Tearing Down Public Housing Projects Teaches Us about the Effect of Racial Threat on Political Participation." Harvard University. http://ryandenos.com/papers/chicago_threat.pdf
- Fong, Christina M. and Erzo F.P. Luttmer. 2009. "What Determines Giving to Hurricane Katrina Victims? Experimental Evidence on Racial Group Loyalty." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 1(2):64-87.
- Frymer, Paul, Dara Z. Strolovitch, and Dorian T. Warren. 2006. "New Orleans Is Not the Exception: Re-politicizing the Study of Racial Inequality." *Du Bois Review* 3:37-57.
- Gamson, William A. 1992. *Talking Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gay, Claudine. 2006. "Seeing Difference: The Effect of Economic Disparity on Black Attitudes toward Latinos." *American Journal of Political Science* 50:982-97.
- Gilens, Martin. 1999. *Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Anti-poverty Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Giles, Michael W., and Kaenan Hertz. 1994. "Racial Threat and Partisan Identification." *American Political Science Review* 88:317-26.
- Glaser, James M. 1994. "Back to the Black Belt: Racial Environment and White Racial Attitudes in the South." *Journal of Politics* 56:21-41.
- Green, Donald P., Dara Z. Strolovitch, and Janelle S. Wong. 1998. "Defended Neighborhoods, Integration, and Racially Motivated Crime." *American Journal of Sociology* 104: 372-403.
- Gross, Kimberly, and Marcie Kohenak. 2007. "Race, Poverty, and Causal Attributions: Media Framing of the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April.
- Grusky, David B., and Emily Ryo. 2006. "Did Katrina Recalibrate Attitudes Toward Poverty and Inequality?" *Du Bois Review* 3:59-82.
- Harris-Lacewell, Melissa, Kosuke Imai, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2007. "Racial Gaps in the Response to Hurricane Katrina: An Experimental Study." <http://imai.princeton.edu>.
- Ho, Daniel E., Gary King, Kosuke Imai, and Elizabeth Stuart. 2007. "Matching as Nonparametric Preprocessing for Improving Parametric Causal Inference." *Political Analysis* 10:1-38.
- Hopkins, Daniel J. 2010. "Politicized Places: Explaining Where and When Immigrants Provoke Local Opposition." *American Political Science Review* 104:40-60.
- Hopkins, Daniel J. Forthcoming. "National Debates, Local Responses: The Origins of Local Concern about Immigration in the U.S. and the U.K." *British Journal of Political Science*.
- Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1995. *Citizens, Politics and Social Communication: Information and Influence in an Election Campaign*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Huddy, Leonie and Stanley Feldman. 2006. "Worlds Apart: Blacks and Whites React to Hurricane Katrina." *Du Bois Review* 3:97-113.
- Iyengar, Shanto, and Donald R. Kinder. 1987. *News That Matters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Iyengar, Shanto, and Richard Morin. 2006. "National Disasters in Black and White." *Washington Post*, June 8. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2006/06/07/AR2006060701177.html>.
- Kahneman, Daniel, and Amos Tversky. 1979. "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk." *Econometrica* 47:263-92.
- Key, V. O. 1949. *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. New York: Knopf.
- Kilday, Anne Marie, and Armando Villafranca. 2006. "Residents Urge White to Send Evacuees Home: Neighborhood Holds Meeting to Discuss Growing Crime Problem." *Houston Chronicle*, August 31, B1.
- Kinder, Donald R. 1998. "Communication and Opinion." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1:167-97.
- Kinder, Donald R., and D. Roderick Kiewiet. 1981. "Sociotropic Politics: The American Case." *British Journal of Political Science* 11:129-61.
- King, Gary, James Honaker, Anne Joseph, and Kenneth Scheve. 2001. "Analyzing Incomplete Political Science Data: An Alternative Algorithm for Multiple Imputation." *American Political Science Review* 95:49-69.
- Kruse, Kevin M. 2005. *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Mendelberg, Tali. 2001. *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Mutz, Diana C. 1994. "Contextualizing Personal Experience: The Role of Mass Media." *Journal of Politics* 56: 689-714.
- Mutz, Diana C. 1998. *Impersonal Influence: How Perceptions of Mass Collectives Affect Political Attitudes*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mutz, Diana C., and Jeffrey J. Mondak. 1997. "Dimensions of Sociotropic Behavior: Group-Based Judgments of Fairness and Well-Being." *American Journal of Political Science* 41: 284-308.
- Oliver, J. Eric, and Janelle Wong. 2003. "Intergroup Prejudice in Multiethnic Settings." *American Journal of Political Science* 47:567-82.
- Pettigrew, Thomas F. 1998. "Intergroup Contact Theory." *Annual Review of Psychology* 49:65-85.
- Pew Research Center. 2005. "Huge Racial Divide over Katrina and Its Consequences." <http://people-press.org/reports/pdf/255.pdf>.
- Pew Research Center. 2006. "Maturing Internet News Audience—Broader Than Deep." <http://people-press.org/reports/pdf/282.pdf>.
- Putnam, Robert D. 2007. "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the 21st Century: The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30: 137-74.
- Schafer, Joseph L. 1997. *Analysis of Incomplete Multivariate Data*. London: Chapman & Hall.
- Stein, Robert M., Stephanie Shirley Post, and Allison Rinden. 2000. "Reconciling Context and Contact Effects on Racial Attitudes." *Political Research Quarterly* 53: 285-303.
- Taylor, Marylee C. 1998. "How White Attitudes Vary with the Racial Composition of Local Populations: Numbers Count." *American Sociological Review* 63:512-35.
- Tropp, Linda R., and Thomas E. Pettigrew. 2005. "Relationships Between Intergroup Contact and Prejudice among

- Minority and Majority Status Groups.” *Psychological Science* 16:951-57.
- Varano, Sean P., Joseph A. Schafer, Jeffrey M. Cancino, Scott H. Decker, and Jack R. Greene. 2010. “A Tale of Three Cities: Crime and Displacement after Hurricane Katrina.” *Journal of Criminal Justice* 38:42-50.
- Welch, Susan, Lee Sigelman, Timothy Bledsoe, and Michael Combs. 2001. *Race and Place: Race Relations in an American City*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilson, Rick K., and Robert M. Stein. 2006. “Katrina Evacuees in Houston: One Year Out.” <http://brl.rice.edu/katrina/>.
- Wilson, William J., and Richard P. Taub. 2006. *There Goes the Neighborhood: Racial, Ethnic, and Class Tensions in Four Chicago Neighborhoods and Their Meaning for America*. New York: Vintage.
- Zaller, John R. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York: Cambridge University Press.