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Abstract

This single-case study explores the use of popular music in response to the destruction of New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina in August, 2005. Using research in sociology of disaster and uses and gratifications theory in mass communication, data collected included original music written in response to the hurricane, major benefit concerts that aired in the wake, and re-appropriated music that developed new meaning when used in conjunction to the case. Analysis yielded that popular music was used to raise awareness, raise funds, and express emotion following the disaster. Common themes throughout include the impact of genre on how this was accomplished and the messages it yielded, the power of collective effervescence, and the importance of space and place when dealing with tragedy through music.

'DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO MISS NEW ORLEANS?' THE USE OF POPULAR
MUSIC AFTER HURRICANE KATRINA

by

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B.A., Indiana University, 2006
M.A., Syracuse University, 2009

Dissertation

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Mass Communications

Syracuse University
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Chapter 1

Introduction

On September 2, 2005, days after Hurricane Katrina lay waste to much of the Gulf Coast by ripping through Mississippi and toppling the levees of New Orleans, Kanye West appeared on live television as part of the NBC's "A Concert for Hurricane Relief." Standing next to comedian Mike Meyers (who read off a teleprompter somberly), West immediately went off script, rambling off a manifesto about the dire situation on the ground in New Orleans, about his own guilt for not doing enough, and about the violence breaking out throughout the city. After he finished, a nervous Mike Meyers said a few more words before West uttered what became almost a rallying cry for those noticing a racial and socio-economic pattern to the citizens who appeared to be suffering the most from Katrina's wrath: "George Bush doesn't care about black people."

It's easy to dismiss the opinions of celebrities, especially one like West who has found his foot in his mouth more times than can be counted-this event finds itself one of the first in a long-line of televised incidents starring West that have stirred both controversy and national conversation. But in 2010, when former President George Bush released his memoirs, he revealed the low point of his presidency as that moment when Kanye West accused him of being racist during the Katrina relief efforts (Allen, 2010). When a president who found himself at the helm during the most deadly attack on US soil, who during his tenure involved the

country in two wars, and whose Vice-President shot a man in the face while in office puts this much stock in the actions of a rapper, it's time to take notice and admit the impact that popular culture can have on society at large (an ideology that has been largely accepted academically).

In the weeks, months, and years following Hurricane Katrina's devastation of the port city of New Orleans, people turned to song as a way of expressing hope, anger, and every facet of human emotion in between. Because of the "musicality" of the city, the notion of the benefit album and concert was used particularly well, not just to raise money to rebuild the city, but to rebuild morale and the music that existed prior to the disaster.

This project does not seek to explore some kind of effect of music used after tragedy; rather, it is looking at the musical artifacts being used as a response, and analyzing their messages. The amount of time that has passed since the event makes an effects study implausible, but it also shifts the focus off of the messages produced and intended meaning and negotiated readings of these messages by artists responding to the event that warrant analysis and contextualization on their own merit.

This project seeks to answer the following:

RQ1: How was music used as a way of coping, both emotionally and financially, after Hurricane Katrina?

RQ2: What music was produced after Hurricane Katrina and for what purposes?

RQ3: Are these two methods of coping (emotionally and financially) through music connected? If so, in what ways?

Chapter 2

The Uses and Gratifications of Music

Mass Communication Theory

My work is interdisciplinary in nature. When I chose this research agenda, I quickly realized that in order to make a cohesive argument and examine the individual and societal levels of using music as a way of coping after tragedy or disaster, I would have to look outside of my discipline to fully comprehend this. That said, Uses and Gratification (Blumler, Katz, et al.) is the mass communication theory that I will predominantly use in this work.

Uses and Gratifications

Uses and Gratifications Theory assumes an active audience, one that chooses media to serve different purposes. The use of music can be explained by all five major categorical uses outlined in early Uses and Gratifications work- cognitive, affective, personal, social, and tension release. For the purposes of music and emotion, on the individual level, the affective aspect and tension release aspect are the most pertinent.

The affective proponent of Uses and Gratification deals directly with how a person utilizes media to serve an emotional need, whether it's watching a comedic film to laugh, or listening to a sad song to have a good cry. This second example actually blends into the tension relief aspect of Uses and Gratification, with psychological studies finding that the act of crying tears of sadness releases the hormone prolactin, a "feel good"

hormone that is also secreted when mother's breastfeed infants and during orgasm (Levitin, 2008). Essentially, people choose sad movies or sad music when they're sad because of a biological need to cry and release this hormone, so they will feel better. This is what I mean when I say that my research is interdisciplinary in nature. While mass media research alone can point to people using music for emotional response or tension release, musical psychology can aide us in the "why" aspect.

In 1989, James Carey emphasized the need to explore the "ritual" side of communication in addition to merely looking at how media is transmitted (Carey, 1989). According to Carey, "a ritual view in communication is directed not towards the extension of messages in space, but towards the maintenance of society in time: not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs" (Carey, 1989). He offers that the explanation of why American research in media deals with this transmission side rather than the ritual side is that the ritual side suggests a shared culture, something that seems foreign and against typical American ideologies of "obsessive individualism;" we've grasped so strongly on to this idea of a cultural melting pot and individual diversity that it's almost unnatural for us to want to examine communication from a standpoint that suggests a common cultural linkage in this country, and therefore miss out on an entire sphere of the study of communication.

Ruggiero re-asserts the importance of uses and gratification theory and its changing role in the digital world of the 21st century (Ruggiero, 2000). He also claims that more research should be done using this theoretical framework and looking at interactivity and interpersonal effects, something that can be related to the idea of the benefit concert, both in the fact that most of these take on the form of a telethon with "users" having the ability

to call in and give money to a cause and in the community forged by people watching and using this media together.

The importance of the interpersonal aspect of uses and gratification theory is again asserted in a study by Perse and Courtright. After conducting a survey in which they asked respondents to rank how useful different methods of communications were at fulfilling their needs, it was concluded that, as most previous studies had discovered, those that existing in a social realm and included more interpersonal interactivity proved most useful (Perse & Courtright, 1993).

As this is not an audience-centralized study, the focus of this inquiry relates to how artists and producers used music as a mechanism of coping post-Katrina. Additional studies may be done to analyze how these products were used by audiences, but time and distance from the original event makes self-reporting by audience members unreliable at this time. What is available for analysis is the musical response by artists. Admittedly, the responses by popular musicians are the focus of this project not just because ease of access, but because celebrity drives how widespread these musical messages are, and, in turn, suggest an impact that can not be measured by this study, but is important to note.

Neurological aspects of music use

While people may feel an emotional reaction to music, studies have only recently begun to show the actual physical reaction to music that the brain undergoes. The field of psychology has long accepted that music can be useful in therapeutic ways, and music has traditionally been used as a way to cope with personal grieving.

In his book *Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain*, Oliver Sacks (2007) asserts that human beings are intrinsically musical, as he examines remarkable cases in which music and the brain are linked. One man is struck by lightning and develops the ability to compose piano music overnight. Another chapter looks at musical savants, and another focuses on the ideas of the blind musician. He discusses the concept of perfect pitch, and the phenomenon of music being able to “treat” some Parkinson’s patients. Other ideas are more universally relatable, including the presence of music in dreams. Sacks’ scientific, neurological background developed in this book provides solid evidence to attest to the natural, human instinct to turn to music as a way of coping or healing.

Further cognitive research has been done on the connection between the human brain and music, with one study examining the perceptions of music by non-musicians after brain trauma (Peretz et al., 1998). Experiments warranted that even when subjects were unable to process music, they were still able to make judgments on it emotionally, determining whether it was happy or sad. This provides another strong example of how the brain processes music, and the strong ties between music and emotion on the neurological level.

While music psychology can give a good understanding of the cognitive effects of music, arguments have been made that the blending of music psychology and music theory would give a better understanding of how music is perceived on the individual level. Krumhansl postulates that by using more sophisticated theoretical concepts already used in music theory to design better psychological experiments, different results could be warranted (Krumhansl, 1995). The idea that both sciences can be used to better each

other can apply to how other disciplines examine music as well. To merely look at it from a communications standpoint or anthropological view doesn't begin to explain the complex ways in which humans utilize this art form.

Conceptualizing coping

The concept of "coping" after disaster on a personal and societal level has been explored extensively in the areas of psychology and sociology. Coping is defined as an exercise in actively attempting to ameliorate problems, deal with stress, or respond to conflict on an interpersonal or individual level (Hodgkinson & Stewart, 1997). Differences in coping mechanisms have been found relating to gender and situation (Billings & Moos, 1981). In sociology, coping strategies can be a cohesive element of a group initially, but as time moves on and difference indicators take hold (religion being a significant one), it can actually be divisive to a community (Hawdon & Ryan, 2011).

With a mass communication focus, this inquiry examines the products created by musicians in response to these events. Though these songs (and the messages they produce) are most likely only one piece of the coping process that the individuals responding to the event of Hurricane Katrina went through post-tragedy, they are uniquely public manifestations of the individual coping process. Attention is drawn to these methods of coping through musical production because of a celebrity-driven culture, and because of the unique platform these artists were given in attracting an audience in the early days of social media.

Music and grief

The psychological dependence on using music to express mourning and grief is made apparent by the use of music at funerals and memorial services. Religious chanting and music has long been used to both express grief and to comfort the griever through repetition and theological reassurance. There has, however, been a trend as of late of incorporating popular songs in lieu of religious music at funerals (Cook & Walter, 2005). The idea that popular music can comfort and express emotion in the same way that religious music can is a revolutionary one, and noteworthy because of what it says about the relevance and usefulness of popular media in general.

While the idea of listening to sad songs when you're already sad seems counterproductive, it's a method of assuaging one's grief that people often turn to instinctively without stopping to question why. Sacks states that human beings listen to sad music for one of two reasons; they either find relief and comfort in the idea that they aren't alone in their grief, or they use it as a way to actually make themselves cry in order to express their feelings in a way that they might be unable or unwilling to otherwise (Sacks, 2007). Levitin takes this idea further by explaining the biologically ingrained reasons why we feel the need to make ourselves cry, explaining that studies have shown that the hormone released when a person cries actual tears of sadness (not tears of joy, or tearing of the eye in response to stimulus) is the same one that causes an almost euphoric feeling that some women experience while breastfeeding their babies.

Chapter 3

Music and Tragedy

After national tragedies, when most entertainment media is shunned and seen as shallow and not important, people seem to actively seek out music as a way to express their grief and come to terms with loss.

Popular culture, by definition, is looking not at all aspects of the cultural experience, but rather the hegemonically dominant ones (Storey, 2003). To study popular culture is not to attempt to formulate a holistic understanding of society, but to understand what ideas, products, and media manage to shove their way to the forefront. While looking at popular music in the United States won't give one a complete and detailed idea of every kind of music that every American is listening to, it will allow for the study of the songs that reach popularity and are recognizable nation-wide (Fiske, 1995).

Popular Music

Since its inception, popular music research has been, by nature, interdisciplinary. One significant issue came from the fact that musicologists, long studying "important" texts, were largely uneasy about using their expertise and devoting time to the frivolity of studying the popular (Tagg, 1982). As a result, there exist a number of studies done in the field with major problems, both methodologically and analytically, that could have benefitted from the interdisciplinary approach (particularly between mass communication studies, sociology, and musicology) that is essential to fully understanding popular music.

One good example of this is from a 1971 study by Denisoff and Levine, in which an attempt to understand the sociopolitical effects of popular music was measured quantitatively by seeing if college students could identify the *correct* meanings of the lyrics to the song “Eve of Destruction” (Denisoff & Levine, 1971). Musicologists today would scoff at the idea that there can be one correct reading of lyrics, but this brand new field lacked communication and positive working relationships between disciplines at the time that would have probably prevented this type of research from taking place.

When not looking at music from a historical perspective, many studies in communication examine it from a media effects perspective (St. Lawrence & Joyner, 1991). The debate surrounding the effects of violent song lyrics on teenagers is a raging one, with aggressive and depressing lyrics being blamed for everything from school shootings to suicide. In his book *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager* (Hine, 1999), Thomas Hine uses a historical lens to explore issues relating to teens, one of them being music. He mentions an incident from the 1990’s, when a teenage girl gave birth to a baby in the bathroom during her prom, threw it in the trash, and returned to the dance. When the girl’s personal life was dragged through the media, many chose to focus on the fact that she was a fan of the heavy-metal group Metallica, and had actually requested one of their songs at the prom after she gave birth. The lyrics were scrutinized by adults searching for some kind of hidden meaning, with a focus on one particular phrase: “New blood joins the Earth and quickly he’s subdued.”

While concrete, research-based answers to the questions surrounding the exact amount of influence that music has on listeners are still out of reach, the fact that popular opinion seems to be that music makes some kind of impact is certainly relevant. But

while many studies focus on the influence of music on an event or incident, I am more interested in noting the actual messages and the use of these messages in response to an event or tragedy, something that warrants further exploration.

Significant cultural movements almost always have some kind of connection to popular music, with the social change and upheaval in the United States during the 1960's being a prime example. Protest songs, used to convey displeasure with racial and gender injustices and an unpopular war conveyed the ability for music to express both a message and a sentiment (Eyerman & Jamison, 1995).

Pop Culture and Tragedy

When looking at how popular media is used after a significant incident, the days and months following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, offer a look how entertainment is treated after an unprecedented tragic event. In the immediate wake of the attacks, almost all television channels canceled regular programming and focused only on the unfolding news, with the coverage by the networks going on for the longest continuous length of time in history (Castleman & Podrazik, 2003). In the following weeks, entertainment content was edited and altered so as not to make mention of terrorism or bring about disturbing memories to viewers. Box-office ticket sales of films were down, and then- New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani even appeared on the first post 9/11 episode of *Saturday Night Live* to literally tell New Yorkers and viewers at home that it was okay to laugh and be entertained again. But while films and entertainment television were either altered or ignored completely in the somber wake of the attacks, music was sought out as a way to heal, with noted concerts and performances

at the Super Bowl Halftime Show and other sporting events commemorating the victims later that year (Castleman & Podrazik, 2003).

“Today we are all New Yorkers”: National Identity After National Tragedies

If one is to assume that people in the United States use large-scale benefit concerts as a means of mourning together, then one assumes that this shared grieving through music is, for the most part, a cultural phenomenon. Therefore, there must be some kind of unifying cultural factor in this country that prides itself on being a diverse “melting pots” of cultures, founded by settlers and immigrants from all over the world. The problem with pinpointing some kind of national identity that would make it plausible for the country to come together and mourn as a group after a national tragedy is that it’s often the national tragedy itself that unifies this country, with the events of September 11, 2001, acting as a major unifier, if only for a short while.

One of the new ways in which we mourn on a larger, national scale and form a cultural basis for national image and identity is through digital memorials on the Internet. Beginning after September 11th, montage videos featuring images from newspapers, magazine, and other sources paired with popular music began appearing (Hess, 2007). It is a way to mourn and recognize grief on a larger, national scale, using popular images and music designed to evoke feeling and emotion from the masses in the way only popular culture can.

The need to mourn as a group is not a new one, and has been practiced for a long time in traditional media, especially when dealing with celebrities. Newsmagazines have traditionally served that role, with public discourse about a public figure being not only

the natural choice for acknowledging and mourning that person, but necessary in moving on and grieving from a cultural standpoint (Kitch, 2000).

The rise of patriotic and, at times, nationalistic language, themes, and ideas that occur in the news media following a tragic event is another major way to unify an otherwise diverse national culture. A 2004 study looking at newsmagazines after September 11th found that the intensely patriotic rhetoric helped to coalesce the nation and spur public support for the impending “war on terror” (Hutcheson, et al., 2004) Words and phrases are carefully chosen to build a national identity and a sense of purpose, a goal that also translates when making song and artist choices for the benefit and tribute concerts following these events. The magnitude of 9/11 made it unique from other events in United States history that acted as unifiers of the nation, with nationalism and patriotism arising as a reaction to the intensely threatening circumstances that Americans found themselves in (Li & Brewer, 2004).

Popular Music as “Relief”

Through benefit concerts, tribute songs, and original music produced after a tragic event, music is often used in relief efforts. Literature in this area focuses on the healing properties, as well as the ability to fundraise using music.

Benefit concerts and telethons

Though holding a benefit concert and using popular music as a way to raise money, awareness, and memorializing a tragedy had been done before (former Beatle George Harrison’s “A Concert for Bangladesh” in 1971 being perhaps the most notable),

nothing precedes 1985's Live Aid in terms of size, scope, and success (Devereux, 1996). Held on July 13th on two continents (stadiums were filled in Philadelphia and London), popular musicians of the day came together in an effort organized by Bob Geldof to raise awareness and money to fight famine in Africa (Geldof, 1986). The concept of networking is an essential one in charity fundraising, and the theory that by involving celebrities in an event, you tap into their "networks," which usually involve other A-list celebrities (Street, 2002), proved to be right, and the event was extremely successful.

In her article "Soundtrack to a Crisis; Music, Context, Discourse," Forman provides a textual analysis of music after the terrorists attacks of September 11th (Forman, 2002). She discusses the use and purpose of music in a post-9/11 society, offering a look at radio activity after the attacks (what songs were requested, which ones were avoided or banned altogether) and songs that were quickly produced and distributed in order to raise money for relief funds. Forman also discusses one benefit concert/telethon (*America: A Tribute to Heroes*), offering an analysis of the concert by focusing on song choice and the presence of patriotism and nationalism throughout the performances.

Tribute songs

If one doubts the inherent connection between music and mourning, consider this: the best selling single of all times is not by the Beatles, or Elvis, it's not a popular Christmas song that's been around for sixty-plus years or sung by Madonna. It's a title held by "Candle in the Wind '97," a re-appropriation of his song about Marilyn Monroe recorded by Elton John as a tribute to the fallen Princess Diana (Hubert, 1999). Mourned

publicly and on a grand scale in England despite her divorce from Prince Charles and frequent slandering in the tabloids, the song was purchased in stores and requested on the radio in record numbers, symbolizing a need to feel connected to the Princess and the tragedy and need to mourn can be stimulated emotionally through popular music.

On the flip-side of the “music as relief” discussion lies the theories presented by Jacques Attali’s work “Noise; The Political Economy of Music” (1985). His thesis statement is that “to make noise is to interrupt a transmission, to disconnect, to kill. It is a simulacrum of murder” (p 26). It makes his extended metaphor work; if noise is violent, then music, the arrangement of noise to create a way for primitive urges to be sublimated in some way, to establish some kind of social meaning, is kind of a ritual sacrifice (of whatever the noise “killed”).

Attali describes how noise can be physically painful, stating that “in its biological reality, noise is a source of pain. Beyond a certain limit, it becomes an immaterial weapon of death. The ear...can be damaged...Diminished intellectual capacity, accelerated respiration and heartbeat, hypertension, slowed digestion, neurosis, altered diction; these are the consequences of excessive sound in an environment” (p 27). But he also addresses the way that music, not just noise can play the powerful role of reassurance, calming anxiety and dissonance in one’s mind.

Chapter 4

Disaster Studies and the Case for Studying Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans

“There’s no such thing as a natural disaster”

There are certainly other tragedies where music has been used to cope and heal, but Hurricane Katrina’s cultural impact on New Orleans make it an ideal case study because of the musical nature of the city, the enormity of the hurricane, and the anger and reaction to the response (or lack thereof) on all levels of government.

The current thinking in the area of disaster studies is that there is no such thing as a truly “natural” disaster (Quarantelli, 1998) something that I think applies to Katrina and New Orleans particularly well. The idea is that it’s not the act of nature that makes a disaster, but the reaction after that is the actual “disaster.” This model fits Katrina perfectly; it wasn’t the Hurricane itself, but the poor construction of the levees that then broke and flooded the city that resulted in the tragedy and anger.

A similar instance involving human “error” that accounts for almost all aspects of a natural disaster is looking at the Chicago heat wave of 1995 (Klinenberg, 2003). People did not die because of the extraordinary heat; they died for a number of sociological issues that the heat wave brought to light. Many elderly people passed away because they had been all but forgotten; single, elderly women suffered especially because news coverage highlighted looting, and so these women who lived in dangerous neighborhoods locked their windows and died inside of apartments without air-conditioning. Resources weren’t used, cooling stations

weren't opened to the public, and fire hydrants were sealed shut when citizens attempted to open them to cool off. The heat wave was not a natural disaster-it was a socio-economic one. Those who could afford air-conditioning or could leave the city did and were unscathed, while those who couldn't died in the hundreds. There are certainly similarities with the "natural" disaster of Hurricane Katrina.

The study of coping with disaster is an interesting one, with most studies showing people bonding together after tragedy. In some instances, disaster sociologists even describe something called "disaster utopias" where, for a brief moment, people band together, have no use for money, and depend on each other's kindness and aid in the face of devastating loss (Solnit, 2009).

Music and New Orleans

Though devastating on many levels, the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina offers the perfect opportunity to study how music is used after tragedy.

New Orleans is by nature a "musical" city, credited by many as the birthplace of the one true American art form-jazz. The Crescent City has been home and musical playground to epic musicians, from the Neville Brothers, Fats Domino, and Louis Armstrong to current chart-toppers like Lil Wayne. Music makers and lovers have chosen New Orleans as their home for several centuries, sometimes citing a kind of ephemeral draw to the city that acts as a muse to so many.

New Orleans is known for its live music scene, with too many performance venues just within the city proper to count. For those without a nightclub to set up their music stands, the outdoors serve just fine-with it's lax laws about street

performers and noise ordinances, it's not unusual to see several performers within a block playing various genres and instruments.

Jazz and Race Relations in New Orleans

A huge spotlight was shone on race relations in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. In fact, the city had been rife with socio-economic and racial tensions since its inception. One of the best ways this can be seen is actually through music, particularly jazz.

"Racially Mixed Spaces"

There are many histories of jazz music, but to separate the history from how it was situated racially in New Orleans is to do the topic a disservice. In his book *Subversive Sounds; Race and the Birth of Jazz in New Orleans* (2007) Charles Hersch credits the rise of "ratty" music to a "strong black population unafraid to assert its power." But its not as simple as this, and to understand how race is inherent in jazz it is essential to first understand the racial makeup of the city, and how people existed within these boundaries.

One of the reasons why "black" music was even allowed to exist in the first place is the unique place that African culture occupied in Louisiana. Although the slave trade was alive and well until its abolishment, there was no movement to rid slaves of African culture, something that was very much NOT the case in other states. African music continued to exist, along with cultural aspects and rituals that originated in Africa. In addition, whiteness was not necessarily synonymous with power-there were many impoverished, non-land owning white New Orleanians.

Around the time of the birth of ratty music, New Orleans was home to the largest African American population in the South, which was also largely rural (a deep opposition to the now urban New Orleans). In addition, there existed a history of blacks and whites working alongside each other-in fact, a 1865 strike of dockworkers was one of the first interracial strikes ever. In the 1870s, according to Hersch, “approximately five hundred to a thousand African American children and several thousand whites attended racially mixed schools. Even in the 1880s, New Orleanians of color were able to ride in first-class railroad cars if they desired. In 1888, half of Louisiana’s registered voters were African American, and the legislature included eighteen people of color” (p. 49).

Hersch claims that a big reasons why jazz was able to cross racial boundaries was because there existed a “third” race in New Orleans-Creole, or more specifically, mixed-race Creoles of Color. Although the word originally just meant a person born in Louisiana but of French ancestry, it is now more colloquially used to describe someone of mixed-race, born in Louisiana but with French ancestry. Hersch discusses how this “third race” was “mercurial” and able to cross color lines. Hersch attributes this to the fact that the Caribbean was a large slave hub, and the proximity of the Gulf region to the West Indies led to this “third race”, and that “the existence of Creoles of Color challenged race-based thinking because it rested on culture rather than biology” (p. 22).

But any mixing of these three races and peaceful cohabitation was challenged by Jim Crow laws in the late 1890s. Suddenly, New Orleans was a racially charged hotbed, and it was a bad time to be African-American in Louisiana. The black church

became a “sanctuary” in more ways than one, and allowed for black expression in the one place that wasn’t policed by the white population. Music found a place in the church.

But ratty, or jazz, music, could not have been born of the church-it was looked at as dirty, depraved, and dangerous, and was born in a series of clubs in what was known as the tenderloin district. Hersch makes the point that the idea that jazz as we know it evolved solely from these clubs is a myth-that music played in festivals and picnics around the city contributed to the style-but it was in these clubs that jazz was able to stretch its legs. It was because of Jim Crow laws, though, that this music was able to develop-it was forced into these so-called “disrespectful” places until it couldn’t be contained any longer.

I enjoy Hersch’s writing throughout this book, but particularly when he describes the clientele of the clubs: “These clubs were frequented by New Orleans’ lower classes, consisting of working-class blacks as well as the “good time people,” a kind of proletariat consisting of pimps, whores, and petty criminals” (p. 31). Musicians weren’t hired, but in fact were usually people who just sat down at the pianos. Drinks such as a concoction including “California Claret, water, and cocaine” flowed, and prostitutes peddled their “wares.” Interestingly enough, one of the only times that this music moved out of the black clubs was when black musicians were hired by upper class whites to play in brothels, usually accompanying acts that Hersch describes in detail but I can not type without blushing. Although this was a predominantly black form of music, there did exist a few whites, mainly Jews and Sicilians (but Hersch points out that they were from lower classes as well).

“Racially Impure Music”

“Jazz’s opponents heard racial and ethnic mixing in the music itself, European harmonies sullied by African rhythmic and tonal devices. (p. 5)

New Orleans and music has a history that is more akin to West African traditions than European models that most US cities were born from. My personal interest in looking at New Orleans and Hurricane Katrina and the music that originated from the disaster lies in the fact that, at its core, New Orleans is an inherently musical city today. To walk on a modern-day Bourbon street is to be soaked in a deluge of different styles of music that pour out of different clubs, peppered with street performers.

This was the case at the end of the 19th century as well. Barbershop quartets, street performers, and of course the traditional brass band following a funeral procession (with the “jazz funeral” coming right out of African ritual). Hersch points out that because New Orleans is a port city, it was influenced from music around the world.

Jazz was a mixture of European musical instruments and African tonal structures, something that critics warned was dangerous, and would lead to miscegenation. Other musical purists just viewed this as an unholy union because the sounds produced were not “natural” or as appealing. And a third criticism was that the music was “dirty” and impure.

This early version of ratty music tried to be as dirty and vulgar as possible, with such popular songs as “If You Don’t Like The Way I Play, Then Kiss My Funky

Ass.” Hersch describes early audiences in New Orleans as “pursuing a life built around rebellion against authority in general, and the Protestant ethic in particular, instead celebrating the pursuit of pleasure” (p 37).

Out of the Bayou

In a world of social media, it’s easy to take for granted the impossibly simple act of disseminating music-if I wanted to (and had any actual musical skills), I could record a song and upload it to YouTube for everyone around the world to see in under an hour. In order for jazz to spread outside of New Orleans, it relied on actual transportation-namely, trains and riverboats. Musicians would travel from port to port, stopping sometimes for only a night, to play at clubs (almost always “black only” venues). But still, these traveling musical acts didn’t reach must past the borders of Louisiana. Hersch claims a large part of the further reaches of jazz came when artists such as trombonist Preston Jackson relocated to northern cities, like Chicago, because of escalating racial violence. Of course, the rise of the record and radio assisted this jump greatly.

Why study this

My research surrounds popular music and social movements/ activism. Jazz, at its core, was “activist” music by sheer virtue of its existence. An unapologetic expression of African-American sexuality and indigenous undertones, this wasn’t “for the masses,” and it didn’t attempt to fit into mainstream culture; it was birthed on the fringes, breathed and thrived in dark, “dangerous” nightclubs, and rose to

mass appeal only when racial tensions in New Orleans came to a boil. The irony that jazz is sometimes considered the “one true American pastime” cannot be overstated-it was created by and for people whose existence as “Americans” was routinely denied.

There have been several non-academic books published within the past few years that only consist of interviews with musicians who survived Hurricane Katrina (Sperra, 2001 and Swenson, 2011). I have found these books to be useful in helping me gain a general understanding of the musical climate when Katrina struck New Orleans. However, there’s a great gap in the literature, when it comes to the mass communication study of music and tragedy in general, and specifically regarding how music was used as a way of coping after Hurricane Katrina. There has been literature on Katrina news coverage and framing theory, but my topic in particular is largely ignored.

Chapter 5

Research Design

For this project, I have followed the single-case study model (Yin, 2009) to gather qualitative data about the popular music produced post-Katrina. This singular event was profound in scope of disaster, but also due to the inherent musical nature of a city like New Orleans-these aspects of the case make it fit the parameters for the single-case study rational as it is an “extreme” and “unique” case (Yin, 2013). While other qualitative methodologies would work in part to answer my research questions, a case study allows a more holistic approach, providing different avenues to explore. In addition, a case study allows for the studying of the context (Yin, 2011) of the event, an integral part to understanding the environment (and in turn, being able to draw connections and find meaning in data). The case study I have conducted contains three embedded units of analysis-original music written after Hurricane Katrina, benefit concerts, and re-appropriated music.

In order to prevent the usual pitfall of the case study (not knowing when to stop), I set a roughly two year parameter for my data gathering; I looked at music released and benefit concerts performed from August 29, 2005 (the day that Katrina made landfall in New Orleans) to September 25, 2006, when U2 and Green Day performed a rendition of “The Saints are Coming” at the first football game back in the Superdome.

With the exception of religious music that was performed in the benefit concerts that I covered, I limited my sample to popular music. Popular music

certainly has its theoretical critics, with a focus on the mass produced, commercial nature (Adorno, 1941), and examining popular culture of a time period does not provide historical evidence of how reality was; rather, it demonstrates how reality was constructed by those who have a voice in mass communication. But to ignore the presence of religious music in some of my data would be to paint a partial picture; the inclusion not only is a more accurate of the sentiments expressed via music, but also provides an interesting juxtaposition of the sacred and profane (Durkheim, 1959) in some very literal ways.

The concept of popular music is a nebulous one, with definitions changing over time. For the purposes of sampling, “popular music” was defined as non-religious music designed for wide appeal (Tagg, 1982). In this context, as in many other areas of research, popular music is not limited to one genre-rather, it encompasses many. The most clear delineation made for the purposes of sampling was music that was non-religious in nature, and mainstream in terms of genre and accessibility to audiences. Musicians were chosen based on mainstream popularity, celebrity, and established history of music production, and all were (at the time) signed to non-independent record labels. This was done in attempt to have data that coincided and was comparable with both the large-scale benefit concerts as well as the tribute albums produced. Including analysis of local gulf-area musicians and independent artists would alter the intent of the project (to analyze how coping is done musically on a large scale through popular music and therefore popular culture), and is something that has been done quite successfully by other projects.

This is also an area where a researcher more familiar with the local music scene would be more successful in offering a richer interpretation of data.

An ad hoc analysis was conducted (Creswell, 2007), looking for themes in lyrics of original music recorded (or performed, if footage was available) that are about Hurricane Katrina. It became clear at once that the theme of “blame” in original songs was a prevalent one, and it gave me a starting off point to begin categorizing data.

I analyzed the economic assets produced by benefit concerts, tribute CDs, and music relief organizations that came to fruition during this period of time, looking for themes in genres used, assessing the monetary success of these benefit concerts, and comparing them to existing literature surrounding how music is used to raise funds.

In addition to analyzing primary sources such as lyrics and audio and video recordings, I also collected and analyzed a wide assortment of press coverage of music post-Katrina ranging from mainstream news sources to trade publications. My data also includes several NPR interviews with artists involved with benefit projects.

Lastly, since this project is tied so tightly to a specific place, I visited New Orleans in January of 2013 and using a grounded theory approach (George & Bennett, 2004,) visited as many musical venues and witnessed, recorded and took notes on as many live performances as possible. I ended up with upwards of 50, from street performers in the French Quarter to dive-bars in the Bywater to braving crowds of tourists (and, as luck would have it, thousands in town for a college

football game the weekend of my trip) on Bourbon Street. I visited several landmarks where music played a big part after Katrina, including the now-famous Mollie's on the Market, the only bar and music venue that stayed open during the hurricane and where many locals gathered for comfort and literal shelter. I observed music being played in clubs and bars on Frenchman Street, an area that has experienced tremendous growth in popularity post-Katrina. My focus on live performances (including street performers) served to better inform my understanding of the role that music plays in current day New Orleans, and observe personally this "ephemeral" (impossible to measure, obviously) quality that so many musicians attribute to New Orleans, and give for their reason for staying. This proved imperative to my understanding of New Orleans as it exists today, somewhat how it used to exist, and in gaining a better feel for the geography.

In addition, there were several museum and tributes around the city where artifacts exist having to do with music that I also visited and observed-including but not limited to Fats Domino's wrecked piano (which he used to record several huge hits) that resides in a museum in Jackson Square, and the Jazz History Museum in the French Quarter.

Because I never visited and collected data prior to the hurricane, I am unable make any kind of observations as to the changes, but I was able to witness firsthand what a post-Katrina music scene in New Orleans means. This proved useful in this dissertation, and also gave me important data to use when looking to future research.

Role of the Researcher

The fact that I'm not from New Orleans, as many who have embarked on this kind of study are, is both a benefit and a possible hindrance. I had to work harder to gain an understanding of the city, the history, and culture. But from a research perspective, the fact that I'm emotionally removed from this particular instance is a good thing, and I think allows me to have a more impartial view and analysis of messages presented in music.

Hurricane Katrina hit during my senior year of college, and I remember watching news coverage obsessively. I came into this project with some preconceived notions about politics involved, but through my readings and work in the area of disaster studies, I have a much more nuanced understanding of the events, and underlying issues that had occurred and were still occurring before the hurricane struck land.

I chose this area of research-music, emotion, and tragedy-because of my own personal involvement with the subject. I'm moved to tears by songs on a regular basis, I see the importance of song in social movements that others may dismiss as secondary to other forms of communication in benefiting a cause. And I believe that music can aid in public diplomacy as much as it can help a child figure out her identity during rocky adolescent years. I used to think that my natural sensitivity and emotional connection to music made this work too difficult, and too upsetting. I don't anymore. Years of doing work like this has taught me how to deal with difficult subject matter, how to remove myself from depressing images and music, and return with fresh eyes. I think that a person like me, with the kind of passion and

background knowledge that I have for my area of research, is the ideal person to be conducting a qualitative assessment of the use of music during this event.

Chapter 6

Music and the Events of Hurricane Katrina

Though devastating on many levels, the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina offers the perfect opportunity to study how music is used after tragedy. I spent 3 days in January of 2013 traveling around the city, attempting to see as much live music as possible, and also visit locations that have been become part of the musical history of Hurricane Katrina's impact. While I certainly can not approach this topic as a New Orleanian, I felt it imperative to truly experience music in new Orleans post-Katrina with a research focus, and to also see the physical locations discussed in so many ethnographies where music and space and the aftermath is discussed.

New Orleans is by nature a "musical" city, credited by many as the birthplace of the one true American art form-jazz. The Crescent City has been home and musical playground to epic musicians, from the Neville Brothers, Fats Domino, and Louis Armstrong to current chart-toppers like Lil Wayne. Music makers and lovers have chosen New Orleans as their home for several centuries, sometimes citing a kind of ephemeral draw to the city that acts as a muse to so many.

New Orleans is known for its live music scene, with too many performance venues just within the city proper to count. For those without a nightclub to set up their music stands, the outdoors serve just fine-with it's lax laws about street performers and noise ordinances, it's not unusual to see several performers within a block playing various genres and instruments.

Experiencing music in New Orleans with a research agenda and limited time was both a blessing and a curse-after attempting to document every single run-in with live music that I had on the streets of New Orleans, I quickly realized this was a fruitless task-there is simply too much happening musically, all at the same time. I stopped and watched street performers at every corner of the French Quarter, ranging from groups of people in their early twenties who looked like typical “hipsters” that could fit in on any street in any major U.S. city, but who opened their mouths and tuned their instruments and Cajun-folk came out, to an older man with a long white beard who had set up shop in the middle of the actual street, sitting on a chair with a guitar and harmonica covering early 1970s Bob Dylan songs with a sign reading “If you like the sound, stick around, if you have to split, leave a bit.” Next to him was a shop with a t-shirt hanging in the window that immediately caught my eye-it was emblazoned by a Tennessee Williams quote:

“America has only three cities; New York, San Francisco, and New Orleans. Everything else is Cleveland.”

New Orleans became an iconic American city in much the same way that both New York and San Francisco have-by having a culture, in this case, one of jazz music, created in a melting pot of cultures, provided by immigrants-here by choice or by force. As this music now spills out of clubs on Bourbon St., is sung in public by street musicians, and celebrated as something uniquely American and seminal to the city, it wasn't always the case. The birth of the culture that has sustained New Orleans happened not in its streets, but hidden in clubs in its back alleys.

Music (and Musicians) After Katrina

I've chosen three points of data from my trip to discuss how music itself was impacted by Katrina, and to note how this had been rebuilt as of the beginning of 2013. I'll be discussing musician Fats Domino, the bar Molly's at the Market, and a standing Thursday night performance by famed musician Kermit Ruffins at Vaughan's lounge in the Bywater.

Fats Domino

The destruction of New Orleanian music was personified when Fats Domino, legendary 1950s/1960s R&B musician and one of The Crescent City's most famous and beloved sons, was missing and feared dead in the wake of Katrina. Domino reportedly refused to evacuate due to the failing health of wife Rosemary, and his family and manager spoke to the press after not hearing from him for several days, and acknowledging that he hadn't left his home in the 9th ward prior to the touchdown of the storm.

News of the missing musician was picked up by national media when these statements were taken to mean that Domino had indeed died in the storm-of the many messages scrawled across rooftops in the wake, one was put on Domino's own home, reading "RIP Fats, you will be missed."

Domino, certainly one of the most influential popular musicians to come out of New Orleans, aided the local government in the rebuilding of the city's music scene. Domino was the first artist announced for the 2006 Jazz and Heritage Festival. He also appeared as himself in the HBO series *Treme* in 2012.

Domino's completely destroyed, and rebuilt, piano was on display in an exhibit in Jackson Square that I visited on January 3, 2013. This exhibit featured thousands of artifacts of Hurricane Katrina-I focused on the musical aspects, of which there were many.

A jagged piece of paper was Scotch-taped to the desk where I purchased my ticket, a prayer of remembrance written by two rabbis typed onto it. We Remember Them by Rabbi Sylvan and Jack Riemer begins with the line "In the rising of the sun and in its going down, we remember them." It's the theme of this temporary exhibit, titled "Recovery and Resilience: Living With Hurricanes, Katrina and beyond."

It feels fitting to begin this visit with a prayer-the space, in a building facing the cathedral, feels holy and sacrosanct. It was quiet in the lobby where the exhibit began, and blue and purple bulbs illuminate a display of hundreds of bottles hanging from the ceiling, all looking like message-containing vessels that are lost at sea. The room was meant to make visitors feel as if they are underwater, looking up. It was solemn and quiet.

Tilted completely on its right side and positioned on a stage was what remains of New Orleanian musical legend Fats Domino's piano. Green and blue lights gently illuminate the wreckage, making it appear as if it were still underwater. A placard explains why the instrument is not upright-this was how it was found when flood waters completely decimated Domino's house on Marais Street in the Lower Ninth Ward.

I was, of course, looking for musical aspects of this story-the remnants of what was, and how music would be used to make "what will be." But if someone

were to happen upon this exhibit, they would probably also note the importance of art, music, and ethereal rebuilding of spirits and hope that the city and its people placed a premium on during the rebuilding efforts post-Katrina. The fact that exhibit begins with the mammoth, upended piano, along with a discussion of the importance of the instrument and the man who played it speaks volumes in itself.

Molly's at the Market

I had learned to expect the unexpected in New Orleans, but couldn't help but be a bit taken aback when the barstool next to me at Molly's on the Market on Decatur Street was suddenly occupied by a gray and black cat, peeping over the table onto my field notes with interest. I sought this bar out specifically for the role it played after the hurricane hit the city, and it exceeded my expectations of a quirky venue that my readings in preparation for this visit had informed me.

My guidebook for much of this began in a book that loomed large as I attempted to see where my own research would fit into what existed already. John Swenson's "New Atlantis: Musicians Battle for the Survival of New Orleans" details stories from ground zero and the city's musicians who rebuilt the city in many ways (Swenson, 2011). While my own research is focused mainly on a mass communication's view of messages and uses of music on a large scale, the work that these musicians did and the premium placed on returning music to the city is inherent to any understanding of a larger media use.

Swenson details how blues guitarist Coco Robicheaux played one of the first musical performances in the city a mere two and a half weeks after Katrina at Molly's:

"I was at Molly's when the lights came on,' he said. 'I said to Monaghan (*who was running the bar at the time*) 'What does this mean to you?'" He said, 'I'm back in business. My beer cooler's on.' I said, ' It means music to me. I got my shit parked right outside.' Robicheaux set up and started playing Jimmy Reed's classic blues tune 'You Don't Have to Go.'

The bar filled with people drawn to the music. 'Girls were dancing on the bar,' Robicheaux smiled, 'removing clothing. Everybody was partying. I just kept playing, never took a break. I have no idea how long I played, longer than usual, and I usually play four or five hours. There was a curfew but we didn't care. Monaghan said, "The hell with it, man.'" (pg. 33)

Kermit Ruffins at Vaughan's

Vaughn's, in the 9th Ward, looks like someone's recreation room in the 1970s (complete with a cigarette machine and wood-paneling on the walls). It's a far cry (and a taxi ride) from the splashiness of Bourbon St., but on Thursday nights it's where tourists in the know are headed-jazz legend Kermit Ruffins has a standing show.

A 9th Ward native (the area hit hardest by Katrina) Ruffins has appeared in the HBO show *Treme* as well, and has long been a staple at festivals big and small around the city. Driving through the Bywater district at night, I was struck by how different the area looks from the Business District and the French Quarter. The area is mostly residential, and looks all but decimated. I thought I was in the wrong location when I dropped off at Vaughan's.

It took about half an hour, but people started trickling in until the one room bar was more than at capacity, and the lights went off and Ruffins took the "stage"- actually just a corner of the room. Mere feet away from everyone jammed into the tiny venue. With alcohol flowing-I declined shots of Jaigermeister offered to me by my tablemates and new friends, a mother and daughter traveling from Florida for the Rose Bowl-Ruffins' trumpet blasted through the darkness and the crowd sang along to many New Orleans jazz standards.

Halfway through the show he took a break, and Ruffins manager told the crowd that "anyone who wanted to smoke a joint with Kermit could go out back and do so if they brought their own, and also paid for a CD." This was a first for me.

By the time he came back and began playing again, red beans and rice was served to the entire bar (apparently this is done every week), and patrons drunk on that Jaigermeister or other spirits, high on pot or just the thrill that jolts through your spine when you see live music began to form a conga line that snaked in front of the bar and through the center of the room. It felt like a wild reunion of friends, but with strangers and a living legend playing a trumpet in the corner.

I had at least a hundred encounters with live music on my trip for this research. I went to clubs on Frenchman Street and Bourbon, to Preservation Hall and to Jackson Square. But this experience both reminded me of why I love music, and gave me the opportunity to witness firsthand this ephemeral, “special” quality that writers try and nail down when talking about New Orleans. It’s a feeling of being alive, and it’s perhaps so strong because it had to be brought back to this location after it had been completely destroyed.

The purpose of this ethnographic work was to gain a better understanding of the physical space represented in music written in response to Hurricane Katrina. The understanding of this space, with a focus on the inherent musicality of the city of New Orleans, has added immeasurably to the depth of lyrical and textual analysis done in this project.

This proved to be especially useful when analyzing benefit concerts produced. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, producers made specific efforts to highlight the uniqueness of the city of New Orleans, and to point out that it is a location that is special and worth preserving. This notion is echoed throughout the city itself, from souvenir shops to bars on Bourbon Street- whatever happens in Vegas might stay in Vegas, but New Orleans very much prides itself on the ephemeral quality of the city that was sung about in response to Hurricane Katrina as artists attempted to explain a feeling through song.

2013 New Orleans was still very much still under the specter of Hurricane Katrina and the events of August and September 2006. In order to understand how music was used to help rebuild, cope, and raise funds for the city, we must examine

the music that was produced immediately after the storm. Let's begin with original music produced in the year following the deluge.

Chapter 7

Original Songs

Original songs written post-Katrina range in message, tone, and genre, spanning the emotional gambit of responses as well as what the call to action should be. Much can be interpreted by looking at appropriated music (discussed in the following chapter), but examining original songs written explicitly about an event is response music in its purest form. As I gathered songs and began to analyze lyrics, a theme emerged as to how these diverse songs can be analyzed-the concept of “blame” (be it placed on God or human) is threaded throughout.

Songs as Protest

At the individual level, music serves mainly to satisfy entertainment, relaxation, and emotional release needs outlined in uses and gratifications theory. But music both consumed en masse and produced for large audiences fits all of these factors-perhaps most importantly, the social utility aspect of the theory.

Biblical accounts talk of key actors singing stories of events, something that is seen through Medieval times and throughout the United States Civil War and into modernity-often times battles are recounted in song, serving to educate people on events and happenings, as well as to memorialize events and people in a way that is easily remembered and recounted to groups.

Some of this music simply recounts events and spreads information. When John Lennon began experimenting with “story songs” that explicitly told of current events

(“The Ballad of John and Yoko” tells of the duo’s travel through Europe and various run-ins with international authorities as they tried to spread their messages of peace in 1969), he was late to a party that for most intents and purposes began decades earlier, but was solidified in the mid 1960s with artists like Bob Dylan quickly penning and releasing (“quick” by 1960s standards) songs that focused less on musicality and more on getting a message out, usually related to a socio-political event. Though they were certainly not the first nor the last American protest songs, the combination of celebrity and better recording technology mixed with intense political and social upheaval lead to a decade of prolific song production and dispersion.

If knowledge, as the adage goes, is power, then combining information that the masses need to know with the emotionality of music can be explosive. Media has long been used to educate consumers as well as provide a call to action, and the popular music produced after Hurricane Katrina is no exception.

Linking popular music and disaster

Though this case study focuses on contemporary events involving popular music, in some ways the link between popular music and disaster pre-dates even recorded music. Ballads about ships lost at sea, natural disasters, and war have existed as long as folk music has been performed (Carr, 2004). Aristotle noted the importance of music in depicting tragedy; in the dramatic arts, it allows for a more intense depiction of emotion than can be expressed in words alone (Sifakis, 2001).

The 1960s revival of folk music, led by artists like Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, used popular music as a way of reacting to events and calling for social change. Their

predecessors actually started this movement post World War 2, as recorded music allowed for the rebirth of this long-standing tradition in a new medium. But it is important to note that this was a *revival* of folk music; as a tradition, folk-music has played an important role in reporting events, passing down stories, and the use of catharsis post tragedy in the United States since the 1700s (Weissman, 2006).

But the importance of the revival is directly correlated with the rise of recorded music; record companies actively sought out “classic” folksongs, setting up recording facilities in rural areas in the 1920s and 1930s so these songs could be documented before they were lost to time completely. This move to record folk music and a post-Industrial Revolution focus on workers’ rights collided, and activists at the time became cognizant that these songs could be used to depict both disaster and tragedy, but also call for social change (Weissman, 2006). These earlier recorded examples of music about disaster focused heavily on mine explosions, highlighting inequality perpetuated by corrupt bosses and unfair (and unsafe) working conditions.

Themes of Blame in Original Songs Post-Katrina

When conducting my analysis of original songs, a running theme quickly emerged-the concept of blame. If there truly is “no such thing as a natural disaster,” then blame has to lie somewhere, and many songs released in response to Hurricane Katrina attempt to place that blame in various locales (Appendix).

Analysis showed that many of the songs fell into four categories in terms of representing agency; blame was placed on nature, the government in general, specifically

then-President George Bush, and a fourth category where the government is discussed, but interlocking institutions are acknowledged. A sample song that exemplifies findings for each category was selected for deeper analysis.

Act of Nature

To not examine the socio-political structure that existed in New Orleans at the time of Katrina means that blame can easily be placed in one location; it was water caused by an act of nature that led to the destruction of much of the city. Songs that placed the blame simply on an act of God tend to be more resigned to the inevitable, with no call to action (since there can't really be any action to take). Jimmy Buffet's "Breathe In, Breathe Out, Move On" is a prime example:

If a hurricane doesn't leave you dead
 It will make you strong
 Don't try to explain it just nod your head
 Breathe in, breathe out, move on

And it rained
 It was nothing really new
 And it blew
 Seen all that before
 And it poured
 The earth began to strain
 Pontchartrain buried the 9th ward to the 2nd floor

According to my watch, the time is now
 The past is dead and gone
 Don't try to shake it, just nod your head
 Breathe in, breathe out, move on

Don't try to explain it, just bow your head
 Breathe in, Breathe Out, Move on
 (Buffett, 2006)

Even if human response had been flawless, the fact still remains that Hurricane Katrina was on a magnitude that no one living at the time had witnessed; the storm was monumental and devastating in its own right. Would there have been the same kind of musical response if there was an appropriate (or what was viewed as acceptable) human response? It's hard to say. But this kind of song, this message of "there was nothing we could do, it was a hurricane and these happen" was not a popular sentiment in this sample-when blame was placed, it was predominantly attributed to human actions and political beurocracy that resulted in tragedy.

This does, however, speak to an attitude shared by many living in coastal gulf areas when a hurricane is predicted-what's going to happen is going to happen, so make the best of it. New Orleans is not unique in the messages scrawled on boards used to reinforce windows-taunting calls to hurricanes by people claiming "we're ready for you" is, at this point, a trope of pre-hurricane coverage. And few can do the "let's just roll with it" attitude better than Jimmy Buffett.

It is also worth noting that "hurricane culture" is as much a part of New Orleans as the jazz bars that line its streets-in a perfect example of just "rolling with it," some might say that a trip to the Big Easy is not complete without a visit to Pat O'Brien's and your own taste of an (alcoholic) hurricane. A *lasseiz faire* attitude is certainly culturally appropriate when talking about this city. But Hurricane Katrina *was* different-in its size, in its scope, but mainly in the fact that it existed in a young, albeit truly digital age, with a 24 hour news cycle covering the horrific aftermath and lack of response, perceived and real.

Buffet's song is not upbeat, but his message is, if not a positive one, one that attempts to alleviate guilt, regret, and blame and instead focuses on the future. To include the refrain "don't try to explain" perfectly encapsulates this notion.

As an aside, it's interesting to note the YouTube comments in response to this song (Pederson, 2012) with a lot of users mentioning how this song reminds them of personal tragedy and strife that they have endured-many mention the death of a loved one, especially those who were "Parrotheads," or members of Buffet's fandom. While the song specifically references Katrina and New Orleans landmarks, the metaphor of a hurricane as any act of nature can certainly stand.

The Government

You left them swimming for their lives
Down in New Orleans
Can't afford a gallon of gasoline
With your useless degrees and contrary statistics
This government business is straight up sadistic
Don't speak to us like we work for you
Selling false hope like some new dope we're addicted to
I'm not a desperate man but these are desperate times at hand
This generation is beyond your command

And it won't be long
'til the people flood the streets
To take you down
One and all
A black rain is gonna fall (Harper & Yates, 2006)

In a mix of funk and rock, Ben Harper speaks directly to the government in the song "Black Rain." His tone is angry and accusatory and direct, opening as such with the line "**you** left them swimming for their lives down in New Orleans." As the song

continues, Harper illustrates the prevalence of institutional racism that African-Americans have experienced at the hand of the US government.

The clear references to race are not coded, “Black Rain,” which Harper says will fall and flood the streets—a call to protest and action by any means necessary. This is not a song meant to memorialize or pay tribute; it’s a call for action, mirroring the most powerful songs protesting injustice of the 1960s. Harper even quotes what might be the most recognizable of these anthems, Bob Dylan’s “The Times They Are A-Changin’” when he lifts the line “this generation is beyond your command” right out of Dylan’s song.

“Black Rain” is a strong example of a song that is not meant to assuage, comfort, or console—often in a social media age where we experience tragedy and disaster collectively, it is inevitable that right after an event, memes and images begin to sprout meant to restore faith in humanity and deliver a message that everything will be okay. Harper is not calling for hope—in fact, he connects it to something used to keep people down, and “drug” them or numb them thus actually stopping any action.

This urge to acknowledge institutional racism within government operations is something that is still being pleaded for in 2015, as the rise of the #blacklivesmatter movement attempts to shed light on a topic that some find uncomfortable and difficult to discuss (often leading to a vicious cycle of no action, and therefore no change).

Specifically George Bush

In his musical response to Hurricane Katrina “Georgia...Bush”, controversial rapper and New Orleans native Lil’ Wayne makes it perfectly clear who he faults for

mishandling of the aftermath, as well as many other situations at home and abroad that were occurring at the time.

This song right here, is dedicated to the president of the United States of America
 Y'all might know him as George Bush
 But where I'm from, lost city of New Orleans... we call him this
 [Ray Charles sample:] Georgia.....
 Now
 This song is dedicated to the one wit the suit
 Thick white skin and his eyes bright blue/ So called beef wit you know who
 Fuck it he just let him kill all of our troops
 Look at the bullshit we been through
 Had the ni**as sitting on top they roofs
 Hurricane Katrina, we should've called it Hurricane (Georgia) Bush
 Then they telling y'all lies on the news
 The white people smiling like everything cool
 But I know people that died in that pool/I know people that died in them schools
 They tell you what they want, show you what they want you to see
 But they don't let you know what's really going on
 Make it look like a lot of stealing going on
 Boy them cops is killers in my home
 Ni**a shot dead in the middle of the street
 I ain't no thief, I'm just trying to eat (Lil' Wayne, 2006)

In this case, the blame is placed specifically on George Bush, providing a deep criticism of his presidency as a whole by referencing one of several military operations underway at the time.

What's also interesting to note is how Wayne's identity is performed in this song. It shifts throughout the verses, from Lil' Wayne the rapper, to Lil' Wayne the native of New Orleans/ young African-American male who, as he sees it, could very well have been in the position of any of those victims if he hadn't become "Lil' Wayne." His connection to this event is different from Kanye West, who infamously said that "George Bush doesn't care about black people" during the Hurricane Katrina telethon. Wayne is also a native son of this city, and this almost schizophrenic switch to first person shows

that this song is not just in protest, not just to come out strong in a definitive stance against Bush, but also to show his own personal ties to this tragedy, which are strong.

Another New-Orleans born rapper, Juvenile, eviscerates Bush, Cheney, and then Mayor Ralph Nagin in video for his song “Get Ya’ Hustle On,” and several other rap songs name Bush specifically for his lack of intervention as citizens of New Orleans perished before a nation’s eyes.

Intersections of Blame

Like fellow rapper Lil’ Wayne, Jay-Z also criticized the government. But he personalize this issue in a different way, approaching it as an African-American man seeing that there were clearly racial matters at hand in the song “Minority Report”:

People was poor before the hurricane came
 But the down pour poured is like when Mary J. sang
 Every day it rains, so every day the pain
 But ignored them, and showed em the risk was to blame
 Silly rappers, because we got a couple Porches
 MTV stopped by to film our fortresses
 We forget the unfortunate
 Sure I ponied up a mil, but I didn't give my time
 So in reality I didn't give a dime, or a damn
 I just put my monies in the hands of the same people that left my people stranded
 Nothin' but a bandit
 Left them folks abandoned
 Damn, that money that we gave was just a band-aid
 Can't say we better off than we was before
 In synopsis this is my minority report (Jay-Z, 2006)

The term “minority report” references an alternative report or record of an event that is compiled by members of a committee or group who view a series of events

differently than the majority-this is an obvious play on words here, also alluding to a report on the status of a minority (in this case, black) group. But Jay-Z is also offering a minority report that shows a different side of both hip-hop and rap culture, as well as a self-criticism of not doing enough work, or the work that was needed.

It's important to a discussion of popular music produced after an event because it references the kind of power and influence that musicians, huge celebrities in particular, have to effect massive change. Jay-Z is expressing guilt for not using that celebrity in a different way that, now that he's reflecting on it, might have been more effective. The oppression referenced by Jay-Z is systemic, and he is examining the role that he plays in a consumer culture and perhaps alluding to a representation of black male rappers as "silly," and not to be taken seriously. He points to money given, but if this is a systemic issue, then money can't fix it.

"Katrina Klap (Dollar Days)"

Perhaps no other song written by a mainstream musician eviscerates and dissects the complicated social, racial, and political factors that played into the response (or lack thereof) of Katrina better than Mos Def's "Katrina Klap (Dollar Days)." The song appears on Def's 2006 album *True Magic*, but was written, recorded, and released via a planned leak online within two weeks of Katrina (Patel, 2005). Not only is it one of the first original songs inspired by the events, but it casts a wide net when dispersing blame.

The song begins with Def telling an anecdote about a storm survivor who was greeted with shock when rescue teams discovered that she was alive. When they asked

her “where have you been?” she responds with “where have I been? Where have YOU been?”, setting the theme of this song-the people of New Orleans, particularly the poorer black population, had been abandoned at every turn.

President Bush is immediately at the center of Def’s criticism, with the first stanza including “and Mr. President/he ‘bout that cash/he’s got a policy for handling the n*ggas and the trash.” He references Bush again throughout the song with “tell the boss he shouldn’t be the boss anymore” and “Mr. President’s a natural ass/he out treatin’ n*ggas worse than they treating the trash.”

He also critiques the racial and socioeconomic factors that led to the disproportionate amount of poor black Americans (nationwide, not just in New Orleans) with “and if you poor you black/I laugh a laugh they won’t give when you ask/You better off on crack, dead or in jail, or with a gun in Iraq/And it’s as simple as that/No opinion man, it’s mathematical fact/Listen a million poor since 2004/And they got illions and killions to waste on the war/And makes you question what the taxes is for.”

Also noteworthy is Def’s criticism of other artists for not coming forward to help sooner. He calls out Bono and U2 by name with “It’s where water everywhere and babies dead in the streets/It’s enough to make you holler out/Like where the fuck is Sir Bono and his famous friends now/ Don’t get it twisted man, I dig U2/But if you ain’t about the ghetto then fuck you too.”

But merely writing and interpreting lyrics doesn’t come close to giving the full emotional impact of this song-Def screams, yells, and pleads throughout the album recording. It’s also certainly worth noting that Def chose to release this song unofficially online, both ensuring that it would be heard sooner and the message-one of anger and

disgust at systematic racism and inequality-would reach mixtape DJs who could disseminate it. The effect is a song that shows how a 21st century hyper-critical “protest” song might look like-recorded and released quickly online, with a message coming from a celebrity but passed around by regular people.

A week after the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, Mos Def took his message to the streets, performing “Katrina Klap” outside of the MTV Video Music Awards at Radio City Music Hall (Rolling up on the back of a flatbed truck, Mos Def was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct for performing without a permit. Reports of the incident appeared on several hip-hop blogs and sites with varying details. Def was released the next day, and in an official his publicist stated that the police “overreacted” and didn’t effectively communicate to Def what was going on, but that “he chose to use his voice to speak for those who are losing their own during this critical period of reconstruction.”

It is certainly worth noting that of the thirty-two original songs in this sample, the ones in which an intersection of blame focusing on systemic racism were mentioned were composed and performed by musicians of color. In this instance, lived experiences are being discussed by these musicians, regardless of whether or not they are New Orleanian. What might be easy for Jimmy Buffet to do-dismiss this as an act of nature-is not done quite so flippantly by several African-American musicians who see this as a far more complicated issue, one in which racial and social inequality has played a significant

Measuring the “power” or “success” of the messages in these songs and their different approaches to helping listeners cope and assign blame in attempt to find peace is virtually impossible, but also not the aim of this study. What an examination of these

original songs does show are the unique messages produced, as well as how artists attempted to use original music to cope with the unthinkable. By examining appropriated music in the next chapter, we can see further how sense of the senseless is made through song.

Chapter 8

Re-Appropriated Music

Using pre-existing songs and attaching them to current events and disasters has become so commonplace that even original songs have now been reappropriated- in truly “meta” form (perhaps even a byproduct of remix culture) the original songs “We Are the World” and “Don’t They Know It’s Christmas”-both written and performed for specific events in the 1980s-have been appropriated and rerecorded for other tragedies. These pre-existing songs that are re-recorded to pay tribute to a new event are rarely released as singles, and instead tend to form a cohesive benefit album, with proceeds from sales going to aid and relief. I have selected two albums of re-appropriated music released after Hurricane Katrina to discuss in this chapter. But first I will be discussing a rare single, re-recorded to mark the re-opening of the Superdome.

“The Saints are Coming”

Like most major events marking milestones in the reparation of New Orleans post Katrina, the re-opening of the Superdome was made into an event, and that event had a soundtrack.

In my experiences studying music post-Katrina, genre plays an important role in the meanings and messages behind songs. Rap has been utilized to spread messages, especially ones of defiance, and to point out the racial aspects of this disaster. Ragtime and jazz bring a nostalgic tone to a song’s message, serving as a totem to remind listeners what has been lost. So it bears discussion that the song that became the anthem to reopen

the Superdome, to reclaim it for the city, for football, and for entertainment after it became such an explosive landmark immediately following the hurricane, was an adaptation of a punk song from the 1970s.

As a genre, punk is loud, raucous, and high energy. Not focused necessarily on producing melodious musical works, punk music instead has something to say, and it says it with force and more than a little anger. Punk music is traditionally seen as the music of rebellious youth (white youth, at least), and has at times born messages of injustice and the need for social change.

The live recording of Green Day and U2 covering The Skids' 1979 "The Saints Are Coming" comes from the pre-show to the first Saints home game in the Superdome following the events of Katrina on September 25, 2006. It was a mini concert including U2's "It's a Beautiful Day" (a song about rebirth and optimism), "The House of the Rising Sun" (a song iconic to New Orleans), and Green Day's own "Wake Me Up When September Ends," a song that had been used in remembering the tragedies of September 11, 2001, but in this case pays fitting tribute to the month of September, 2005 as the Gulf Coast awoke to their new post-Katrina reality.

The 1979 song by The Skids "The Saints Are Coming" is no exception, but this cover, performed by Green Day and U2, change this song to give it new meaning in light of the events following Hurricane Katrina. According to an interview with Skids singer Richard Jobson done in 2007 after the new version referencing Katrina gained popularity, the song was originally about another kind of tragedy-the death of one of Jobson's close friends fighting for the British army in Northern Ireland (The Skids official website). The choice to record this song seems to be a fairly obvious one-New Orleans' football

team is named the Saints, and the song provides metaphoric references to flooding and tragedy that in the hands of U2 and Green Day become literal:

The saints are coming, the saints are coming
 I say no matter how I try, I realize there's no reply
 A drowning sorrow floods the deepest grief
 How long now
 Until a weather change condemns belief
 The stone says
 This paternal guide once had his day
 Once had his day

But the U2/Green Day version was not without references to New Orleans and Katrina, both lyrically and instrumentally. Musically, the live version of this single relies heavily on New Orleanian brass instrumentals, played by The Rebirth Brass Band and other Crescent city musical institutions like Troy “Trombone Shorty” Andrews- interestingly enough, all are absent on the version released on the album of U2/18 singles. There are also added lyrics to this new version, with the first stanza a reference to “House of the Rising Sun,” a song famously about New Orleans, in the tune but with lyrics changed:

There is a house in New Orleans
 They call the Superdome
 It's been the ruin of many a poor boy
 And God, I know I'm one

Also new to this recording, the tragedies of Hurricane Katrina’s aftermath are vividly painted:

Living like birds in magnolia trees
 A child on a rooftop, a mother on her knees
 Her sign reads
 Please, I am an American

There's nothing surprising about U2's involvement with music as relief-the band has been a staple in benefit concerts and music used as relief for almost 30 years. What is noteworthy is that neither band is native to New Orleans or the Gulf. And while they do incorporate New Orleanian musicians in their live version, this is very different from most artists who bore some kind of personal connection to the tragedy, either due to their hometowns or self-identifying as members of groups who were most affected by the storm (mainly at the intersection of race and socioeconomic status). As previously mentioned, in his song "Katrina Klap" Mos Def is slightly critical about U2's involvement, perhaps suggesting that they paint too pretty a picture in reaction to this tragedy, not going far enough to call out racial and socioeconomic inequalities.

"Sing Me Back Home," by The New Orleans Social Club

Existing popular songs "resurrected" after Hurricane Katrina fall into two major categories in terms of their use and purpose. Songs are either re-recorded as is, used to evoke a particular emotion (in this case, nostalgia for what was lost/almost lost in the floodwaters) or as a way to take a familiar song and "twist" it in a way to suit a new need, and give it new meaning. One of the best examples of the latter in my sample is from the benefit album "Sing Me Back Home," by the New Orleans Social Club.

Released on April 6, 2006, "Sing Me Back Home" was a collection of songs either iconic to New Orleans or songs that in some way matched the tone and feel of emotion felt after the hurricane, all recorded by a loose collective of iconic New

Orleanian musicians and formed by Grammy-winning producer Leo Sacks. Though not a native of New Orleans, Sacks' love of the city began in 1982 when he covered the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival for Billboard magazine (Trakin, 2014). The album was recorded in Austin, TX (where several of the Neville brothers had relocated) over several days, with all parties involved working collaboratively in the studio (NPR recording, 2006).

In an interview with NPR, Ivan Neville recounted how the actual process of recording the album was healing to him, as well as other artists, a sentiment echoed in the same interview by artist Leo Nocentelli of the band The Meters: "I was doing this for people I didn't know (the audience), and here's my boys-I'm doing it for them too." Nocentelli pointed out that everyone involved had been deeply impacted by the tragedy, but he sensed a different kind of pain from those artists who had physically been in New Orleans at the time of the hurricane.

If you're not paying attention to the lyrics and song choice, it's easy to miss the tension and protest that's underlying. Its sound is straight "Dixieland," and melodically its very much New Orleans specific. Several song choices, however, point to somewhat coded messages about race and inequality, and the disaster sociology belief that there is no such thing as a natural disaster.

"Fortunate Son"

One of the best examples is the use of the song "Fortunate Son." It's interesting to note that the song is used in much of the same way that Credence Clearwater Revival used the original in 1969 as a way to protest the social inequity that sent certain young

men off to Vietnam to be killed while sparing others. CCR hid this political message in this now-classic, Southern, honky-tonk tune, but paying attention to the lyrics, its message is much more obvious:

“Some folks are born silver spoon in hand
 Lord, don’t they help themselves
 But when the tax men come to the door
 Lord, the house look a like a rummage sale

It ain’t me, it ain’t me
 I ain’t no millionaire’s son
 It ain’t me, it ain’t me,
 I ain’t no fortunate one

Yeah, some folks inherit star spangled eyes
 Ooo they send you down to war, Lord
 And when you ask them, ‘How much should we give?’
 Oh they only answer more, more, more, oh.”

Ivan Neville chose and recorded this classic song, infusing it with a definitive New Orleans twist. He added riffs and small elements while keeping the basic structure and lyrics, with one exception-in the final 20 seconds, Neville sings the phrases “take me back to New Orleans,” “I wanna go home,” and “whatcha gonna do with the money?” the last phrase being a possible indictment of perceived corruption, or a (justifiably) jaded view of how little of benefit album proceeds end up making a significant financial difference to victims.

“Somewhere”

The same album also features a cover of “Somewhere,” from the musical West Side Story, written by Leonard Bernstein in 1956. The lyrics are as follows:

There's a place for us,
 Somewhere a place for us.
 Peace and quiet and open air
 Wait for us
 Somewhere...

Somewhere.
 We'll find a new way of living,
 We'll find a way of forgiving
 Somewhere . . .

This song is about place-both location and time. It's worth noting that "Somewhere" originated from West Side Story, a play about racial tensions between Caucasian and Puerto Rican gang members in New York City, with the focus on a modern-era retelling of Romeo and Juliet. This again points to the raced aspects of the tragedy of Katrina. This cover, by Henry Butler, is accompanied by an organ and sounds similar to a religious ballad (accompanied by electric guitar, of course).

"This Is My Country"

This cover of the soul group The Impressions' 1968 release about being treated as a second-class citizen in your own homeland is covered by Cyril Neville.

In a decade that saw the U.S. embroiled in heated debates about what "real America" is (those discussions all surrounding class status), this song deals with race outright with lyrics like "I've paid three hundred years or more/Of slave driving, sweat, and welts on my back/This is my country" and "too many have died/protecting my pride/for me to go second class." Ivan Neville confirmed the undertones of messages about social and racial inequality, stating that "we're talking about a race thing, we're

talking about a color thing. It reflected not only just songs, or somebody's talent, or the way someone sings or whatever. The songs brought out the emotion of everyone who performed on the thing. It's an intangible that you could feel."

Female voices are notably excluded from this collection, and it's interesting to note that the only female artists are Irma Thomas, with Marcia Bell, singing her own song "Look Up," originally recorded in the 1960s. Thomas, a household name in New Orleans but relatively obscure artist to outsiders, sings the only truly upbeat and optimistic song on the album-others harbor (due) sadness, slight bitterness, and anger, either in lyrics or the way they are performed by the artists. "Look Up" is markedly different:

"Whenever you feel blue look up/I do the same thing to, look up/Spot that silver lining/Follow it until it's through/Whenever you feel blue, look up."

An Album To Benefit Preservation Hall & The Preservation Hall Music Outreach Program

There are few New Orleanian musical institutions as revered as Preservation Hall, a live-music venue in the French Quarter that first opened its doors in the 1750s. The building itself escaped without too much damage, but displacement of its musicians meant that the structure did not re-open for performances until 8 months following Katrina. Since the 1960s, Preservation Hall has been both a performance venue and somewhat of a living museum where traditional jazz has been preserved and played for

the masses. In the decade prior to Hurricane Katrina, they moved towards incorporating rock and roll into the repertoire.

If you weren't looking at the liner notes, "An Album to Benefit Preservation Hall & The Preservation Hall Music Outreach Program" would never appear to be a tribute or benefit album at all-it is a compilation of New Orleans-centric classics and jazz standards, covered by contemporary musicians. For this benefit album, producers relied heavily on the nostalgic aspects of New Orleans, while showing off the musical talents of the Preservation Hall Band (an institution unto itself).

This album didn't aim to draw proceeds by covering current, popular music, nor did it attempt to appeal to an audience looking for mainstream and currently popular artists. It instead relies on the vocals of artists that are mainly Southern performers, and many who are from New Orleans or currently reside there. But it does mirror the way that Preservation Hall and The Preservation Hall band has attempted to remain relevant in the 21st century by infusing popular culture into jazz standards.

While the song choices on the album don't serve the purpose of bringing political messages or a discussion about racial and class divisions that impacted New Orleans to light, it does include several outspoken artists who are extremely politically divisive, including Ani DiFranco and Steve Earle, both who were extremely vocal about their distaste for then-president George Bush, and both released several songs expressing their opinions. Earle's music was used in the documentary "Fahrenheit 91" and "John Walker's Blues," a ballad from the point of view of an American kid-turned-Taliban member has been divisive since its release following September 11.

Levels of Pop Culture Literacy

Examining re-appropriated music presents an ideal example of how this research is looking at both the individual level and the societal level simultaneously. Bringing back a classic song for these benefit albums or at these concerts is done for a specific purpose-usually to evoke a meaning or emotion without saying it explicitly. But one must also consider the level of popular culture literacy that the listener has, and with fragmented audiences this is a difficult task. Therefore, the song has to work at multiple levels in order to make sense as a song that has been re-appropriated post-tragedy. These messages are deeply polysemic.

Take for example the inclusion of “Somewhere” on the Sing Me Back Home album. Knowledge of that song and its original incarnation depends on the media literacy and possibly the age of the listener. For those who are able to place it as coming from *West Side Story*, they may or may not be able to connect the messages of racial conflict from the play and movie to the events following Katrina. For listeners who only recognize it as a song from the 60s, perhaps they will read it as being reminiscent of protest/social justice music from the time. But in order for this to be impactful and make sense, it has to also be able to be understood at face value-the lyrics talk about being displaced but hopeful, and the score itself conveys an emotional message.

Stuart Hall, Encoding and Decoding

All of this speaks to Hall’s theories of encoding and decoding, and the work that must be done by an active audience in order to make sense of a message (Hall,

1973). But music in response to tragedy is unique from other “entertainment” media-the goals and purposes are complex. Music is used to raise awareness, raise money, and provide some kind of cathartic emotional release (for listeners AND, as discussed previously here, for producers).

If you were to combine “The Saints Are Coming,” the Preservation Hall benefit album, and “Sing Me Back Home,” you would find music that fits into three categories-songs that are critical about the need for social change, songs that evoke sad emotions in general, and songs that serve as a reminder of the artistic value that New Orleans has given the world. These categories are seen in original music, as well as the music performed in benefit concerts analyzed in the following chapter.

Chapter 9

Benefit Concerts

A televised benefit concert offers a mass communication scholar a rich and unique experience to blend research about performance and music with media ecology, and to evaluate if the medium really is the message, or if a powerful musical moment transcends that.

The Modern Benefit Concert and Social Marketing Theory

The United States has seen many large-scale tragedies since the modern celebrity-led benefit concert as we know it began with Live-Aid in 1987. September 11th, Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Sandy, and the Boston Marathon Bombing are but several instances where this format has been employed to great fiscal success. At this point, it has become all but a knee-jerk reaction-when large-scale tragedy hits, you respond with music in this way. The concerts for Hurricane Katrina follow a specific pattern and style established after the attacks on New York City and Washington DC four years earlier. The use of celebrity seems to be impactful, and also worth noting that these celebrities fall into two camps. Like September 11th (and other large-scale tragedies post-Katrina), there is a focus on using musicians that are both popular at the time and have the attention of the general public, especially youth, but not inaccessible to the masses, and also musicians who are tied to the *location* of the tragedy.

With “Shelter From the Storm,” the essence of saturation television is at play with this benefit airing on all major networks at the time. But it also offered a diversion for

audiences who were glued to television screens watching hurricane coverage-these producers didn't need to set an agenda, as it was already there (along with a captive audience). The placement of these concerts, coming on the heels of non-stop coverage of the tragedy, gives audiences both an emotional release, as well as a relatively easy way to donate money and feel like active participants in providing aid.

Network Concerts After Hurricane Katrina

Many small-scale, local benefit concerts were held to raise funds for victims of Hurricane Katrina across the Gulf Coast. Because my research focuses on popular music and the incorporation of celebrity cache in these tragedies, I have focused on several major ones, with in-depth analysis of "Shelter From the Storm" because of its multi-network reach, unprecedented at the time.

A Concert For Hurricane Relief

NBC's benefit, "A Concert for Hurricane Relief," aired on September 2, kicking off several large, network-helmed concerts with headlines-this was where Kanye West declared that "George Bush doesn't care about black people" (AP, 2005). As anchor Matt Lauer closed the show, he offered the following statement relating to West's comments (NBC stated that West went off script, and that producers who were focused on listening for curse words during the live telecast missed this):

"Emotions in this country right now are running very high. Sometimes that emotion is translated into inspiration, sometimes into criticism. We've heard some of that tonight. But it's still part of the American way of life."

Coverage of the concert focused largely on West. The event itself combined performances by Louisiana-natives Tim McGraw, Harry Connick Jr., and Aaron Neville, and Mississippi-born country singer Faith Hill with celebrity speakers Lindsay Lohan, Leonardo DiCaprio, Hilary Swank and others delivering impassioned monologues to camera, urging viewers to donate to the Red Cross. In terms of format and line-up, this concert was all but replicated in “Shelter From The Storm,” the largest and most ambitious of the Katrina telethons that aired one week later. This focus on providing music that was typically associated with New Orleans (as well as New Orleanian musicians) as well as current popular musicians to add “star power” yielded around \$40 million in donations, with approximately 8.5 million viewers tuning in, according to Nielsen Media Research (Billboard, 2005).

Shelter From the Storm

“Shelter From The Storm: A Concert For the Gulf Coast” was grander in scope than other Katrina benefit concerts, but mimicked a predictable pattern in terms of composition of the program itself, what kinds of celebrities appeared, and the songs that were presented. It aired at 8 pm on September 9th, 2005, as a collaborative effort on the part of all major television networks, airing simultaneously (and commercial-free) on ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, UPN, and the WB, with several cable channels also participating and seen in over 100 countries. Event producer Greenwood Hall credits the success of their benefit (with proceeds exceeding \$30 million going to the Red Cross as well as the Salvation Army) to technological advancements in donations that afforded more seamless transactions, as to low

costs to produce due to corporate donations, leading to almost all money raised going directly to charities (Red Cross case study).

This concert, while focusing heavily on New Orleans for reasons which I will get into promptly, is not specific to New Orleans; the "Shelter From The Storm" benefit concert was for the entire devastated gulf region. The format is one that audiences have come to automatically recognize as a benefit concert-performances, interspersed with monologues and pleas for money and aid by celebrities.

Louisianan Ellen DeGeneres, looking somber and bleary-eyed, opened the show:

"Tonight is about giving. Giving what you can to help people put their lives back together." "Tonight let's show people from the gulf coast that they have friends across the world, friends who care. Who are here to give them shelter from the storm."

Though the purpose of this inquiry is to examine popular music, it would be a mistake to ignore the role that religious music plays, as well as the possible messages behind using this genre. In "Shelter From the Storm," gospel performances were peppered throughout the telecast and performed by combinations of popular and Christian musicians to different effects. The first was a gospel medley helmed by R & B artist Alicia Keyes (accompanied by gospel performers Alvin Slaughter and Shirley Ceaser), who opens the performance by stating "this is for anyone in pain, or suffering."

Beginning with several somber songs, it escalates into a joyous, high energy performance that appears to be cathartic to the actual performers-something that many musicians have reiterated in interviews following their involvements in benefit albums and performances. The impact of music is not just on the listener, but performer as well, many of whom experienced Hurricane Katrina as a personal tragedy, Mariah Carey was another popular musician who performed a gospel song, this time accompanied by a choir that included children, all outfitted in white robes. The result is a clash of the sacred and profane (Durkheim, 1915) on the grandest scale-celebrities singing religious music for money (albeit money for charity) in between popular singers of the day.

Fresh from his telethon appearance days earlier and bridging the gap between secular and religious messages in popular music is Kanye West with a performance of "Jesus Walks," one of his most successful songs from 2004's *The College Dropout*. Seated in front of a choir and symphony, Kanye self-censors lyrics and speaks to the audience about both the tragedy and the role that musicians and rappers play in social change. "Rappers as role models, we rap we don't think...If you speak the truth, you won't get played."

U2 performed "One" with Mary J. Blige, a song that's lyrics speak to injustice among people with lines like "one life, but we're not the same." Their performance is accompanied by shots of the collaborative music effort performing on a stage to an empty auditorium.

Interestingly enough from a music and tragedy perspective, a montage of video and stills of hurricane survivors is accompanied by Green Day's "Wake Me Up

When September Ends,” a song that was re-appropriated after September 11 attacks and the subsequent military involvement by the United States. Images displayed include many shots of babies and elderly citizens, and a lot of crying. A woman states “we’re stranded here but I don’t want to be here, I want to be somewhere with my family, I want food, drinks, and a roof over our heads.”

Comedian Chris Rock addressed the elephant in the room (Kanye West and his appearance on a previous telethon) by stating “George Bush doesn’t care about midgets,” but then went on to make a poignant argument against the “why didn’t people just leave” rhetoric that had already taken hold post-Katrina. He explained how, so often, natural disasters are more often than not, socioeconomic disasters and do not impact all equally: “(there’s) dependence on public transportation, not everyone can jump into an SUV. Not everyone can pay for a fancy hotel, because some of them work there.”

The 51 minute telecast is closed out by actor Jack Nicholson, with a message about the triumph of the region, the importance of the music it has produced, and a last push for donations by presenting this as something that is an American issue, not just a problem for the Mississippi Delta:

“ New Orleans jazz, Mississippi blues, are beautiful and profound expressions of the human spirit. The blues and jazz will live forever-so will the Delta and the Big Easy...the people of the gulf coast need us, and we need them. It will survive this, the worst natural disaster in American

History, if you say so. Measure by measure, bar by bar, nickel by nickel.
They're playing our song. Thank you."

Southern Identity in "Shelter From The Storm"

A theme that is apparent immediately is the representation that we are talking about the Southern United States, and the appeal to that is aural, oral and visual. Every single celebrity who delivers a monologue to the camera is wearing jeans, many are sporting leather boots, checked shirts, and in some cases even cowboy hats.

As these celebrities speak, twangy music that ranges from ragtime to folk to even jazz plays softly in the background-as Morgan Freeman speaks about noted-Southern writer William Faulkner, it's folk music. When Jack Black talks about the need to "channel anger and frustration into something positive," the music is a lighter jazz number. Southern music is referenced often, but so are Southern artists in general-aside from the Faulkner quotes, Bruce Willis also references "To Kill a Mockingbird" author and noted Alabama native Harper Lee as he talks about the need to rebuild in Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Even the choice of actors and celebrities speaking skew Southern-both Sela Ward and Julia Roberts reference their home states of Mississippi and Georgia, respectively. The identity of these celebrities is used in a similar way to that of song choice-they are physical representations of the "best" of the Gulf-"best" being of course subjective, but not an inaccurate way to describe celebrities in a fame-centric society.

Performances specifically about New Orleans

While the concert as a whole was dedicated to the entire effected gulf coast region, several songs and celebrity monologues put the focus directly on New Orleans. With a single light on his piano as video of storm coverage is projected behind him, Randy Newman delivers a somber and sobering cover of the song "Louisiana 1927," his song about the prior drowning of New Orleans when the Mississippi River flooded in 1927, leaving many dead and homeless. Paul Simon presents a cover of "Take Me to Mardi Gras." And the Foo Fighters give a raucous, high energy performance of "Born on the Bayou," led by an angry looking Dave Grohl. The effect is an aggressive performance celebrating southern pride (specifically Louisiana), And one of the most poignant moments comes from iconic New Orleans musician, Dr. John. Performing "Walking to New Orleans," the usually gregarious character is without his signature flashy accessories and appears wide-eyed and shell-shocked, devoid of trademark jeau-de-vivre.

While many Southern musicians and actors appeared in this telecast, there were very few who were living in the affected areas at the time, with Dr. John being perhaps the only big name from New Orleans in attendance. This could have been for logistical reasons, or the fact that these celebrities were still dealing with the very recent impact of the hurricane's devastation.

"Shelter From The Storm" seemed to follow an emotional trajectory, becoming progressively more upbeat as the concert continued. There was no

mention of negligence by government, local or federal. No focus on existing socio-economic conditions that made this event so devastating.

Two goals of this telecast come through strongly in song choice, presenters, and tone of the concert. The producers are making a case for the uniqueness and “specialness” of the region, while simultaneously maintaining a “this could be you” undercurrent directed at the television-viewing audience at home across the country. This is certainly a contradictory message, and not at all true-not only are hurricanes relegated to a specific region, but the effects of this “natural disaster” were due large in part to human-made choices and mistakes.

One can also interpret the use of pre-existing, re-appropriated music here as serving several purposes. Not only are they songs that are familiar and possibly comforting, but they perhaps aide in making the point that this kind of horrific event has happened before, and as a people we have prevailed.

“Elite panic”

When applying a critical-cultural theoretical lens to the mass media (and in turn, big business) to the benefit concert, we can see a different perspective on power. The notion of those in power using music to soothe masses- fear of the “downtrodden” and a feeling of needing to control the reactions of the masses-is what sociologist Kathleen Tierney dubbed “elite panic:”

“Fear of social disorder, fear of poor, minorities, and immigrants, obsessing with looting and property crime; willingness to resort to deadly force; and actions taken on the basis of rumor...”

If we accept the adage that “music soothes the savage beasts,” then perhaps the displays of emotions (sadness vs. anger or indignation, for the most part) and song choices that aired on these monolithic television stations was also acting as a lullaby—a musical sedative to angry viewers, particularly those directly effected.

Chapter 10

Conclusions and Future Research

Popular music post-Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans was used to raise money, raise awareness, and to express emotion. It was done through original music, benefit concerts, and re-appropriated, already popular music to different effects. Common themes throughout these different kinds of music produced include the impact of genre on this effectiveness/the message, the power of collective effervescence, and the importance of space and place when dealing with tragedy through music.

Benefit Concerts

It stands to reason that the tone of the big benefit concerts post-Katrina differed greatly from the original music produced. These concerts were used in two ways-yes, they utilized music as catharsis to heal, but ultimately they existed, as all benefit concerts exist, to raise money. To broadcast to people at home messages that the blame for Katrina lay in the hands of politicians in Washington whose wealth is something that most Americans can't even wrap their heads around would be to tell the American people that they are not "responsible," and therefore not the ones who need to donate funds to "fix" the gulf. Instead, the approach became very clear as messages from all major benefit concerts shared several common themes.

There was a big push to highlight what is unique about New Orleanian culture, with a huge emphasis on its national influence and impact. Music is a

natural thing to fall on here; not only is it one of the things that immediately comes to mind when one thinks of the city, but it very clearly is a natural fit with the benefit concert. This is done in speeches and monologues by celebrity hosts, where specific messages about the cultural impact of New Orleans were a focus. It was also done by taking New Orleanian standards, and having popular musicians with big household recognition perform them. And finally, it was done by bringing iconic New Orleanian musicians to the stage, serving as physical, living and breathing relics of what could have been lost in the water, or the personification of New Orleans culture and art itself.

In order to elicit donations, appealing to the humanity of viewers is an obvious and potentially very effective technique. Images of crying babies and shots of furniture and photo albums destroyed by water have the ability to resonate, in some way, with huge populations. To some effect, these images and music and monologues given by celebrities help to highlight a “this can happen to anyone, anywhere” factor.

But could it? This message is in direct opposition to many of the original songs written post-Katrina, and is in opposition to most research surrounding “natural” disasters. A hurricane does not discriminate in terms of damage inflicted, but institutions and practices put in place certainly do discriminate against individuals and groups, to detrimental effects. Research about natural disasters are clear-a heat wave is only deadly if you can’t afford air-conditioning, or you don’t have a car or money to get out of town to cooler temperatures. More violent forms of these disasters (hurricanes, tornadoes, fires) can certainly strike anywhere that

has the geographic and temporal conditions for them, but locations of a city with weak infrastructure and places that have been ignored by local governments for too long will certainly take the brunt of it, with populations who live there unable to financially or physically start over.

And yet this destruction of property or loss of life by forces “out of our control” is something that plays well with audiences. It’s why people buy insurance. The perceived risk, this “that could happen to me and my loved ones,” is the one that was tapped into for most of these attempts to illicit donations. But at the same time, there is a fine balancing act being performed here. If you are trying to make a case to save a particular location and space, you have to reiterate what makes it special. In this case, it’s music.

To watch these concerts with an emotional “eye” is to experience something sad and beautiful. With an analytical bent, it’s all of this and more, with a much sadder message-celebrities pleading the case for raising funds to save a city. One would hope that the lives of people would be enough, and maybe it would be. But to fall back on the power of music to appeal to people for donations is both indicative of the pull that this art-form has on a human, but also a perhaps cynical idea that viewers need “entertainment” or something else out of it to make it worth their while.

Original and Re-appropriated Music

A large theme lyrically present in original songs created post-Katrina was a need and strong push to assign blame, and how it was done proved much more

artful and complex than Kanye's original claims about George Bush. Many artists (hip-hop and rap in particular) specifically name-checked Bush and Cheney, but there was also recognition that this was a complex situation that highlighted institutionalized racism, and socio-economic and racial inequality that had laid dormant in the city-at least to the outside world, certainly not to New Orleanians-until flood waters washed over and exposed it. "Tragedy" doesn't occur independent of social and institutional impacts, usually before AND after the event (Vale & Campanella, 2005) Re-appropriated music allows for both an easier, sometimes immediate connection between producer and consumer when the meaning behind a song already exists.

Genre is not the only place where a delineation between where musicians are willing to assign blame can be seen, and identity of these musicians can not be ignored when analyzing responses to the events. The presence of critical race theory in these analyses is not seen solely in work done by artists of color, but it is certainly dominated by this population of musicians. Whereas a white artist like Jimmy Buffet might be willing to lay the blame for the effects of Katrina on an act of nature, many African-American musicians laid out arguments referencing entrenched social inequality as playing an important role in how this tragedy was handled. Several African-American rappers presented these arguments by referencing lived examples of this systemic racism, something that was not done by any white musicians in the sample-while white musicians were critical of the system, they were not quick to (or perhaps able) to situate themselves and their racial identity in their response to the events. While some white artists spoke out

against this in ways other than song, it is certainly worth noting the labor done by artists of color to express this inequality on a systemic level through popular music in attempts to reach the masses.

Genre as Message

The genre of music chosen to accompany tributes, memorials, and benefit concerts (particularly music that has been re-appropriated or “covered”) served to send a message, in and of itself and independent from messages in actual lyrics. Time and again, jazz, ragtime, and big brass ensembles were trotted out to not only cause audiences to make the connection between the music and New Orleans, but almost as if to serve as a reminder of the value of the city (especially as the birth place of jazz). One could certainly interpret this action as problematic if you compare it to messages of the value of the *people* of the city, particularly groups seen as “undesirable” or not of great importance. In fact this message that New Orleans contributed so much to art, music, and American culture was explicitly explored in every benefit concert that was analyzed for this project-it was not enough to make the case against the human suffering, but the need to connect it to tangible contributions was seen time and time again.

While the focus of this inquiry was on popular music, you can't ignore the use of the religious music in several benefit concerts, as well as the fine line between songs that are “popular” or traditional to New Orleans and music that also has spiritual messages. This is a city that gave birth to the “jazz funeral”-you can't

exactly separate the sacred from the profane when you discuss music that is native to this space.

Uses and Gratifications

Music written in response to Hurricane Katrina was used for catharsis and satisfying affective needs, cognitive needs, personal integrative, and social utility factors associated with Uses and Gratifications theory. Musicians self-reported using music to release emotions, but also to identify as someone directly impacted in some way by Hurricane Katrina.

This use of music for identity performance acted to situate these artists socially. Several artists used their direct connection with New Orleans and the Gulf to foster these social interactions, and make connections with others. They performed songs and contributed to benefit concerts to feel catharsis, but also to connect with others like themselves.

Others saw a connection through their identities as people of color witnessing racial injustices occurring in the Gulf to connect to the events of Katrina. Again music is cathartic and used for affect, but it is also a means of identifying within a group and fostering important social relationships with others in this group. As this study was not able to explore how audience members used this music produced, it is not possible to definitively say that mirrors how listeners used the music as well, but it would certainly be in line with previous research on popular music and identity

Individual and Social Uses of Music and Collective Effervescence

One of the first things done by a researcher to determine if they are analyzing data at the individual level or the societal level-this research straddles both. This examines media that has a purpose of sending a sole unifying message to large swaths of the population and is consumed both at the collective level and the individual. An era of digital musical consumption means that a listener can sit on a crowded subway car and have a very singular experience with music on their phone that is not being shared by the people around them, but it also allows for shared playlists, shared discussion on social media and message boards, and the ability to disseminate new media to the masses instantaneously. Popular music produced after a tragedy might be consumed by an individual in one sense, but the act of participating in popular culture (even alone in your bedroom), situates your experience within a social context.

In his work "Musiking," Simon Fritz discusses the universality of music, and the act of performing it. He looks at performance rather than the recording, at the act of sharing a live music experience, stating that "the act of musicking establishes in the place where it is happening a set of relationships, and it is in those relationships that the meaning of the act lies." (Small, 13). Anyone who has attended a concert can attest to a feeling that exists in the shared space that is not comparable to listening to a performance on headphones.

But Small's work comes long before social media as we know it-long before groups of strangers can individually sit around screens around the world watching the same thing at the same time, commenting in real time.

This is where I see the future of my research, and the future of audience studies focused on music and emotion. This is not a substitution for the live experience-I believe that Small is right, I believe in that intangible something that exists at a live show. And I believe that community that forms in that moment is special. But I also believe that sharing music online, that experiencing music through social media, that watching iconic performances on YouTube and dialoging about it with people online can create a unique community that in turn is able to experience something quite unique.

Though collective effervescence was originally coined by Durkheim to apply to the connection of communities in the physical realm, I think we see this impact across space when a country experiences tragedy on such a large scale, and music can aide in that movement. In fact, I believe that the way benefit concerts post-Katrina were structured and the messages that were presented or not presented (or attempted to not be presented, as the case was with Kanye West and NBC) was an attempt to actually harness the collective effervescence and in effect channel emotions connected to the event away from anger over socioeconomic and racial inequalities towards hopeful sadness and a feeling of “we shall overcome.” Individual artists, especially rappers, focused on the former, but were not included in attempts to raise funds post-Katrina.

Space and Place

Location is as integral to music in New Orleans as the melodies themselves, something which I saw reiterated again and again with songs about bringing music

back to actual physical locations and experienced myself when I went to New Orleans to gather data. I visited approximately 25 different music venues/spaces where important events surrounding music and New Orleans and music, New Orleans, and Hurricane Katrina took place. These spaces are filled with the ephemeral-whether strains of music are heard in the distance or blasting from speakers on a stage near a bar, they are inherently musical spaces. Music is in the décor, in the names of signature drinks, music is what is missing and strongly felt in its absence when the trumpet player takes a break for a latte. To be in New Orleans is to be surrounded by music and musical energy.

Artists and producers banked on this connection to space when creating post-Katrina benefits and musical tributes-it is a quite literal commodification of culture. Music is used as cues to listeners to remind them of what is lost if New Orleans is completely destroyed, and with musicians native to New Orleans pleading for the resurrection of the city.

Future Research

This research can be expanded in many ways. One avenue that I hadn't previously examined is the way that music is used specifically as an educational tool in disaster relief. In a comprehensive literature review titled "Hazards and Disasters Represented in Music," Alexander (2012) discusses music's use in coping and healing after tragedy, but also how song is used to educate those in rural areas about the proper way to respond when disaster strikes. The efficacy of this is supported by research looking at media and education, especially with music and

particularly when aimed at children. One issue with this, as Alexander points out, is that a language barrier and lack of visuals, this is perhaps not as effective as it could be.

While this inquiry accomplished what I set out to do, I would like to take what I have observed and apply it to first-hand accounts of people using popular music either at an individual (or perhaps if online then “socio-individual”) level following large-scale tragedy. What makes this especially interesting is to examine how an individual’s identity and connection to the event impacts how they use music in the aftermath.

I would also like to apply this framework that I have established here focusing on New Orleans and Hurricane Katrina to other large-scale disasters we have seen in the United States, especially when analyzing benefit concerts. When I presented my proposal to my committee, one of my members (Dr. Robert Thompson) used the phrase “tragedy industrial complex” to apply to what I was studying, and this has stuck with me. This format has become so formulaic, it can be applied and seen in countless other situations. I want to explore this idea and apply it to what it means for the notion of collective effervesce after a tragedy, and how music can manipulate emotions of groups.

“Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans?”

“Do you know what it means to miss New Orleans

And miss it each night and day

I know I'm not wrong this feeling's gettin' stronger
The longer, I stay away"

As people around the world watched floods rise and New Orleans crumble in September of 2006, many who had never even visited the city felt like they could answer the title of the popular 1947 Louis Armstrong-sung "Do You Know What it Means To Miss New Orleans?" with a resounding yes. This can certainly be connected and perhaps attributed to the omnipresence of this city in popular culture, especially in the music singing its praises. And as they watched benefit concerts and listened to tribute albums that soon followed, the connection was made stronger by music telling us all just what it meant to miss New Orleans, and the importance of rebuilding it, even just musically, in order to heal.

Appendix

Song Title	Artist
Minority Report	Jay-Z
All These People	Harry Connick Jr.
The Saints Are Coming	Green Day and U2
Houston	REM
Hollywood Divorce	Outkast feat. Lil Wayne and Snoop Dogg
Tie My Hands	Lil Wayne feat. Robin Thicke
O Katrina	Black Lips
Breathe In, Breathe Out, Move on	Jimmy Buffett
Wide Awake	Audioslave
Oh My Heart	REM
Georgia...Bush	Lil Wayne
Black Rain	Ben Harper
This City	Steve Earle
Dry Drunk Emperor	TV on the Radio
Gov Did Nuthin	John Butler Trio
Magnolia Soul	Ozomatli
All I Need	Matt Kearney
The Little Things You Give Away	Linkin Park
Red Letter Year	Ani DiFranco
Houston	Mary Chapin Carpenter
Home	Cowboy Mouth
I Hope	The Dixie Chicks
Where Were You	Jackson Browne
Katrina Klap (Dolla Dayz)	Mos Def
Get U Down	Warren G. feat. Ice Cube
S.S.T	Prince
Brand New Orleans	Prince
From The Bottom of My Heart	Michael Jackson and the All Stars
Love is Free	Sheryl Crow
Any Other Day	Wyclef Jean feat. Norah Jones
Hold Out a Hand	Edwin McCain
Get Ya Hustle On	Juvenile
Shelter in the Rain	Stevie Wonder
Hell No We Ain't Alright!	Public Enemy

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Mass Communications, Syracuse University** Current
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RESEARCH INTERESTS

In an increasingly globalized society, there are a few aspects of the human experience that are truly universal. Music is one of them. My research is focused on the study of popular culture and popular music, with an outside concentration in Disaster Studies. My specific interest is in the use of popular music in activism work, and in the aftermath of national tragedies and disasters. I utilize multiple qualitative research methods in my work, including textual analysis, in-depth interviewing, historical methods, and case studies.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Department of Communication, Christopher Newport University
Instructor

Public Speaking (COMM 201)
Gender Communication (COMM 330)
Communication and Social Media (COMM 321)
Media, Culture, and Technology (COMM 222)
Media Audiences (COMM 326)
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I had the opportunity to be Instructor of Record of eleven classes at Newhouse, including the introductory course Communications and Society, as well as upper-level classes such as Race, Gender and the Media and a course that I developed called Diversity Issues in Contemporary Music.

Professor

Communications and Society (COM 107) Spring 2013

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STUDY ABROAD

I will be teaching Communication and Film in the Summer of 2016 in Brussels as one of two professors chosen to participate in Christopher Newport University's study abroad program, Cultural Communication Competence: Interacting in a Global Environment

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Instructor, Christopher Newport University 2013-Present

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I authored two articles that were selected for publication in TIME Europe and TIME Asia, and were also featured in the online versions of both ("How Many Kisses?" March 2004; "Hot Hostels", July 2004) and fact-checked and researched information for stories, working directly with writers and reporters. I also conducted and translated interviews and stories for a special issue on Spain, in the aftermath of the Madrid subway bombings.

PUBLISHED WORKS

Billinson, J. (accepted book chapter to be published in 2016). *Soundtracking ShondaLand: Music and the construction of identity in Shonda Rhimes' hit television series*.

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CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Billinson, J. (2015) *'The Interview'; A case study of using popular culture to teach mass communication*. Teaching panel at the 2015 AEJMC conference in San Francisco, CA.

Billinson, J. (2015). *“Why I Stayed”; Using twitter to re-frame narratives of domestic violence*. Panel presentation at the 2015 Central States Communication Association conference in Madison, WI.

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Billinson, J. (2008). *‘Dance ‘til you feel better’; How ‘The Godfather of Soul’ saved Boston*. Paper presented at the 2009 National Popular Culture Association Conference in New Orleans, LA.

Billinson, J. (2008). *I’m not a doctor, but I play one on TV: An examination of host Phil McGraw’s portrayal as a medical professional on ‘The Dr. Phil Show’*. Paper presented at the 2009 AEJMC Midwinter conference.

Billinson, J. & Crosby, M. (2008). *Quarterbacks, engineers, and wingmen; Stereotypically male linguistic and semiotic content in “The Pick-Up Artist.”* Paper presented at the 2009 AEJMC Midwinter conference

Billinson, J. & Crosby, M. (2008). *Get Lost! Online fan response to unwelcome cast additions on the popular television show*. Paper accepted to a conference entitled "It Has Happened Before It Will Happen Again: The "Third" Golden Age of Television Fiction" in Istanbul, Turkey. We were unable to attend due to concerns related to the bombings at the United States Consulate.

AWARDS, HONORS, AND GUEST LECTURES

Guest Lecturer, Sociology of the Family (CNU) October 2015
 “Television and the American Family”

Featured Guest Lecturer, Spectrum of CNU September 2015

Featured Speaker, Gamma Phi Beta Sorority (CNU)
 Current Issues in Social Media April 2014

- Guest Lecturer, Feminist Theory (at SUNY Brockport)** February
2013
"Music as Theory"
- Lecturer, S.I. Newhouse Media Literacy Day** April, 2012, April 2013
I taught Advertising basics to visiting 6th graders from a local elementary school
- Lecturer, New York Parents Are Talking (NYPAT)
Parent Educator Meeting** November
2011
"Sex, The Media, and Youth"
- Outstanding T.A. Award** April 2011
Given by The Graduate School
- Lecturer, Real Talk CNY** April 2011
"Sex, The Media, and Youth; Finding Opportunity in Danger"
- Guest Lecturer, NEW 205** October 2009
Interviewing Skills
- Catherine L. Covert Research Award** April 2009
Newhouse School of Public Communications
- The Floyd and Ardola McCammon Faculty Award**
2002
Academic Scholarship, Indiana University