



Abstract

The destruction of homes and livelihoods are affected to this day. This research project investigates the long-standing effects of Hurricane Katrina to better understand the residents' experience through the lens of psychological and urban resilience. Disaster resilience refers to the ability of a community to experience and recover quickly and efficiently from the disaster. Psychological resilience centers on the actions that promote positive mental wellbeing for people. Urban resilience emphasizes the health of the environment with influence from people. The existing literature highlights certain criteria that support psychological and urban resilience, such as levels of community, governmental, and family support, positive coping mechanisms, support from religious communities, high quality greenspaces, flood prevention tactics, distance to the waterfront etc. This project employs a mixed methods research design, featuring semi structured interviews based on the resilience criteria with New Orleans residents and public database information to support or refute trends that are discussed in the interviews. It is important to note that the information presented from the interviews is not generalizable to the New Orleans population as participants are not from a random sample. The results of the study indicate that there were many shortcomings with the governmental response to Hurricane Katrina, with inequitable treatment by race and income being prominent. Community and family-based support was most beneficial to resident recovery. Recommendations for future hurricane responses include focusing on equitable treatment and streamlining financial support to help residents in a more efficient manner.



Tableau Restaurant-The French Quarter: Raised wrap around porch on a restaurant with seating. Own work.

Results

Community based aid was more effective at supporting residents psychological and urban resilience as they are more knowledgeable of the community and can provide relevant resources. Formal support networks should strive to be more equitable and consider existing challenges that lower income and communities of color face. This is representative of current equity challenges in society that urbanists must consider. Community connectedness is a key factor to promote both types of resilience.



Audubon Park: Play structure near Tulane University. Own work.

Theory

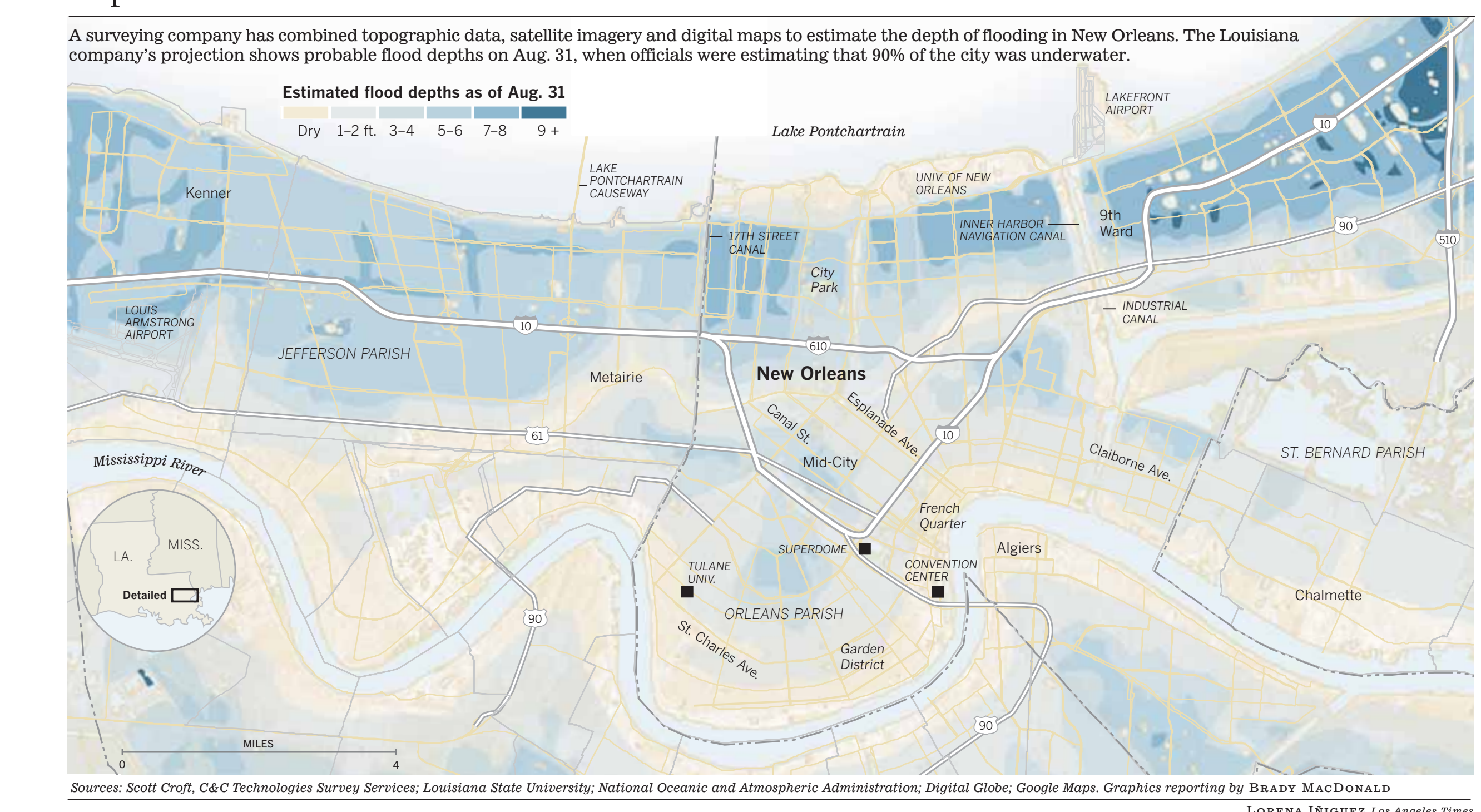
Urban and psychological resilience theories are employed to increase the ability of people to recover from disasters. Switching focus from resistance to resilience is key, as resilience focuses on promoting safety and identity. Urban resilience aims to preserve and improve the city landscape and the residents that live there. Psychological resilience focuses on the ability of people to recover from disasters. There are several indicators and criteria that can be used to measure and assess resilience.

Resilience Indicators

Below are examples of resilience indicators and criteria used in this project:

- Marijuana usage
- Coping mechanism
- Park usage
- Community connectedness
- Access to public transportation
- Concentration of poverty
- Educational attainment
- Religion

Depth of the disaster



Important References

- (Wu et al., 2017 p.892)
- (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2017 p.519)
- (Rodriguez-Llanes et al., 2013 p.7).
- (Molnar & Rutledge, 2015 p.13)
- (Bertilsson et al., 2018, p.973)
- (Zhang et al., 2008, p.5)
- (Jacovljevic, 2017, p.239)



Protective sea walls near the coast in the French Quarter. Own work.