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The University of Southern Mississippi

**COMMUNICATION, CRISIS, AND IDENTITY: DIALECTICAL TENSIONS
IN FAMILY NARRATIVES ABOUT HURRICANE KATRINA**

by

Laura Poole Rogers

**Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Studies Office
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

December 2008

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2008

The University of Southern Mississippi

COMMUNICATION, CRISIS, AND IDENTITY: DIALECTICAL TENSIONS
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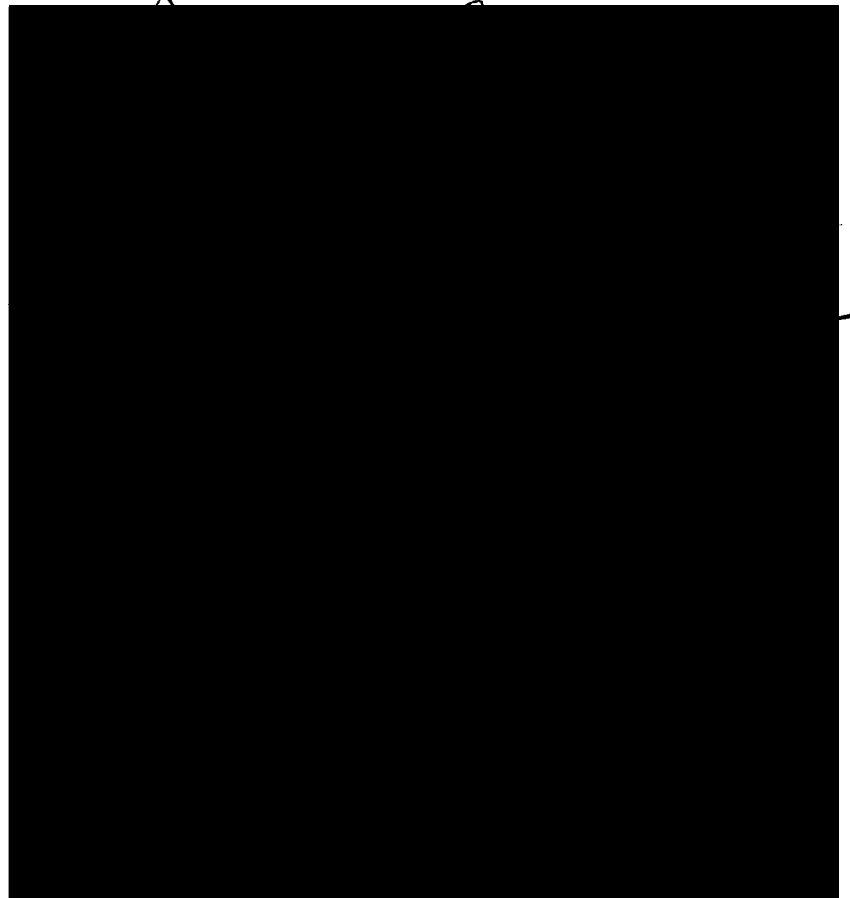
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A Dissertation

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Approved:



December 2008

ABSTRACT

COMMUNICATION, CRISIS, AND IDENTITY: DIALECTICAL TENSIONS IN FAMILY NARRATIVES ABOUT HURRICANE KATRINA

by Laura Poole Rogers

December 2008

In this study victims of Hurricane Katrina ordered their experiences with the crisis into meaningful themes which expressed their values, actions, inactions, occupations, needs and losses, and feelings. In interviews participants explained what happened, when it happened, how they responded, how they thought they should have responded, and how they handled situations surrounding the storm. Narratives about situations after the storm revealed descriptions of their and others' relationships in interactions with representatives of larger social units. The dialectical analysis revealed dialectical tensions that emphasized participants' dynamic and changing relationships and identities. Dialectical analysis of narratives about those relationships revealed dialectical tensions in the form of dialectical oppositions in relationship maintenance and identity gaps in identity maintenance. Nine dialectical oppositions and nine identity gaps were revealed in the four analyzed narratives. There were five inclusion-seclusion, two conventionality-uniqueness, one revelation-concealment, and one approach-resistance dialectical oppositions and four identity gaps between personal and relational frames of identity, three gaps between the enactment and relational frames of identity, one gap between the personal and enactment frame of identity and one identity gap between the personal and communal frame of identity revealed.

The dialectical analysis also revealed that participants used strategies to cope with the dialectical tensions which were indicative of threats to identity. The threats to identity consisted of breaks in continuity, threats to self-esteem and threats to efficacy caused by the storm and surrounding circumstances. In summary, participants exposed themes, dialectical tensions and coping strategies when facing and surviving threats from their Hurricane Katrina experiences.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

By looking at how identity is constructed through communication, this study offered insights into how crisis affects identity. Thus, the study extended existing knowledge in crisis, identity, and communication research. While there have been studies regarding crisis communication, the studies have primarily focused on communication in organizations. The usual focus of crisis communication is how an organization communicates within and outside its boundaries before, during, and after a crisis. In contrast, the present study expanded the definition of crisis communication to include interpersonal aspects of communication.

By the same token, studies of identity seldom examine identity as it is related to crisis. This study offers new insights to existing knowledge by focusing on individuals' communication about their identities in response to crisis by observing, describing, and analyzing how participants maintained and reconstructed identity regarding their Hurricane Katrina experiences.

This study (1) affirms that identity is constructed and maintained through interpersonal communication; (2) that individuals strive to maintain or to reconstruct positive identities; (3) exposes a connection between crisis and identity by looking at crisis from an interpersonal communication perspective; (4) broadens the meaning of crisis communication to include aspects of interpersonal communication; and (5) shows that exposing identity gaps by looking at personal narratives from a dialectical perspective contributes to our understanding of the role of identity in crisis.

The method mirrored Conville's (1998b) method that is a "qualitative approach that is at once dialectical, structural, and narrative" (p. 147). Narratives provided a

detailed description of the communicative processes individuals use to describe crisis events and themselves in situations surrounding the events. Participants were members of an extended family of fishermen who experienced losses and damage during Hurricane Katrina. Thematic analysis and dialectical analysis were used to organize and categorize communicative episodes to illuminate meaning. Thematic analysis helped illuminate how participants viewed themselves before and after the crisis. Dialectical analysis helped illuminate how participants viewed themselves and constructed identity in relationships pertaining to their Hurricane Katrina experiences by exposing two types of dialectical tensions: dialectical oppositions and identity gaps.

Offering a glimpse into one family's experiences, communicative responses, and efforts to construct and maintain identity in the face of crisis raises substantive questions about crisis, identity, and interpersonal communication. Raising awareness by calling attention to the fact that there is a connection between crisis and identity may result in providing help for those dealing with associated problems. Naming a thing or calling attention to a phenomenon inspires acknowledgment that the phenomenon exists (Wood, 1992).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The broad purpose of this study was to expand knowledge concerning how individuals communicate about their identities when affected by crisis situations. Montgomery and Baxter (1998) stated, "Communication is the vehicle of social definition; participants develop their senses of self, partners develop their senses of relationship, and societies develop their senses of identity through the process of communication" (p. 161). This research looked at how individuals defined their senses of self, their senses of relationship, and their senses of identity through communication in a crisis situation. The inquiry was conducted from an interpersonal communication perspective by focusing on how individuals communicated to construct and maintain identity in the wake of crisis.

In order to discover the breadth and scope of existing literature associated with communication, with crisis and with identity, this review includes information found in searches of crisis communication, organizational communication, interpersonal communication, and health communication, personality and social psychology perspectives, and anthropological perspectives associated with identity and crisis. Additionally, this encompasses identity research and crisis research in order to ascertain connections in identity and crisis research. The following pages include definitions and discussions of interpersonal communication and narratives, of crisis and crisis communication and of identity, explanations concerning construction and maintenance of identity, motivational factors for identity construction and maintenance, explanations regarding positive identity construction and maintenance, information describing threats

to identity, thoughts about coping with threats to identity, and a discussion about dialectical perspectives and identity.

Interpersonal Communication and Narratives

Interpersonal communication in relationships is observed in narratives (Bochner & Ellis, 1992). Bochner (1985) stated that interpersonal communication is a “vague, fragmented and loosely defined subject that intersects all behavioral, social, and cultural sciences” (p. 27). The fact that interpersonal communication is defined by many researchers in several ways supports Bochner’s (1985) claim. Interpersonal communication has been described as: (1) “communication between people, usually in face-to-face, private settings (Littlejohn, 2001 p, 14), (2) “a transactional process of exchanging messages and negotiating meaning to convey information and to establish and maintain relationships” (Wilson, 2000), (3) having *situational* characteristics in which the number of communicators and physical proximity were limited and having *developmental* characteristics in which the relationship changed from that of strangers to becoming more acquainted if the relationship continued (Miller, 1990), (4) as a way in which people participate in the negotiating relationships (Heath & Bryant, 2000), and (5) “an interactive, involving, and situated process that produces multiple meanings that simultaneously differentiate and connect participants” (Montgomery & Baxter, 1998, p. 161). In this research interpersonal communication was defined as *a dyadic interaction in which messages are negotiated, relationships are negotiated, or identities are negotiated.*

In order to observe interpersonal communication, a naturalistic narrative approach was taken in this study. Narratives provided the means to observe interpersonal

communication of participants which offered insights into their relationships and identities as related to their Hurricane Katrina experiences.

Through narratives, people structure their experiences and actions. Narratives give meaning to the world. Through stories, the world and people's actions reflect a logic that explains what happens, why it happens, who makes it happen, when it happens and how people should respond to these events. Narratives express a set of preferences, the values of the persons who ascribe to those narratives, The world of human events is understood in terms of a thematic logic that begins with "once upon a time" and progresses through "and then she said to him," and resolves into "and all ended well for both" (Heath, 2004, p171).

Ewick and Silbey (1995) defined narratives by stating: (1) narratives contain past events and characters, (2) the events are ordered chronologically and (3) the events and characters are related to one another and to some overarching structure.

Narratives provide "thick descriptions" which are rich and complex descriptions of social events, behaviors, and processes exposed in participants' stories (Geertz, 1975). The thickness signifies the richness and complexity of descriptions as a suitable and sufficient form of verification (Geertz, 1975). Guba (1978) argued the need to interpret the meaning of descriptions. Geertz (1975) realized the importance of interpreting descriptions while emphasizing that what researchers call "data" (narratives in this case) are constructions of participants' realities interpreted by researchers resulting in different meanings by the mere act of interpretation and construction. Therefore, Guba (1978) said it is necessary to discover meaning by preparing categories of observances which will lead to discovery and verification. Narratives make the world more coherent for those

telling their stories by ordering events into themes that express values and guide actions (Heath, 2004).

The role of the researcher is to organize the narratives into themes which enable us to interpret categories to discover meaning. Narratives serve to sustain, enhance, or impede actions of those telling stories pertaining to different situations or contexts including crisis (Heath, 2004). Heath (2004) further explained that all crisis communication is narrative.

Crisis and Crisis Communication

Crisis is defined by Heath (2004) from an organizational communication perspective as a “predictable event that occurs at an unexpected time and threatens the well being of stakeholders and stakeskeepers (key publics); it challenges the ability of organizations to enact the narrative of continuity through constructive change to control the organization’s destiny” (p. 167). Millar and Beck (2004) offer a more general definition which is not limited to organizations when they state, “crisis is associated with the loss of control, with the breaks from the routine, with the turning point (or threshold) from order to disorder” (p. 163). Millar and Beck’s (2004) definition can be applied to personal crisis. For example, the Hurricane Katrina crisis was associated with a loss of control (e.g. the inability to protect against flooding), a break from the routine (e.g. work interrupted by damage), and with turning points from order to disorder (e.g. flooded businesses and houses, disrupted schedules) for individuals as well as for organizations. A personal crisis affects fewer numbers of people than a public crisis. A family experiencing a serious illness of a member, for example, is a personal crisis; a natural disaster such as a hurricane or a man-induced disaster such as an attack by terrorists is an example of a public crisis.

Harwood and Sparks (2003) examined identifying characteristics of people experiencing cancer, a personal crisis, and Sparks (2005a) looked at identifying characteristics associated with a more public crisis when studying those who have experienced a terrorist attack. Harwood and Sparks (2003) and Sparks (2005a) believed their research provided a meaningful agenda for intergroup work for better understanding individuals who have experienced crisis. While Sparks (2005a) and Harwood and Sparks (2003) looked at communication after public and personal crisis; Garnett and Kouzmin (2007) looked at communication after a public crisis, Hurricane Katrina. Garnett and Kouzmin (2007) stated that Hurricane Katrina was a communication crisis as well as a natural disaster because of the break down in communication between leaders and victims after the storm.

Sparks (2005a) defined crisis communication as “communicating with the public before, during, and after a negative event” (p. 13). Crisis communication has typically been studied from an organizational communication perspective (Garnett & Kouzmin, 2007; Heath, 2004; Marra, 2004; Millar & Beck, 2004; Sellnow & Ullmer, 2004; Ullmer et al., 2007). More specifically, when studying crisis communication, researchers predominantly looked at image restoration of organizations after crisis (Ullmer et al., 2007). However, Ullmer et al. (2007) focused on renewal response rather than image restoration by looking at accusations and responses after crises. Harwood and Sparks (2003) and Sparks (2005a) looked at crisis communication from an intergroup perspective when studying group identity and stereotypes. Garnett and Kouzmin (2007) looked at “interpersonal influence” by studying the influence of governors, mayors, presidents, and other public figures when talking with large groups of victims.

Garnett and Kouzmin (2007) used an example from a historical context regarding neighbors passing the word about a crisis and consoling each other after crisis as an example of “interpersonal influence.” Neighbors interacting and consoling would have involved interpersonal communication. However, Garnett and Kouzmin’s (2007) study did not. Instead, groups of victims were influenced by messages from individual leaders thus the term “interpersonal influence,” making the research focus, in my opinion, on “social influence” rather than on “interpersonal influence”.

Sparks (2005b) challenged researchers to “broaden definitions of crisis communication to draw from relevant theoretical frameworks that inform crisis situations” (p.2). Studying crisis communication from an interpersonal perspective in this study answered the challenge; the interpersonal perspective broadened the definition and added valuable theoretically frameworks to crisis communication.

This researcher recognized the need to use an interpersonal communication lens rather than an organizational or social group lens when studying crisis communication because all crises, whether public or personal, affect individuals personally. Therefore, it is important to think of personal, individual needs as well as needs of groups or organizations. Whether a crisis is personal (affecting few people) or public (affecting many), needs of people on a personal level are involved and important. Studying victims’ interpersonal communication exposes needs of crisis victims allowing researchers to learn and to understand with the goal of sharing knowledge to help victims. Researchers can learn crisis victims’ needs and losses regarding their livelihoods, homes, families, and occupations. However, because of losses and situations surrounding crisis, victims’ identities can also be threatened causing more stress and uncertainty. Even though identity issues may seem unimportant when more basic needs are threatened by crisis,

identity threats exist and can affect the well-being of victims. Through analysis of interpersonal communication of victims, their needs can be understood.

Identity

Identity can not be easily defined. Breakwell (1986) explains that “an abstract and operational definition [of identity] will depend on the role it has to perform within the theory” (p. 10). What is called identity by some theorists may be referred to as character, self-concept, or personality by other theorists (Breakwell, 1986). In addition to being called by different terms, what is called identity can refer to completely different things.

Breakwell (1986) explained from a symbolic interactionist perspective “identities are negotiated performances of the role prescriptions attached to the occupancy of social positions: as such any one person can have many identities depending upon the number of roles adopted” (p10); from a psychoanalytic perspective, “identity is a global self-awareness achieved through crisis and sequential identifications in social relations” (Breakwell, p. 10), and “from a role theory standpoint, any label applied consistently to a person may be considered an identity” (p. 11).

Gegas (2000) said identity is viewed by some as locating a person “in social space by virtue of relationships and memberships that it implies” including memberships in particular groups, organizations, and society as a whole (p. 93). Units or elements of identity such as occupational roles, family roles, ethnic groups, values, and value systems constitute locations of identity (Gegas, 2000) within the social space. Any self-characterization, according to Gegas (2000), such as wishes, desires, achievements, roles, values, goals, and attitudes, for example, can be considered elements of identity.

Vignoles et al. (2000) define identity broadly as a subjective concept of oneself as a

person. In this research identity was broadly defined as *a changing concept of self that varies with life's circumstances and with one's interaction with others.*

Identity Construction

The construction of identity is a social process constructed through interaction (Cooley, 1964). Cushman and Cahn (1985) stated, “our self-concept or interactive identity is thus a communication rather than a psychological phenomenon, because it is interactively established and sustained” (p. 2). “Self and other do not exist as mutually exclusive social factors” (Cooley, 1964, p. 126). Cooley (1964) and Cushman and Cahn (1985) emphasized that communication is a *system* of interconnected parts. In other words, interpersonal communication involves more than just individuals; it involves individuals in multiple relationships. Stewart (1995) claims that “human worlds are collaboratively constructed (modified, developed, razed, reconstructed) in speech communicating” (p. 111). Thus, identities that are part of socially constructed human worlds are modified, developed, razed, and reconstructed in interpersonal relationships through communication.

“Identities of individuals arise and are sustained in communicative interactions” and in “cultural, political, institutional, social, and personal locations” (Wood, 1992, p. 357). “The relationship is always embedded in organizational, cultural, and cross-cultural systems” (Cushman & Cahn, 1985, p. 16).

Mead (1934), Goffman (1959), Cooley (1964), Erikson (1968), Cushman & Cahn (1985), Wood (1992), Hecht (1993), Stewart (1995), Jenkins (1996), Woodward (2000), and Jung & Hecht (2004) agree that identity is constructed through interaction. This position is widely accepted in the field of communication. Through communication (social interaction) individuals create realities about how they perceive who they are

(their identities). Jung and Hecht (2004) acknowledged the interactive and changing characteristics of identity formation:

Social relations and roles are internalized by individuals as identities through communication. Individuals' identities, in turn, are acted out as social behavior through communication. Identity not only defines an individual but also reflects social roles and relationships through communication. Moreover, social behavior is a function of identity through communication. (p. 266)

In what ways do individuals interact to construct individual and group identities?

Some scholars say identities are constructed by *distinctiveness* (comparisons, differentiation) (Greenblatt, 1980; Worchel & Austin, 1986; Breakwell, 1993; Stewart, 1995; Vignoles et al., 2000; Jasinski, 2001); some say identities are constructed through *negotiation*, (Goffman, 1959; Cooley, 1964; Woodward, 2000; Jung & Hecht, 2004); others say by *regulating consensus* (Cushman & Cahn, 1985); and some say identities are constructed through *symbolic interaction* (Mead, 1934; Cooley, 1964; Cushman & Cahn, 1985; Stewart, 1995; Woodward, 2000). Distinctiveness, negotiation, regulating consensus, and symbolic interaction are not exclusive of each other. For example, individuals may regulate consensus and show distinctiveness through symbolic interaction while constructing identities.

Distinctiveness is a comparison or differentiation from others (Breakwell, 1993).

Distinctiveness can be seen as difference from others, separateness from others, and in differences in social positions (Breakwell, 1993). "A notable feature of any representation is that concepts are not meaningful independently of each other but are defined in relation to each other, involving a process of differentiation" (Vignoles et al., 2000, p. 340).

Worchel and Austin (1986) and Stewart (1995) believe people distinguish themselves from others by constructing identity. Contrarily, people construct identity by distinguishing themselves from others. Vignoles et al. (2000) believe that distinctiveness is important for “establishing and projecting a meaningful sense of identity” (p. 341). A person can not know who they are unless they compare themselves to others to know who they are not (Vignoles et al., 2000). Jenkins (1996) believes that similarity and difference are the two comparisons made when individuals distinguish themselves while forming identities. Individuals identify themselves relationally and comparatively by distinguishing themselves as similar or different or better or worse than members of other groups (Worchel & Austin, 1986). In order to “segment, classify, and order the social environment,” individuals make social comparisons while constructing social identities (Worchel & Austin, 1986, p. 15).

Jung and Hecht (2004) state, “An individual’s identity is created through internalization and negotiation of ascribed identities by others. The co-created identity is avowed in communication and adjusted again by others’ ascriptions” (p. 266).

Woodward (2000) states:

Both as individuals and through collective action it is possible to redefine and reconstruct our identities. We can negotiate and interpret the roles we adopt. Through collective action it is also possible to influence the social structures which constrain us, but there are clearly restrictions and limits. The scripts of our everyday interactions are already written and at the wider level structures are deeply embedded in contemporary culture, economy, and society. Identity formation continues to illustrate the interrelationship between structure and

agency [the degree of control which we ourselves can exert over who we are]. (p. 39)

Goffman (1959) believes individuals can negotiate their identity by the roles they play in life. He believes individuals choose their roles as if in a play and that the roles or scripts have already been written as if parts in the play.

Cushman and Cahn (1985) discuss regulating consensus in cross-cultural, cultural, organizational, and interpersonal systems. They explain that regulating consensus in cross cultural communication means to come to an understanding about cultural identity and interest. To regulate consensus in cultural communication means to come to an understanding about institutions. In organizational communication consensus is about production. To regulate consensus in interpersonal communication means to come to a mutual understanding with an individual about his or her self “in regard to the development, presentation, and validation of individual self-concepts” (Cushman & Cahn, 1985, p. 19). The function of interpersonal communication is to “regulate consensus regarding individual self-concepts” (Cushman & Cahn, 1985, p. 16). To regulate consensus is important, according to Cushman and Cahn (1985) when they stated, “The chief problem of communication in such a world [containing people who are diverse, interdependent, and aware] is one of discovering and building upon areas of agreement in order to develop a consensus capable of guiding collective action” (p. 15).

Symbolic interaction refers to self-object relationships. In symbolic interaction, individuals first “determine what the objects in their experience *are* by associating them with and differentiating them from other objects of their experience”; secondly, “they must determine the relationship of the object to themselves in terms of appropriate actions in appropriate circumstances” (Cushman & Cahn, 1985, p. 21). Mead (1934)

claimed a symbol stands for something else. Clothes, words, pictures, images, gestures are all symbols which represent something else. For example, if someone uses proper grammar or words, that person is using the words as symbols which may represent an educated person. Therefore, correct grammar (the symbol) is representative of an educated person in the interaction. Both or all people in the interaction are constructing identity by perceiving symbols that are signifying an educated person.

The communication processes involved in forming identity or self-concepts by symbolic interaction according to Cushman and Cahn (1985) are: (a) "taking the role of others with whom we interact and asking what they must have thought about us in order to communicate with us as they did;" (b) deciding "that we need to assert various aspects of our preferred conceptions of self in order to influence others' perceptions of us;" (c) recognizing "through interaction others' conceptions of themselves and the role their self-concepts play in either supporting or limiting our presentation of self;" and (d) realizing "that who we are in interaction, our self-concept, is a subtle interaction between our own desires and communication skills and the desires of others for us and their communication skills" (pp. 19-20). Cushman and Cahn (1986) explained symbolic interaction when forming identity or self-concept by stating "our ability to create and sustain our vision of self depends upon the room others provide for us or the room we create in interaction to develop, present, and validate our self-concepts" (p. 20).

Woodward (Woodward, 2000) described how everyday interactions are symbolic stating:

We present ourselves to others through everyday interactions, through the way we speak and dress, marking ourselves as the same as those with whom we share an identity and different from those with whom we do not. Symbols and representations are important in the marking of difference and in both presenting

ourselves to others and in visualizing or imagining who we are. We use symbols in order to make sense of ourselves in relation to the world we inhabit. This world is characterized by structures which may limit our choices, but which may also provide more opportunities. (p. 39)

The above discussion about identity construction explains how identity is constructed through interaction. It is important in this research to point out that individuals attempt to construct, maintain, and reconstruct *positive* identities because there may be a need to contrast positive identities with ascribed identities that may not be perceived as positive by those who have experienced crisis.

Motivation to Construct and Maintain Positive Identities

Why do individuals attempt to construct and maintain positive individual and social identities? Breakwell (1993) discusses *motivations* or principles which shape identity in her *identity process theory*. She says the desire for distinctiveness, continuity, high self-esteem, and efficacy are motivations that shape identity. Distinctiveness is defined in the above discussion as comparison or differentiation from others; as difference from others, separateness from others, and in differences in social positions (Breakwell, 1993). Continuity in identity exists over time and across situations. Breakwell (1993) says there is a connection in identity of past, present, and future. Losses of continuity have been associated with negative affect when an attempt to regain continuity of identity has failed (Breakwell, 1993). Efficacy is the motivation to maintain feelings of control and competence (Breakwell, 1993). Self-esteem is the motivation to maintain positive self-concepts (Breakwell, 1993).

Tajfel and Turner (1986) observe “individuals strive to maintain or enhance their self-esteem; they strive for a positive self-concept” (p 16). According to Jung and Hecht

(2004), “receiving others’ appraisals that are consistent with his/her self-views is a goal of communication” (p. 271). Baumeister (2000) said individuals want accurate self-knowledge, they want confirmation of what they believe, and they want favorable feedback. In other words, individuals want affirmation of their positive self-views. They construct and maintain positive identities through interaction.

Individuals do not simply construct identities; individuals strive to construct and to maintain *positive* identities. Through a process of negotiation with others during interaction and through favorable comparisons, individuals construct and maintain positive identities. Through a process of negotiation “people’s identities are asserted, defined, and/or changed in mutual communication activities” to form a “mutually desired identity” (Jung & Hecht, 2004, p. 266). Positive distinctiveness involves social comparisons in which people enhance themselves therefore boosting self-esteem by assigning themselves positive attributes when comparing themselves to others.

Greenblatt (1980) believed that positive social identity is based on comparisons. Jasinski (2001) agreed with Greenblatt’s findings that “individual and/or group identity frequently is constituted by various strategies of othering that secure a privileged [positive] identity for an individual or group at the expense of a different group of people who are constituted as negative or other” (p. 193). Individuals tend to compare themselves as ‘better’ or ‘worse’ than members of other groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Tajfel and Turner (1986) discussed some social principles relating to how positive social identity is shaped:

Individuals strive to achieve or to maintain positive social identity. Positive social identity is based to a large extent on favorable comparisons that can be made between the in-group and some relevant out-groups: the in-group must be

perceived as positively differentiated or distinct from the relevant out-groups.

When social identity is unsatisfactory, individuals will strive either to leave their existing group and join some more positively distinct group and/or make their existing group more positively distinct. (p. 16)

After establishing or constructing positive individual and social identities, the identities can be threatened or at risk. When the process of identity is threatened, individuals strive to maintain or reconstruct identity by using coping strategies.

Threats to Identity

Individuals tend to protect and respond when their identities are threatened.

Social Identity Theory provides evidence for the claim. Sparks (2005b) describes Social Identity Theory as:

a broad socio-psychologically grounded theory of intergroup relations, which focuses particularly on the importance people ascribe to their identities, the ways in which they protect them, and the ways in which they respond when their identities are threatened. It deals primarily with large social groups (age, culture, sexuality, etc.), but can also be applied to smaller and more specialized groups (an alma mater, a family, a victim of a particular disease or crisis. (p.1)

Understanding the identities such as those associated with certain groups enables researchers to explain some crisis-related social processes which may threaten identity. Research shows that a change in social context can threaten identity if the change interrupts the process of identity (Breakwell, 1986). A crisis causes change in social context and therefore can obstruct the process of identity. Two components of the process of identity are assimilation and accommodation (Breakwell, 1986). According to Breakwell (1986), "Assimilation refers to the absorption of new components into the

identity structure; accommodation refers to adjustment which occurs in the existing structure so as to find a place into which to fit the new elements” (p. 23). Hurricane Katrina caused changes in the social context of the lives of victims. The changes caused obstructions to the process of identity. For example, obstructions or changes (damage to houses, boats, tools, natural environment) in the social context of the lives of victims caused by Hurricane Katrina had to be absorbed (assimilated) and an adjustment to the new situation (temporary loss of occupations) and the new identities had to be made (accommodated).

Maalouf (2001) purported, “It can happen that some incident, a fortunate or unfortunate accident, even a chance encounter, influences our sense of identity” (p. 11). Experiencing Hurricane Katrina was an unfortunate incident that caused changes that influenced individuals’ sense of identity.

Woodward (2000) offered an example of how changes can influence identity when she discussed changes in the social structure of the UK:

There have been changes in our lives, in the domestic arena, in the workplace in our communities and at the level of the nation and its place in the world. Some of these changes have been translated into questions of identity. For example, in concerns about how people cope with change. Change has also created new opportunities for redefining ourselves, at home and in the workplace and as members of different ethnicities and nations within the UK. There is both uncertainty and diversity. Identity is a particularly useful concept for explaining how people cope with change and uncertainty and the opportunities presented by diversity. Identities are fluid and changing. This, in itself, produces uncertainty. (p 39)

Woodward's (2000) references to change can be applied to change provoked by different types of crisis. A personal crisis such as a serious illness or a divorce can provoke change that creates uncertainty; a public crisis such as experiencing a hurricane or a terrorist attack provokes change which can also cause uncertainty. According to Berger and Calabrese (1975) and Berger (1993), individuals strive for certainty and feel stressed when faced with uncertainty. Berger (1993) argued that in order to adapt to social and physical environmental changes, individuals strive to reduce uncertainty. As Woodward (2000) stated, "Identity is a particularly useful concept for explaining how people cope with change and uncertainty" (p. 39). In the context of crisis and identity, individuals may try to reduce uncertainty provoked or caused by the crisis while attempting to maintain or reconstruct positive identities.

Breakwell (1986) stated "*a threat to identity occurs when the processes of identity, assimilation-accommodation and evaluation are, for some reason, unable to comply with the principles of continuity, distinctiveness and self-esteem, which habitually guide their operation*" (p. 47). Breakwell (1986) stated "the reason for this obstruction of the processes of identity constitutes threat" (p48). In other words, a threat to identity could be associated with a personal crisis such as being a cancer victim which could prevent continuity of work which is typically an identity characteristic. A threat to identity could also be associated with a public crisis such as experiencing damages from Hurricane Katrina which may affect continuity, efficacy, and self-esteem. Crisis can threaten, obstruct, or interfere with ones identity.

What do individuals do when there is a threat to identity? According to Breakwell (1986), individuals may try to expunge the threat by removing some aspects of the social context, by moving into a new social position or by revising the identity

structure which would enable the identity process to operate again “in accordance with the principles of continuity, distinctiveness, and self-esteem” (p. 79). When individuals attempt to remove or modify a threat to identity, the activity can be regarded as a coping strategy (Breakwell, 1986).

Individuals may revise identity structures by striving to maintain or reconstruct positive identities that have been threatened by crisis or threatened by individuals or media ascribing identities after crisis. Identity is one aspect of ones life that is uncertain when faced with crisis. Crisis can create uncertainty in jobs, financial stability, housing, as well as to identity.

Framework of Identity

How do communication scholars organize different aspects of identity in order to study it and explain it to others to promote understanding? Hecht (1993) and Jung and Hecht (2004) proposed a general framework of identity; Harwood and Sparks (2003) and Sparks (2005a) provided a more specific framework (an intergroup framework of identity) to illustrate issues surrounding those who have experienced terrorists’ attacks (a public crisis) and those who have experienced cancer (a personal crisis).

The general framework of Hecht (1993) and Jung and Hecht (2004) consisted of four frames of identity (personal, enacted, relational, and communal). A personal frame is one’s self-image or self-concept. The enactment frame refers to the acting out of identity through communication in social interactions. The focus of the enactment frame is performed or expressed identity (Jung and Hecht, 2004). The relational frame refers to identity negotiation through interaction in relationships; that is identity is shaped by relationships with others including the views of others (Jung & Hecht, 2004). The relational frame has four levels of identity, according to Jung and Hecht (2004). Within

the relational frame, on one level “an individual develops and shapes his/her identity partially by internalizing how others view him/her” (p. 266). Secondly, an individual identifies self according to relationships with others (someone’s spouse, friend, tutor, etc.) A third level of the relational frame is the multiplicity of identities. In other words, one displays identity in relationships with others. The fourth level in the relational frame is the easily identifiable relationship itself. For example, the relationship may be that of a married couple, co-workers, teachers-student, etc. A communal frame is identity held by a group. For example, faculty at the University of Southern Mississippi composes a large group which is divided into smaller groups by departments. Each division is a communal group.

Jung and Hecht’s (2004) four frames of identity (personal, enacted, relational, and communal) overlap. They state it is important to understand that the frames cannot be viewed as separate entities. According to these researchers there can be identity gaps between the four frames of identity. For example, “an individual’s expressed identity in communication can differ from his or her self views (one can see self as open-minded but cut off conversations in certain topics)” (Jung and Hecht, 2004, p. 269).

Harwood and Sparks (2003) proposed three levels of identity when studying intergroup work in cancer, a personal crisis, and three levels of identity when studying terrorist groups. The three levels associated with cancer victims are: (a) identities associated with large social groups such as sex groups, age groups, cultural groups, (b) identities associated with both positive and negative health related behaviors such as identification as a smoker, identification as a runner, etc., (c) identities unique to those who have cancer such as a sick person, a cancer victim, a cancer survivor. Sparks’s (2005a) three levels of identity when studying terrorist groups are: primary identities

(large social groups), secondary identities (identification associated with behaviors of group), and tertiary identities (identification associated with experiencing terrorist attack indirectly).

Montgomery (1991) stated there may be dialectical tension between group identity and personal identity. In the language of Jung and Hecht, this tension would create an identity gap between the communal frame and the personal frame. For example, individuals may not want to be ascribed a particular group identity associated with a crisis; they may want to distinguish themselves from the group. If the group was labeled as a group of victims, some individuals who suffered the crisis may not want to be seen as victims. Sparks (2005a) suggested that an ascribed victim role may lead to reduced feelings of control. Therefore, there could be dialectical tension caused by the loss of control creating an identity gap between personal identity and the group identity ascribed to them. In other words, the ascribed identity of victim is beyond the control of the individual causing tension. The dialectical tension is the struggle to maintain one's positively constructed personal identity through communication while separating self from the group identity generated or ascribed to them.

Dialectical Perspective

The dialectical perspective focuses on the relationship between phenomena (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). To understand the perspective, one must understand tension that is the basis of the perspective. Dialectical research is based on ideas of Bahktin (1981), a Russian philosopher. There is a tension or a "ceaseless battle between centrifugal forces that seek to keep things apart and centripetal forces that try to make things cohere" (Bahktin, 1981, p. xviii). Dialectical tensions exist in several contexts. For example, Hecht (1993) and Jung and Hecht (2004) acknowledged that identity is

dialectical in nature. Conville (1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b), Baxter (1988), Baxter and Simon (1993), Baxter and Montgomery (1998), and Montgomery and Baxter (1998) focused on the dialectical nature of interpersonal relationships.

Hecht (1993) looked at individual, group, and relational aspects of identity including dialectical aspects of identity. According to Hecht, (1993) most of the assumptions of identity are dialectical. He says a dialectical perspective is a good way of organizing research because dialectical theory acknowledges the polarities, changes, and contradictions in all social life. Identity research has often been viewed as either individual or societal; however, the dialectical perspective has helped Hecht (1993) to recognize the relational aspect of identity in addition to individual and group aspects.

Baxter and Montgomery (1998) claimed the relationships are influenced by opposing societal, personal, and contextual tensions that pull in opposite directions. Furthermore, people in relationships are pulled by oppositional forces and they attempt to cope with these forces by finding a workable position between unity (centripetal force) and diversity (centrifugal force) (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). Brown et al. (1998) agreed that dialectical tensions in communication “involve interdependent, unified, oppositional process” (p. 141). “Two forces stand in dialectical relationship with each other when one is defined in terms of the absence of the other, yet they form a coherent unit or whole” (Conville, 1998a, p. 23).

Bochner et al. (1998) stated that in dialectical research “change becomes the prime condition of relationship” (p. 47). Baxter and Montgomery (1998) agreed that change is a prime concept in dialectical research. However, they include contradiction, praxis, and totality as key concepts along with change.

According to Baxter and Montgomery (1998) “dialectical scholarship, in general, tends to cohere around four core concepts: *contradiction*, *change*, *praxis*, and *totality*” (p. 3). *Contradiction* focuses on the “dynamic interplay between unified opposites” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998, p. 4). In dialectical theory, contradiction is “the driving force of all social interaction” (Johnson & Long, 2002, p. 27). Contradiction is the tension or the opposition; an adjustment in one has an impact on the other in ongoing relationships (Johnson & Long, 2002).

Even though polar opposites such as openness-closedness, certainty-novelty, and autonomy-connection have long been noted in the research literature, Montgomery and Baxter (1998) have recognized that limiting dialectics of relationships to polar opposites is too simplistic. They state, “contradictions are better conceived as complex, overlapping domains as *centripetal* or dominant forces juxtaposed with *centrifugal* or countervailing forces” (p. 157). Polar opposites may have several oppositional tensions that are in constant flux with varying amounts of tension. For example, openness may be seen as the opposite of lying, discretion, or silence to name a few (Montgomery & Baxter, 1998). In addition, similar opposites may be called by different names. Connection versus autonomy could be labeled approach versus avoidance. In addition to each polar opposite having more than one opposite or having different names for similar opposites, there are many pairs of dialectical tensions which become evident in each unique relationship.

The dialectical perspective sees social life as “a dynamic knot of contradictions, a *ceaseless interplay* between contrary or opposing tendencies” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998, p. 3). Dialectical oppositions exist in relationships between individuals in a pair; dialectical oppositions also exist between relational pairs and a larger social unit (Baxter,

1994). Baxter (1994) uses dialectics of integration-separation, stability-change, and expression-privacy to explain categories of dialectical oppositions (Fig. 1). Within each of the three dialectics she organizes three internal manifestations of oppositions within a pair and three external manifestations of oppositions between the relational pair and a larger social unit.

	Dialectic of Integration-Separation	Dialectic of Stability-Change	Dialectic of Expression-Privacy
Internal Manifestations	Connection-Autonomy	Predictability-Novelty	Openness-Closedness
External Manifestations	Inclusion-Seclusion	Conventionality-Uniqueness	Revelation-Concealment

Figure 1. Internal and External Manifestations of Dialectical Tensions

From "A dialogic approach to relationship maintenance," by Leslie Baxter, 1994, *Communication and relational maintenance* (D.J. Canary & L. Stafford, Eds.), p. 240. 1994. San Diego, CA: Academic Press. Adapted with permission of the author.

Baxter (1994) explained that the pair experiences tension between themselves as a pair in a relationship with the larger social order in external manifestations while the pair experiences tension between each other in internal manifestations. Internal tensions or oppositions are necessary to sustain intimacy in relationships; external are necessary to sustain social order and the relationship's place in it in external manifestations (Baxter, 1994). In other words, in external manifestation, the pair is deciding how they identify themselves related to the larger social order. The dialectic of integration-separation refers to the tension between isolation of the pair from others in their social network versus integration of the pair with others in the external manifestation (inclusion-seclusion); while integration-separation refers to the tension between the two parties in the internal manifestation. The dialectic of stability-change refers to the tension between a pair's

construction of an identity which is predictable or is conventionalized versus a pair's construction of an identity which is unique in the larger social order in the external manifestation (conventionality-uniqueness); while predictability-novelty refers to the tension between stability and the need for change, spontaneity, and stimulation in the internal manifestation. The dialectic of expression-privacy deals with what to make known and what to conceal to others outside the relational pair in the external manifestation (revelation-concealment); while openness-closedness refers to the tension between how much or what to disclose versus how much or what to conceal from the other of the pair in the internal manifestation (Baxter, 1994). The dialectics discussed by Baxter are not the only ones that can be manifested in interpersonal communication. Dialectics that are indigenous or unique to a particular relationship can be manifested (Conville, 1998a).

Change focuses on change as process (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). In other words, change is inevitable and expected over time. Change exists as a dialectical tension with stability (Johnson & Long, 2002). In dialectical theory, there is no goal of stability in relationship (Johnson & Long, 2002) because there is an acceptance that relationships are given life by a constantly changing process of communication.

Praxis focuses on the idea that individuals' actions are affected by their previous actions (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). Individuals relate based on what has happened in the past in the relationship or in other situations or in other relationships. Individuals in relationships devise ways to cope with dialectical tensions in their relationships. The coping strategies they use are influenced by previous circumstances or interactions.

Individuals use strategies to cope with the dialectical tensions between opposing forces for their particular relationship, at a particular time, and in a particular situation

(Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). The strategies include spiraling inversion, segmentation, balance, integration, recalibration, and reaffirmation (Montgomery & Baxter, 1998). Spiraling inversion is the idea that the dominance of one pole may change as time passes and the relationship changes (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). For example if a couple looks over the week's agenda and decides which activities they will do together (connection) and which they will do separately (autonomy), they are using spiraling inversion as a strategy (Montgomery & Baxter, 1998). Segmentation means that the dominance of one particular pole may change based on present activities. A couple may usually spend time on the week-ends playing tennis; however, she may take additional time away from him to be with friends and he may take time away from her to play golf. Balance refers to the attempt to maintain a midpoint where neither pole takes dominance (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). For example, as a coping strategy to balance dialectical tension between openness and closedness, a couple may choose somewhere in between total openness and total closedness by divulging some information while keeping some things undisclosed. Integration is recognition of both poles (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). "A family that comes together at dinner time to celebrate each individual's autonomy through serial reports of the day's happenings has established a praxical ritual that integrates the forces of connection and autonomy" (Montgomery & Baxter, 1998, p. 163). Recalibration is the ability of individuals to reconstruct the poles so that they do not seem oppositional (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). For example, if a couple is separated while fulfilling military duty in another country, even though they are separated (autonomy) by distance, they may decide that they are connected through letters, emails, and care packages (connectedness). Lastly, reaffirmation is the acceptance that tensions exist (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). In other words, couples may accept the ever

changing interplay of contradiction as inherent in relationships. Instead of seeing oppositional forces as negative, they may see them as natural and interesting.

Totality focuses on contradictions that cannot be separated from the context from which they come (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998). Totality, according to Johnson and Long (2002), is the idea that the “social world is viewed as a world in process – one that is fleeting and shifting with phenomena understood only in relationship to other phenomena” (p. 29). “Totality, as we envision it, encourages us to think about the world as a process of relations or interdependencies” (Montgomery & Baxter, 1998, p. 164). The temporal, spatial, and sociocultural settings are integral parts of understanding contradictions in totality. From a dialectical perspective, contradiction, change, praxis and totality help us to understand relationships and identity as changing processes that are influenced by what has taken place in the past based on particular social, economic, cultural, and personal experiences.

Literature Review Summary and Research Questions

The literature review led to several questions regarding crisis and identity manifested in interpersonal communication. Because narratives are a tool used to observe interpersonal communication (Conville, 1998b), because identity is negotiated through interaction (Cooley, 1964; Cushman & Cahn, 1985; Hecht, 1993; Jung & Hecht, 2004), and because identities change as contexts change (Giroux, 1993), identities of Hurricane Katrina victims seemed an interesting phenomenon to study. The context of victims’ lives changed as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Therefore, I thought possibly some changes in identity could be observed by analyzing narratives. My conversation with a Hurricane Katrina victim, my experiences with researchers at a communication

convention, my participation in a course about interpersonal communication and narratives, and my reading research articles inspired the research questions in this study.

The first inspiration was a conversation with a Hurricane Katrina victim. The victim said, after experiencing Hurricane Katrina, he realized there are situations in which he cannot protect his family. Before the storm, he thought he could protect them. His self-concept as “protector” had changed. The conversation with the victim combined with knowledge about interpersonal communication and crisis communication led me to wonder about changes in identity associated with crisis.

A second inspiration for the research questions for this study involved my attendance at a crisis communication short course at the National Communication Association (NCA) convention in Chicago in 2004. During the short course while listening to researchers and when reading research articles afterward, I wondered why crisis communication research focused almost solely on organizational communication. I wanted to view crisis communication from an interpersonal lens.

Thirdly, during a course at the University of Southern Mississippi taught by Richard Conville, I learned narratives are a means to observe interpersonal communication (Conville, 1998b). Heath (2004), from an organizational communication perspective, said narratives allow individuals to understand events in logical themes. Therefore, I thought narratives would allow victims to understand and express their Hurricane Katrina experiences in themes.

Themes reveal units or elements of identity (Gegas, 2000). Any self-characterization, according to Gegas (2000), such as wishes, desires, achievements, roles, values, goals, and attitudes, for example, can be considered elements of identity. Therefore, I decided to gather and analyze narratives of Hurricane Katrina victims using

thematic analysis thinking themes would reveal elements of victims' identities. Thoughts about crisis, crisis communication, identity, and interpersonal communication in narratives led me to ask research question #1: How do narratives reveal crisis victims' changed identities?

If thematic analysis revealed elements of identity and changes to identity, I wondered if dialectical analysis would reveal dialectical dimensions in narratives. I thought since identity is dialectical in nature (Hecht, 1993; Jung & Hecht, 2004), and dialectical theory involves change (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998), then dialectical analysis may reveal dialectical dimensions in victims' narratives. Therefore, research question #2 asked: What dialectical dimensions are revealed in crisis victims' narratives?

Research question #3 was similar to research #2; they both focused on dialectical dimensions in narratives. There were two differences in research questions #2 and #3. Research question #2 asked *what* dialectical *dimensions* were revealed; research question #3 asked *how* dialectical *oppositions* were revealed. In research question #2, I wondered what kind of dialectical dimensions would be revealed. Would dialectical oppositions as we know them from past dialectical research (Conville, 1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b; Baxter, 1988; Baxter & Simon, 1993; Baxter & Montgomery, 1998; Montgomery & Baxter, 1998) or some other type of dialectical dimensions be revealed? In research #3, I asked *how* dialectical *oppositions* (as we know them from previous research) would be revealed. Therefore, if dialectical analysis revealed dialectical oppositions as dialectical dimensions, how were they revealed? What observable aspects of interpersonal communication would manifest the dialectical oppositions? I thought interpersonal communication in relationships surrounding Hurricane Katrina may reveal how

oppositions were manifested. Therefore, research question #3 asked: How are dialectical oppositions manifested in interpersonal communication in crisis victims' narratives?

I did not know if aspects of identity would be recognized in victims' narratives when using a dialectical lens. However, according to dialectical theory, relationships are changing, negotiated, and maintained through interpersonal communication and according to Hecht (1993) and Jung & Hecht (2004), identity is negotiated in communication in interpersonal relationships. Therefore, I thought because dialectical analysis of interpersonal communication revealed aspects of relationships (Conville, 1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b; Baxter, 1988; Baxter & Simon, 1993; Baxter & Montgomery, 1998; Montgomery & Baxter, 1998), dialectical analysis may also reveal aspects of identity. Therefore, research question #4 asked: What aspects of identity can be recognized in narratives when using a dialectical lens?

If aspects of identity were revealed in narratives, would identity gaps or different aspects of identity be revealed? As stated above, Hecht (1993) and Jung and Hecht (2004) acknowledged that identity is dialectical in nature. Dialectical analysis revealed dialectical tensions in relationships (Conville, 1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b; Baxter, 1988; Baxter & Simon, 1993; Baxter & Montgomery, 1998; Montgomery & Baxter, 1998). Therefore, because dialectical oppositions in relationships were revealed when Conville used his narrative-dialectical-structural method (Conville, 1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b), I thought identity gaps may be revealed in analysis of crisis victims' narratives. Research question #4 asked: How are identity gaps revealed in crisis victims' narratives?

Because Baxter and Montgomery (1998) have demonstrated that individuals use strategies to cope with dialectical oppositions in their particular relationship, at a

particular time, and in a particular situation, I thought crisis victims may use similar strategies to cope with tensions manifested in their narratives. Therefore, research question #6 asked: How do crisis victims cope with dialectical oppositions?

If individuals use strategies to cope with dialectical oppositions, do they also use strategies to cope with dialectical aspects of identity? The present study was designed to test the speculation of Jung and Hecht (2004) that strategies may be used to cope with identity gaps. I thought if dialectical dimensions of identity were revealed in dialectical analysis of crisis victims' narratives, coping strategies may also be revealed. Therefore, research question #7 asked: How do crisis victims cope with gaps in identity?

This review covered a definition of interpersonal communication, narratives, crisis and crisis communication, a definition of identity, explanations concerning construction and maintenance of identity, information about elements of identity or self-concepts, motivational factors for identity construction and maintenance, explanations regarding positive identity construction and maintenance, information describing threats to identity, thoughts about coping with threats to identity, and a discussion about dialectical perspectives and identity. The review and answers to research questions were intended to show that there is a connection between interpersonal communication, identity, and crisis and that this study was valuable in establishing the connection.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Narratives provided a means to observe interpersonal communication revolving around crisis situations. Because narratives give meaning to the world while reflecting actions, values, and preferences forming “thematic logic”, according to Heath (2004, p. 171), thematic and dialectical analyses were used to shed light on crisis victims’ identities. Participants’ personal narratives revealed the role of crisis in shaping identity through dialectical tensions in interpersonal communication.

Thematic analysis and dialectical analysis of participants’ narratives revealed valuable information about crisis situations and shed light on how individuals who have experienced crisis attempted to maintain or reconstruct identity. Reading archival media sources for reference contributed to my understanding of the social situation surrounding Hurricane Katrina (Busby et al., 2005; Elias, 2007; Harvard Medical School, 2007; Henderson, 2007, January 22; Henderson, 2007, August 29; Kirby & Henderson, 2005; Page & Risser, 2006; Raines, 2007; Reid, 2006; Sayre, 2008; Steiner, 2008).

Thematic and dialectical analyses contributed to understanding the case study (the family) under investigation. “A case study comprehensively describes and explains the variety of components in a given social situation” (Arneson, 1993, p. 164). Arneson added, “case studies enable researchers to understand special people, a particular problem, or a unique situation in great depth” (p. 166). This study enabled the researcher to understand special people (the family of fishermen), a particular problem (problems with identity associated with crisis), and the unique situation (experiences associated with Hurricane Katrina). Participants and procedures for this study are described below.

Participants

Participants were members of one extended family who make their living in the seafood business in south Mobile County, Alabama. For six generations the family has sustained itself by catching and selling seafood in the area. Hurricane Katrina damaged their houses, equipment, places of business, and the surrounding waters where they catch seafood. Several family members' houses were flooded and three family seafood shops were flooded and damaged causing havoc in their lives. Catching oysters, fish, shrimp, and crab was halted for several months while family members attempted to regain some order.

The focus of this study was identities of these family members as they were affected by Hurricane Katrina. They have made their living building boats, and harvesting, and selling seafood. Techniques, values, and beliefs have been passed down through stories and by example in the families for six generations. Their identity has relied on oral tradition and physical example to pass on the trade. Reliance on traditions, beliefs, and knowledge about the trade has led to success. However, continued success has become more complicated. Foreign competition, threats by state legislators to ban gill net fishing in Alabama waters, and numerous storms including Hurricanes Ivan and Katrina have threatened their livelihood (Sayre, 2008). These crises have threatened their survival and at the same time, their identities. This study focused on Hurricane Katrina and this family's response to the crisis.

The following names are pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants. The immediate family consists of Mr. Jones, his three children, their spouses, eleven grandchildren (nine of whom are married), and twelve great grandchildren. In this research, 11 individuals from three generations were interviewed (Fig. 2): generation one,

Mr. Jones; generation two, Mr. Jones' three children (Sarah, Mary and James) and the spouses of Sarah and Mary (Jacob and Richard respectively); generation three, one grown son of James (David) and three grown children of Jacob and Sarah (Rachel, Gabriel, and Samuel) and one daughter-in-law (Louise, wife of Samuel). Anne was included because one of the analyzed narratives is about her relationship with shrimpers. James's wife was included to indicate he is married.

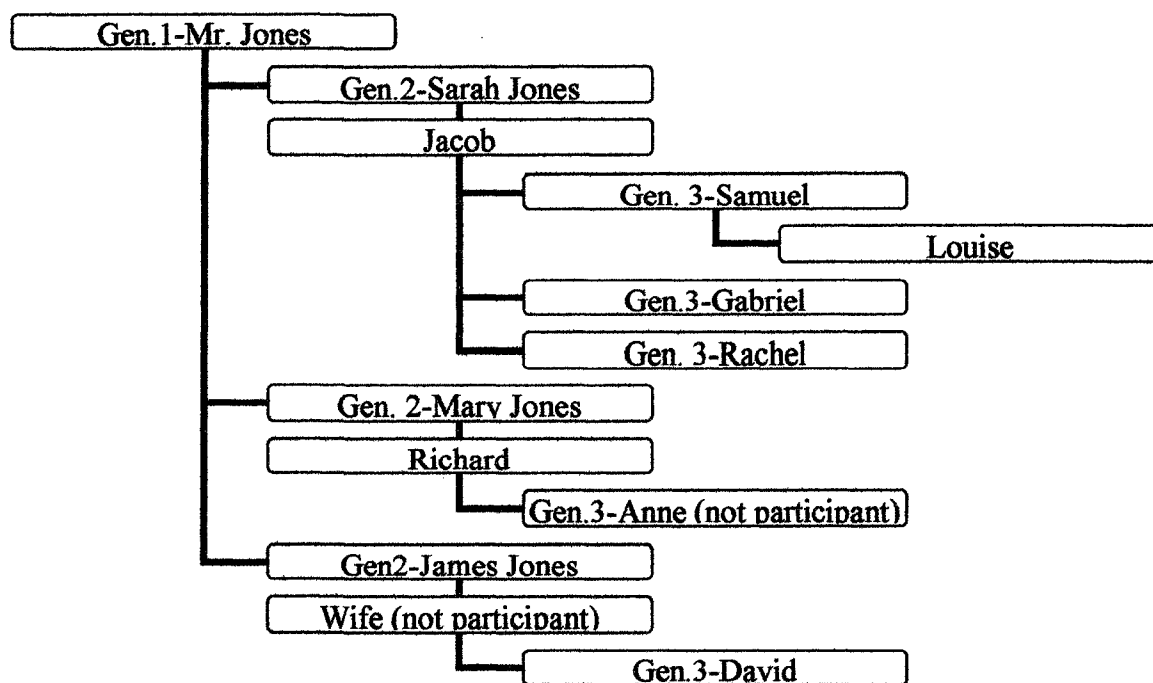


Figure 2. Family Tree of 11 Participants

In past generations, family members have built fishing boats, made nets, and fished.¹ Sarah and Jacob own and operate a seafood shop. While most seafood sold in the shops is supplied by the men in the family; Sarah and her daughters and other employees operate their shop by cleaning, cooking, packaging, and freezing seafood. In addition, fishermen outside the family supply seafood to the shop. Sarah sells raw and cooked seafood products in the shop as well as ships them nationwide. Mary worked for

¹ The verb "fish" in any tense is used to indicate catching fish, shrimp, oysters, or crabs.

Sarah in her seafood shop before Katrina. Mary and Richard and their teenage daughter, Anne, moved to Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina. James and his two sons own and operate an oyster shop. Rachel and her husband owned and operated a seafood shop before Hurricane Katrina and for a while after repairing it after Hurricane Katrina. Samuel and Gabriel continue to catch fish primarily.

For many years and for many generations, the family has lived a life that was simple compared to today's life. Their families caught and sold seafood using boats made by relatives. They say they were not wealthy when times were better for business, but they led a happy, productive life doing what they loved to do; fish. Family members have extensive knowledge of the seafood industry and related topics such as weather, water issues (safety, pollution, and preservation), migration patterns of sea life, boat building and net knitting, and maintenance, gas and supply prices; and they also have extensive knowledge of the Bible. Their knowledge regarding fishing and their faith, they say, has sustained them.

I became aware that problems existed in 2002, when I went to Sarah and Jacob's shop. The conversation that ensued started a keen interest and concern for the family and the fishing community in Mobile. I entered the building on the river. The river could be seen through the back door. The floor was cement. There was no smell of fish or shrimp. Freezers were along the wall humming. Voices and running water could be heard in an adjacent room. A woman entered the room to take my order. She was wearing a white rubber apron and white boots. Her hair was pulled back. She removed her rubber gloves and was drying her hands as she asked me what I would like to buy. I placed my order. While she was gathering my crab quiche and shrimp from the freezers, I remembered seeing some crab traps outside along the river bank. I said, "I almost forgot to ask. Do

you have a crab trap for sale?" After the question, a tall, tanned, slender man appeared through the doorway leading to the room where the shrimp, fish, and crabs were being sorted and cleaned. He said, "I have 125 crab traps plus a boat for sale." I laughed at the time, but later realized he was not kidding. He was telling a story indicating problems in the seafood industry. Many problems exist, but the prevalent problem at that time (2002) and in the past few years was competition caused by an over-abundance of imported shrimp forcing local fishermen to lower their prices.

In 2004, Hurricane Ivan hit the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. In 2005 Hurricane Katrina hit causing more damage to south Alabama than Ivan had. In 2007, an Alabama legislator proposed a bill that would forbid gill net fishing in Alabama waters which would again threaten the livelihoods of local families who make their livings in the seafood business. Forbidding gill net fishing would have a domino effect on other areas of the seafood industry. For example, fish caught in gill nets supply fish for crab traps. Without bait, crabs cannot be caught. Other types of bait would have to be bought. Expense would cut or obliterate profits forcing fishermen out of business. Now the price of diesel fuel has again threatened the livelihood of fishermen.

Family members said they never talked about their occupation much. However, communication with others has become necessary for survival. In order to survive the crisis caused by the over-abundance of imported shrimp, families of fishermen began to communicate within and outside their families. Interpersonal communication between family members about surviving the problems associated with competition on the market became necessary. They said, before the glut of imported shrimp, they really did not find it necessary to discuss business with each other; they just did what they knew; fished. Later, however, it became necessary to unite with family members and fishermen outside

the family to form groups who petitioned state and federal governments. In order to fight the gill net ban, they organized and sent representatives to legislative sessions in Montgomery, Alabama's state capitol. This research is about how their livelihoods were threatened during Hurricane Katrina and how they maintained identity in this particular crisis. Thus far most family members have been able to continue their business in spite of difficulties. This particular study focuses on crisis and identity; in particular the Hurricane Katrina crisis and the identity of the fishing family.

Procedures

A protocol and participant consent forms were approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Southern Mississippi (Appendixes B & C). A human subjects review form was signed (Appendix A). Procedures consisted of several steps: interviews were scheduled, interviews were audio recorded with the exception of the interview with Mr. Jones, interviews were transcribed, interviews were analyzed to reveal themes, then narratives were isolated, analyzed, and interpreted.

Data and Data Collection

Interviews with members of the fishing family comprised the data. Family members shared stories about their experiences with Hurricane Katrina. I met with family members at their convenience. Trust had been established with Mr. Jones and Sarah and Jacob through my association as a customer and later as an advocate when an influx of foreign shrimp and proposed legislative bans threatened their livelihoods. However, other family members, I felt, were less willing to participate in conversations. Therefore, Sarah agreed to help schedule her relatives' interviews with me.

One Sunday in May, 2007, when family members gathered at her house for worship, Sarah mentioned to her family that I would like to meet with them to discuss

their Hurricane Katrina experiences. At my request, she asked family members to write down a convenient time to meet with me. No one chose a time. She said her family members were willing to discuss their experiences with Hurricane Katrina with me for my research project. However, they would call her to let her know when they could meet. Convenient times for participants were not easily established because work in the seafood industry is dependent on unpredictable weather and water conditions. Therefore, interviews took place on days when weather and water conditions were not conducive to fishing or when the catch was small or on Sunday or during other off-hours.

After several weeks, when none of her family called her to arrange a time to meet with me, I called Sarah. Sarah suggested that I call her family members to arrange a time to meet. The first time I called Sarah's brother, James, he reiterated that he would call *Sarah* when he had time to meet with me. Other family members were not home or could not schedule at that time. On later dates, after conferring with Sarah, I called participants again at which time they scheduled appointments at their convenience. Sarah and Jacob, Rachel, and Richard and Mary set appointments for later dates. When I called James, he said to come immediately because he and his son had time to talk. When I called Gabriel's residence, Gabriel's wife called him and asked if he would talk to me at dinner at their house the night of my call. He agreed. She arranged for Samuel and Louise to join us. All interviews were planned and scheduled except for Mr. Jones's interview which happened in the midst of a visit.

Participants were most often interviewed in groups of two or more. Sarah and Jacob or one of the two was present when I interviewed their children. One participant, Mr. Jones, was interviewed individually. Three interviews consisted of the researcher and two participants (Sarah and Jacob, James and David, or Mary and Richard); one

interview consisted of three participants (Rachel, Sarah, and Jacob) and one interview consisted of four participants (Gabriel, Samuel, Jacob, and Louise). Notice, Sarah contributed to two interviews and Jacob contributed to three interviews. There were 11 participants in 6 interviews. The interviews took place between July 19 and October 7, 2007. Participants ranged in age from 28 to 80 years. Audio recorded interviews ranged in time from 21.5 minutes to 57 minutes.

After initial greetings, explanations about the research, and the signing of consent forms (Appendixes B & C), I asked participants to describe their experiences associated with Hurricane Katrina as if they were chapters in a book. If participants seemed confused about the directions, I would prompt them by saying, "An example of chapters would be to tell me what happened before the storm, during the storm, and after the storm." There were no planned questions to ask participants because I wanted to capture their stories without imposing my ideas. However, during the interviews, I made comments to show empathy, in some cases, and I asked questions for clarification. An example of part of an interview showing questions for clarification and a comment to show empathy follows:

Rachel: It [her house] is lower elevated and it is closer to the river than Gabriel's.

Researcher: Is it on the same road as Gabriel's?

Rachel: No it's not: When you go out mama's road, I'm just to the; you go to the right, first house that way.

Researcher: So you are closer to the river?

Rachel: Yeah, yeah. Not far from the bridge.

Researcher: That had to be scary. Was that after the storm?

Rachel: That was during the storm. It was [addressing her mother], "When did the water start coming in Gabriel's house? Do you remember?"

Sarah: About 10 o'clock the next morning.

The first interview, with Mr. Jones, took place on his screened-in porch. I visited Mr. Jones without the intention of interviewing him. However, we were talking when he began to discuss his experiences associated with Hurricane Katrina. I asked him if I could use the conversation for my research about Hurricane Katrina. He agreed and signed the consent form (Appendix B) which I retrieved from my car. I felt as if he would not be comfortable to be audio recorded because he has had throat cancer and struggles when speaking. Therefore, I did not ask if I could record our conversation. I took notes immediately after our discussion in an attempt to capture as much of the interview as possible from memory.

The second interview, with Sarah and Jacob, took place several days after the conversation with Mr. Jones. The interview took place at Sarah and Jacob's house in the afternoon on a Sunday. We talked in the place where they experienced the storm before being forced to evacuate in the pre-dawn hours of August 29, 2005, the day Katrina hit. Because we were at their house, looking at the river and the shop, Sarah and Jacob were able to show me where they struggled to prepare for and recuperate from Hurricane Katrina. They pointed to their shop and to the water where their boats were located, and to the place on their porch where they stored freezers during the storm. The land and the porch are at a higher elevation than down the slight decline of the driveway 100 feet to the shop and river's edge.

Interview three took place on August 15, 2007 with Jacob, Gabriel, Samuel, and Samuel's wife, Louise. On the morning of August 15, I called Sarah to see if she had received information from family members about a convenient time to meet with me. She had not. She suggested I call them. I called Gabriel's number. His wife said her

husband would be “going out” on his large boat for one month to six weeks the next day to fish. However, she called him; then she called me to invite my husband and me to join family members for a fried shrimp dinner that evening. The group consisted of Gabriel and his wife and her mother, their three children, his brother, Samuel, and his wife, Louise, along with their two children and Jacob and Sarah. We ate and talked. Finally, Louise said, “It is getting late. The children need to go to bed. We came here to talk to you about Katrina”. I said, “Good. Thank you. Where should we talk?” We moved from the living room to the dining table where Gabriel and Samuel were sitting. It was not a quiet place. There was activity around us including a baby in a high chair. Jacob sat on a stool near by so that he could join the discussion. I asked permission to record the conversation and was granted permission by all who would participate. Consent forms (Appendixes B & C) were signed by all who were taking part in the interview (Jacob, Gabriel, Samuel, and Louise).

The fourth interview took place on August 23, 2007 at Sarah and Jacob’s house. Their daughter, Rachel, agreed to discuss her experience. Sarah, Jacob, and Rachel contributed to the interview. Rachel is married with two children. Their house and shop flooded during the storm. She lost all belongings in the house. The house was eventually salvaged. She and her family lived with her parents for a while after the storm until they received a trailer from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). Rachel and her husband were able to repair their house and shop after several months of hard work. Rachel’s shop on the island has since closed. Rachel and her daughter work for her parents at their shop once more; Rachel’s husband catches fish.

On September 19, 2007, I called Sarah to ask if her brother, James, had called her to let her know when he would talk with me. She said he had not. She suggested that I

call him again. When I called he said he was not very busy in his seafood shop which is across the street from his father's (Mr. Jones) house. He said if I could come down to his shop soon, he and one son, David, would talk with me about their experiences in Hurricane Katrina. I felt they were the least willing to talk of all the participants. Their shop is at least 40 minutes from my house. I rushed to meet with them. When I drove into the driveway and parking lot made from oyster shells about one hour after the invitation, five shop employees (mostly women) were standing by their cars as if taking a break. They stared at me. I did not know why at the time. However, later I thought it may be because they thought I was a reporter who David claimed "tries to make a fool of them." David came out on the small cement porch of the shop staring at me briefly before asking me to move my car and to come inside. Immediately after I sat down, they began a conversation about how news reporters try "to make fools" of them by "catching us off-guard." I got the feeling they were warning me and letting me know that they were doing me a favor to talk with me. Of course, my intent was to learn from them; not to catch them off guard by asking unexpected questions as they described news reporters had done. After consent forms were discussed and signed (Appendixes B & C), the conversation about their Hurricane Katrina experiences continued.

The sixth and final interview took place in October of 2007 with Mary and Richard. In May, before Hurricane Katrina hit in August of 2005, Richard, Mary, and their daughter, Anne, had returned to Alabama to live after living elsewhere for several years. They wanted to live closer to her family. Richard preaches, sings, and builds and plays accordions; Mary sings gospel music. However, before Katrina, Mary helped Sarah in her seafood shop by cleaning crabs. After Hurricane Katrina flooded and

destroyed their house and belongings in south Alabama, Richard, Mary, and their daughter, Anne, moved away from South Alabama again; this time to Louisiana.

Mary and Richard had returned to Alabama to visit relatives at the time of the interview. Mary and Richard and I sat on the porch facing Mobile Bay while they discussed their experiences. After we talked for an hour, Mary and Richard's son, Sarah, Jacob, and my husband joined us. We moved to the pier where Richard played accordion and sang, their son played guitar and sang, and Mary sang mostly religious songs.

From the interviews I gained insight into the plight faced by participants before, during, and after Hurricane Katrina. In addition, I looked at archival sources to gain a further understanding of the context surrounding Hurricane Katrina. Archival sources used for reference were news accounts from the *Mobile Press-Register* and in *USA Today*, a written personal account by a woman in the seafood business in south Mobile County, AL in a book called the *Bayou Anthology*, and letters-to-the-editor in the *Mobile Press-Register* (Busby et al. 2005; Kirby & Henderson, 2005; Page & Risser, 2006; Reid, 2006; Sayre, 2008; Henderson, January 22, 2007; August 16, 2007; Raines, 2007; Steiner, 2008). There were hundreds of articles regarding Hurricane Katrina. I read the ones in the *Mobile Press-Register* to gain a local perspective and *USA Today* to gain a national perspective on the situation surrounding Hurricane Katrina. The combination of data from interviews and data from archival sources helped me to understand situations and problems associated with Hurricane Katrina before, during, and after the storm.

Data Analysis

Within a day or two of each interview, audio recordings were transcribed word for word. Notes were taken immediately after my discussion with Mr. Jones because our interview was not audio recorded. After transcription, interviews were read and reread by

the researcher. Taped conversations were heard once or twice for transcription; then again to listen for vocal emphasis. After interviews were transcribed, data analysis began. To begin data analysis, analytic induction in the form of thematic analysis was used to reveal themes within interviews. Themes were isolated, organized, described, and interpreted. After thematic analysis, narratives were isolated. From the narratives in the interviews, four were chosen to analyze dialectically because they pertained to relationships.

To define and isolate narratives in interviews, Ewick and Silbey's (1995) definition of narrative was used: the narratives (1) contained past events and characters, (2) the events were ordered chronologically and (3) the events and characters were related to one another and to some overarching structure. After narratives were isolated and narratives pertaining to relationships were chosen, Conville's (1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) narrative-dialectical-structural method was used to detect dialectical tensions.

Thematic Analysis. Interviews were examined through analytic induction to expose themes associated with the Hurricane Katrina crisis. In the first step of thematic analysis, themes were abstracted and isolated from interviews using Owen's (1984) criteria of *recurrence*, *repetition*, and *forcefulness*. Recurrence, according to Owen (1984), occurs when a meaning is expressed at least two times in a report. The words may be different, but the idea reveals a theme.

Repetition, according to Owen (1984), is an extension of *recurrence* and occurs when there is repetition of key words or phrases. In other words, to satisfy the criterion of recurrence, the *idea* is repeated with other words several times. However, in repetition the actual words or forms of the words are repeated several times.

The criterion of *forcefulness* occurs when words are verbally exaggerated or emphasized through vocal inflection or volume. The first time I listened to interviews, I transcribed them word for word. Later, I listened again for Owen's criterion for forcefulness. Vocal volume or inflection differences were used for emphasis which revealed themes. I compiled the words that were emphasized with themes revealed by recurrence and repetition to see if a theme was evident. To acknowledge the criterion of forcefulness in the transcribed text, words or phrases which were verbally emphasized by pitch, volume, vocal inflection, or dramatic emphasis were circled on paper and later capitalized in the text plus I added a note in parentheses stating how the word or words were emphasized. For example, if the word *help* was emphasized by volume, I typed the word, HELP (Volume) to show the word was emphasized and how it was emphasized.

In Owen's (1984) research, he decided, if an idea was evident two times by recurrence, repetition, or forcefulness in any combination, a theme was indicated. In this study, I determined if an idea was evident three times by recurrence, repetition, or forcefulness, a theme was indicated in an interview.

When reading the transcriptions of each interview, recurrent ideas were isolated by copying passages containing similar ideas from the text and pasting them in a new document with similar ideas grouped together. Repeated words and forms of the words were underlined in the transcriptions. For example, the words *preparation*, *prepared*, and *prepare* were considered repeated words because they are forms of the same word. A list of repeated words was made as they were noticed. When reading each interview, the list of repeated words was extended. After compiling a list of repeated words from all interviews, a word search was done on each word in all interviews using Microsoft Word. Each repeated word in each interview was highlighted and assigned a specific color.

When all easily read colors were exhausted, repeated words were italicized, underlined, or made bold in specific colors. Color, boldness, italicized words, and underlined words were easily noticed in transcriptions which made like words from repetition easily recognized to indicate themes.

In the following example, *back*, *after*, *storm*, and *we didn't* were highlighted. In each example, the highlighted color coded, italicized, bold, or underlined words were compared to the remaining interview text to see if a theme was displayed by repetition of words.

Mary: We just decided to come *back* to ministry and to be close to the *family* again. But *after the storm* it was like another blow so we decided, you know, *we didn't* want to go through that any more.

Because of color coding, repeated words were easily identified. The repeated words were examined within and between interviews to see if they indicated themes. A table was made to help organize and make sense of groupings by listing participants and the number of times each word in the list of repeated words was used in their particular interview. The word search function revealed the number of times a word appeared. Not all repeated words indicated a theme because some words were used to indicate different meanings. For example, the word *back* displayed three different meanings in the interviews. It was used in one interview to describe a man's hump *back*, to express the desire to get *back* to normal after the storm, and to explain feelings when participants went *back* to their home after the storm. After thematic analysis was complete, narratives were isolated for dialectical analysis.

Narrative-dialectical-structural analysis. Several narratives were embedded in each interview. Four narratives pertained to relationships. Therefore, these four narratives were chosen for analysis. Conville's (1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) narrative-

dialectical-structural method to detect dialectical tensions is an expansion of Lévi-Strauss's (1967) structural method to group common features. The first step is to decide what makes up a unit. Lévi-Strauss (1967) described how to determine a unit by making comparisons to a deck of cards and to an orchestra score. Similar units like suits in cards or patterns in the orchestra score are constituent units which make up larger units. To understand an orchestra score, the chronology of the units or patterns must be preserved just as chronology in myths or narratives must be preserved. To explain how units are chosen, Lévi-Strauss (1967) developed a structure to group similar units and to preserve chronology. He composed the structure as follows: First, he analyzed each myth individually by writing each myth in the shortest possible sentences. Second, he wrote each sentence on an index card and numbered the cards in order to preserve chronology of the myth. Then, according to Lévi-Strauss (1967), he noticed each sentence on the card consisted of some relation to other sentences. Finally, he concluded that "the true constituent units of a myth are not the isolated relations but *bundles of such relations*, and it is only as bundles that these relations can be put to use and combined to produce meaning" (Lévi-Strauss, 1967, p. 207). He found it necessary to structure the myth so that both chronology and groupings of constituent units into similar bundles or larger units would be exposed in order to be able to tell the myth and to understand the myth. In this research, Lévi-Strauss's (1967) and Conville's (1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) narrative-dialectical-structural method to detect dialectical tensions procedures were mimicked. First short sentences from narratives were written in a list and numbered mimicking Lévi-Strauss's (1967) procedure of writing and numbering sentences on cards. Below is a shortened version of a chronological list in one of James and David's narratives used for explanation purposes:

1. Reporters have prepared speeches when they want to talk with you.
2. They try to catch you.
3. They ask you questions.
4. You are not prepared to answer.
5. We look rough because we have been working.
6. They catch you.
7. She wants to interview me.
8. They make you look like an idiot.
9. I ran inside real quick.

After writing sentences in sequence, sentences were compared in order to group similar sentences to make up a bundle. Each sentence was looked at individually in order to discover the common features between them. For each sentence, the question was asked if each sentence was similar or different from any previous sentence (Conville, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b). The process was continued sentence by sentence. All sentences determined to contain similar features were placed in a column together forming bundles (a larger unit). Lévi-Strauss (1967) said, "all the relations belonging to the same column exhibit one common feature which is our task to discover" (p. 211).

Using the structural methods of Lévi-Strauss (1967) and Conville (1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b), a grid of rows and columns preserving chronology in rows and exposing bundles or groups of similar units in columns was formed. In this research, units were sentences which were kept in chronological order when reading consecutive rows from left to right; sentences were placed in groups based on shared significance from top to bottom when placed in columns. The purpose of the rows and columns grid was meant to preserve the chronology of sentences as well as to gather together constituent units that may reveal dialectical tensions.

In this analysis, columns composed of similar sentences or bundles were given titles according to shared significance. Next, in this analysis, the bundles of constituent

units or groups of similar sentences in columns were compared to detect dialectical tensions at play in the narrative. Conville described this step as the interpretation of the grid to detect dialectical oppositions (1998b). He explained the purpose of the interpretation when he stated, "Inspection of the grid ideally leads the analyst to detect one or more dialectical oppositions that are at work in the story" (Conville, 1998a, p. 26).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Identity in this study is defined as a *changing concept of self that varies with life's circumstances and with one's interaction with others*. Hurricane Katrina abruptly changed the life circumstances of the extended family of fishermen in this study. They recounted their experiences in interviews. Thematic analysis isolated themes which revealed elements of identity which represented changes of identity. Further analysis revealed dialectical oppositions and identity gaps in narratives which shed light on changes in identity and ways of coping with the changes.

Recall that seven research questions guided this study: (1) How do narratives reveal crisis victims' changed identities? (2) What dialectical dimensions are revealed in crisis victims' narratives? (3) How are dialectical oppositions manifested in interpersonal communication? (4) What aspects of identity can be recognized in narratives when using a dialectical lens? (5) How are identity gaps revealed in narratives of victims? (6) How do crisis victims cope with dialectical oppositions? (7) How do crisis victims cope with gaps in identity? Below are descriptions of findings based on thematic analysis and dialectical analysis.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis revealed an answer to research question #1 that asked how narratives reveal crisis victims' changed identities. Thematic analysis of narratives revealed six themes; themes represented elements of identity; analysis showed some elements of participants' identities changed temporarily and some changed permanently; other elements did not change. Below are descriptions and explanations of method, themes revealed, elements of identity, and changes to elements of identity.

Themes Revealed

Recall Owen's (1984) criteria of *recurrence*, *repetition*, and *forcefulness* were used to reveal themes in interviews. Thematic analysis involved reading through interviews multiple times. Commonalities were made visible by Owen's criteria exposing the themes. Six themes were revealed by the thematic analysis: (1) values (family unity, work ethic, and material items), (2) feelings, (3) getting back to normal, (4) storm comparisons, (5) occupations before and after Hurricane Katrina, and (6) needs and losses (Table 1). These themes reflected how participants identified themselves.

Notice all themes except *back to normal* were present in all interviews (Table 1). Mary and Richard moved after Hurricane Katrina which may explain why they did not discuss *getting back to normal*; Mr. Jones is retired which may explain why he did not discuss *getting back to normal*. When other participants discussed *getting back to normal*, they often referred to getting back to their pre-Katrina occupations.

Themes were revealed by Sarah and Jacob in their interview, by Rachel in her interview, by Gabriel, Samuel, and Louise in their interview, by James and David, Mary and Richard, and Mr. Jones in their interviews. Even though Jacob and Sarah were present during the interview with Rachel and Jacob was present in the interview with Gabriel, Samuel, and Louise, themes were revealed in Rachel's dialogue in her interview and in Gabriel, Samuel, and Louise's dialogue in their interview. In Rachel's interview I talked with Jacob and Sarah for a while. During the conversation with Jacob and Sarah, Rachel did not contribute much; later when she talked about her Hurricane Katrina experiences, Sarah and Jacob listened while she and I talked. Jacob contributed two sentences and one short paragraph to the interview with Gabriel, Samuel, and Louise.

When Sarah reminded him that I was interviewing his children; not him, Jacob teasingly said he was present so, “They won’t mess up.”

Table 1

6 Themes Revealed in Participants’ Interviews

Participants Themes Revealed	Sarah Jacob	Rachel Sarah Jacob	Gabriel Samuel Louise Jacob	James David	Mary Richard	Mr. Jones
1. Values:						
a. family unity	x	x	x	x	x	x
b. work ethic	x	x	x	x	x	x
c. material items	x	x	x	x	x	x
2. Feelings	x	x	x	x	x	x
3. Back to Normal	x	x	x	x	*n/a	n/a
4. Storm Comparisons	x	x	x	x	x	x
5. Occupations	x	x	x	x	x	x
6. Needs and Losses	x	x	x	x	x	x

* n/a refers to not applicable indicating no theme was revealed

Each theme is described below with some examples from interviews used for explanation. Full interviews can be read in Appendix D.

Values Theme. In this analysis, the first theme revealed by thematic analysis (values) encompassed *family unity*, *work ethic*, and *material items*. These were values that participants considered important in their lives. Thematic analysis exposed tangible and intangible values. Tangible values were *material possessions*; intangible values were *family unity* and *work ethic*.

Participants revealed that being with family, loving family, and helping family were important to them; they revealed that work is valued and people who work are respected while those who do not work are not respected, and they revealed material possessions that were important because they represented their occupations and their lives.

One value revealed by the thematic analysis was family unity, (1) help given family members before, during, and after Hurricane Katrina, (2) desire to be near family, (3) desire to be in contact during Hurricane Katrina, (4) importance of family, and (5) living near family. *Family unity* was a theme in all six interviews (Table 1). Repeated words and forms of words that revealed *family unity* as values were help, family, and clean. The word help and forms of it (helped, helping) revealed the importance of helping others. Several participants discussed helping other family members before and after Hurricane Katrina. The word clean revealed a specific way participants helped family members. For example, David described helping to clean his father's house, their shop, and his house.

David: After we got his [father's house] cleaned out and then we got the shop cleaned out, I had bought the house from my grandfather that he was renting and it needed to be cleaned. It hadn't really been cleaned. Now [after helping father] I gotta' clean mine out.

Rachel described helping her grandfather after Hurricane Katrina. She also expressed regret that she did not have more time to help her grandfather because she needed to work at her house and shop.

Rachel: I think I only went to Papa's, my grandfather's... I went two days to help him work on his house, but I wanted to help more, but there was more to do at home, too, and at the shop and"

In Richard and Mary's interview, the word family was repeated when revealing the desire to be near family, in contact with family, when expressing the importance of family, and in expressions of caring. The word family was emphasized by volume of voice (Owen's *forcefulness* criteria) as well as by repetition to indicate importance of family unity. For example, Mary revealed her desire to be near family and family affection when she said:

Mary: We just decided to come back to ministry and to be close to family again [before Hurricane Katrina]. We wanted to, you know, me and Sarah [her sister] would be together again. Our FAMILY (volume), we hug, we love. You know. We want them there. We want all our grandkids.

The analysis of Mr. Jones's interview revealed the family unity theme when he expressed proximity of family, working with family, and importance of family over several generations. He explained that family members have lived within a few miles of each other for several generations. Mr. Jones's father and grandfather, and then he, owned and operated an oyster shop at the same location where Mr. Jones's son and grandsons own and operate the shop today. Revealing continuous proximity to others in the family showed their continued desire to be near family.

A second value, *work ethic*, surfaced when participants discussed the work they did to help themselves and others before and after Hurricane Katrina, when they discussed work as interim jobs while "getting back to normal" after Hurricane Katrina, and by praising those who worked and criticizing those who did not work.

Thematic analysis showed work ethic to be a value in all six interviews (Table 1). Repetition of the words or forms of the words, didn't, clean, work, get back [to normal], and help were indicative of the value of work. They discussed work projects and specific ways they worked to repair their houses and belongings before and after Hurricane Katrina. Some participants showed admiration for those who worked and criticism for those who did not work. The contraction "didn't" referred to the lack of work to prepare by participants and the lack of work by others before and after Hurricane Katrina. James and David distinguished themselves from others who did not work to clean and repair their belongings after Hurricane Katrina.

James: We pitched right in.

David: We are one of the few. Most people looked around and sat. [They] didn't do a lot. Soon as the water got low enough that we could get the vehicles back down here, we started sweeping out the house and getting back to work.

In the example below, David praised his fiancé because she worked. Notice the forms of the words help and clean in the example:

David: She done real good and jumped in and helped. She cleaned out cabinets.

Jacob expressed *work ethic* as a value when referring to those living in other places hit by Hurricane Katrina. He thought New Orleans could have prevented some of the damage with work, while work could not have prevented the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi. The following example shows criticism for those who could have worked to produce a better result:

Jacob: I know New Orleans was a mess, but New Orleans' problems; a big part of it was they neglected what they needed to do; what they should have done. No amount of work would have saved Biloxi and Gulf Port.

The analysis revealed material possessions as a third value when participants mentioned the items they chose to protect before the storm and items they regretted losing to the storm. Some of the important material items they secured before the storm were tools of their trade (boats, nets, seafood products) and important personal items (hand carvings, important papers).

Jacob: We got the boat secure. We got a lot of stuff moved out of the shop; frozen food, shrimp. We had Samuel's boat, Chris's boat, and my boat and we spaced those out.

Sarah: [I] Had my important papers and things together. I did do that much.

Participants referred to basic items such as water, ice, and food and some lost items that represented their lives or occupations when describing important items after Hurricane Katrina.

David: We went over there [to the fire house where ice, water, and Meals Ready to Eat were dispersed]. All I wanted was ice and water.

Participants mentioned items lost and missed. For example, Mary and Richard discussed losing his books used for ministry, his piano, and their family photos to the storm. Saving particular material possessions and discussing which ones they regretted losing showed which items family members valued thus revealing some aspects of identity. Material possessions are a reflection of identity. The documentation of their family life and ministerial life was lost to Hurricane Katrina when they lost the piano, the photographs, and ministerial library which they treasured. Therefore, they lost important items that reflected their roles in family and in society; their identity. Research question one asked how the crisis revealed changed identities. Richard expressed how the crisis changed his identity through their losses. The following example shows material items were valued and represented roles in their lives.

Richard: To us our photographs were one of the most valuable things we had. Somebody said "Well what about the baby Grand piano?" It is not even a year old. The photographs were more valuable than that, than even my library. This is our LIFE (volume). This [photographs] was the memories of our children and MINISTRY (volume).

Feelings Theme. The second theme pertained to feelings. Participants discussed how they felt before, during, and after Hurricane Katrina. *Feelings* appeared as a theme in all six interviews. The word felt and the word water revealed the theme through repetition of the words. The word water was repeated while indicating how participants felt as the water level continued to rise during Hurricane Katrina. Their feelings changed as the water rose; from feelings of security and safety, to anxiety, uncertainty and worry as the water continued to rise, to fear as the water reached their houses. As long as the rising water was rain water, they thought it would drain. However, when the water consisted of

tide water, they knew there was a risk of flooding. Samuel's feeling changed from a feeling of security to worry. He was secure that his house would not flood because he had built above the highest water level in the worst floods as reported by his ancestors. However, as the water continued to rise beyond the previous highest level, he worried.

Samuel: I have seen a lot of water before. The water would build up and wouldn't drain. He [his grandfather] kept asking me, "Is that tide water?" I said, "No, it's rain water." I was watching then. I got kinda' worried then because it kept comin' and comin'.

Jacob and Sarah revealed their changing feelings as the storm approached. While beginning to prepare for the storm, they said they felt "safe," "ok," and "secure."

However, as the storm changed direction from north to northeast, their feelings changed to "tensed up" and worry. Later as the water rose, Jacob became nervous. Sarah said his display of nervousness caused her to worry. After the storm they reported feeling fortunate and blessed that no one was hurt and that they did not lose their home.

However, feelings were mixed because some of their children, their parents, and siblings lost their homes. It was evident they felt self-sufficient when they said, "we felt we could do it" (return to normal). They felt others needed more help.

One of the concerns when water started rising was worry over what they may lose. Gabriel and Jacob described feeling worried during the storm and Gabriel described relief after:

Gabriel: Worriation over boats and what else is floating off.

Jacob: Different things going through your mind. Everything you can't see, you worry about. What about the boats? What about the shop? What about the neighbors? Are they [boats] still tied up? Think about the neighbors and all their places and beyond that, what about the oyster reefs? Is there going to be any crabs or shrimp?

Gabriel: Right after, whenever the water had started going back, I was just relieved mostly.

Rachel also worried about flooding during the storm. After the storm she reported feeling surprised that no more than four feet of water was in her shop on a nearby island. In addition, because her house, her church, and her shop were flooded she felt overwhelmed and as if the storm had caused everything in her life to stop. However, she felt self-sufficient because she was capable of cleaning and repairing her house and shop.

Mary and Richard left their house before the storm. They reported their feelings upon their return. When they saw their house and all their belongings had been destroyed, they felt devastated. They were shocked over the damage. They felt regret that they had not packed and removed some of their valued belongings as they had before other threatening storms had approached. They felt sad over losing material items. However, they also reported feeling gratitude that none of their relatives were injured or killed. They helped others recuperate and reported feeling good about that.

James and David felt relief that no one was injured. However, they felt overwhelmed and depressed after the storm because both their houses and their shop were flooded. They reported feeling spiteful, aggravated, and angry because those who did not work and lost less than they, received money and help while they lost everything and did not receive money from FEMA because they had owned their business.

Getting Back to Normal Theme. The desire “to get back to normal,” a third theme, was evident in four of the six interviews. Repeated words that revealed the desire or processes to get back to normal were back, normal, clean, and work. Specific types of work such as catching fish, shrimp, and oysters revealed the types of work participants were striving to regain. Participants described the desire to return to normal by rebuilding their homes, and shops, and working to return to their former jobs.

Rachel discussed working to get back to normal. Rachel is married with two children. Before Hurricane Katrina, Rachel and her husband ran a seafood shop. She said she felt like everything stopped because she no longer had a church; she no longer had her home; she no longer had her place of work. She also discussed the fact that there were no customers on the island to buy their seafood products and there were no fishermen to unload their catch and to sell seafood to them to supply the shop. Even after the shop was repaired, they could not work until others were back to their pre-Katrina routines, too. The feeling of discontinuity was not unusual among participants because their jobs had been halted by Hurricane Katrina. Rachel spoke intensely and adamantly about her feelings, her work ethic, and her desire to return to her routine.

Rachel: It FELT LIKE (volume), like everything would have to stop, you know, because we couldn't work anymore; the church we were going to flooded so it seemed like everything was stopping until it was all cleaned up and it seemed like such a big task to get it all back, you know, back to normal. It was gonna' take a while.

Normal work for Sarah and Jacob consisted of Sarah and her daughters running a seafood shop where they cleaned, cooked, and packaged seafood to sell. Normal work for Jacob was catching crabs and shrimp. Hurricane Katrina flooded the shop and damaged the surrounding waters preventing Jacob from catching seafood and preventing Sarah from running the shop. Debris from hundreds of homes was in the water and habitats for fish, crabs, shrimp, and oysters were destroyed. Therefore, waters had to be cleaned of debris, habitats had to regenerate, and homes and shops had to be rebuilt in order to get back to normal.

To make money while working to get back to normal, Sarah and Jacob and their sons were hired by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to drag the coastal waters with their nets to clear the waters of debris that was deposited in Alabama

Gulf Coast waters by Hurricane Katrina. In the following example Sarah and Jacob express the desire to “get things back together.”

Jacob: And you just do all you can in anticipation to what you would call normal but it was a long time before things got back to normal.

Sarah: While we are working, cleaning up out there, doing the water clean up so we would have an income, Rachel and the girls [other daughters] are here trying to get things back together to operate the crab shop. They operated in October; maybe the end of October. We had set some crab traps and some of our other catchers had set some. They worked the crab shop while we did the debris clean up.

Rachel expressed their capability in regaining their former work.

Rachel: We felt like we were capable of doing what we had to do to get back to work to get things back to normal.. TO START WITH (volume) from just looking around I thought, “How can we ever be normal again?” It didn’t seem like we could. We didn’t see how we could, how we could, how we were gonna’ be back in business, but we did.

James and two sons own and operate an oyster shop in the same location as three older generations in their family. James’s and David’s homes flooded and their shop flooded. The storm damaged oyster beds. In order to get back to their routine, shops and houses had to be repaired, oysters had to replenish or be caught elsewhere, and workers had to be found.

Getting back to normal was not a theme in Mary and Richard’s interview because they did not strive to return to their lives as they were before Hurricane Katrina. Mary and Richard decided to move away from south Alabama after Katrina flooded their house. There was no attempt to stay in the area. They were not committed to the fishing industry even though both their families and they had worked in the industry; they preferred making a living in Christian ministry. Even though Mary had helped her sister, Sarah, in her seafood shop, she did not identify herself as a person in the seafood business; she identified herself as a Christian singer. After Katrina destroyed their house

in south Alabama, Mary and Richard decided to move to Louisiana near where Richard had lived as a child.

Mary: We just decided to come back to ministry and to be close to the family again [before Katrina]. But after the storm it was like another blow so we decided, you know, we didn't want to go through that any more.

Storm Comparisons. A fifth theme, *storm comparisons*, was evident in all six interviews. Participants compared Hurricane Katrina with other hurricanes. Words and forms of repeated words were "didn't", "storm", and "water". "Didn't" oftentimes referred to actions or justifications for inaction during Katrina compared to actions taken in other storms such as Camille, Frederick, Ivan, and Dennis to safeguard their family and property. The names of specific storms and the word storm(s) exposed recurrent ideas such as when Mr. Jones compared storms and reasons he thought they had hit in certain places.

In Jacob and Sarah's interview and in Richard and Mary's interview, participants justified their actions or inactions during Hurricane Katrina explaining what they normally do when a storm is approaching compared to their actions or inactions before this particular storm. Participants explained that they are normally organized and prepared for storms, but in this case, they did not prepare because of external reasons. Reasons for not preparing were explained by comparing the approaching storm to the worst previous storms and by comparing the severity of weather reports. They watched the direction of the approaching storm on television and watched wind and water surrounding their houses. They listened to weather reports on the radio. They reported that they could hear waves crashing on the island which was unusual and was a sign of the strength of the storm. Therefore, they knew water action was different than usual. They touched the water where they were fishing as the storm approached to observe

water temperature. They reported that the water was “hot.” Warmer water provokes more strength in hurricanes; cooler water slows them.

Gabriel: Before Katrina came I was fishing at the mouth of the Mississippi River and the water was so hot. I have never seen it that hot.

Even though family participants thought the hurricane would be bad, they did not expect it to hit south Alabama and they did not think damage would exceed damage they received during previous storms. They compared the approach and fury of Hurricane Katrina to previous hurricanes. The most damaging storms (Hurricanes Camille, Frederick and Ivan) had not flooded their homes; therefore, they did not think Katrina would flood. Camille, Frederick, and Ivan were benchmarks they set as the worst storms to which they made comparisons. Jacob explains that Katrina caught them off guard.

Jacob: We were so fortunate in Hurricane Ivan that Katrina caught us off-guard. We didn't go get supplies like we did. We didn't have any lunch meat or anything other than what we had to start with. After we did all we were going to do and we didn't prepare like normally. People go to buy extra bread and food. We really were thinking, “Ok, it's not going to be that bad here.”

Participants said they thought reporters had exaggerated previous storms' strength. Therefore, when Hurricane Katrina approached the area, participants did not think it would be as strong as reported.

Because participants decided the storm was going to hit Louisiana without affecting Alabama was another reason given for not taking usual precautions. Based on evaluations of wind and direction the storm was moving, they believed the storm would hit at a safe distance away from them. However, Hurricane Katrina was more widespread than other hurricanes in their experience, and it changed direction from northwest to north; then to northeast. James and David explained why the storm was unexpected and what they normally do to prepare.

James: It caught us unexpected, you know. It was going to Louisiana so we didn't pick things up that normally we would. After it got to comin' in we didn't have time.

David: You [normally] put things up like the washer and dryer up on cabinets. You get things as high as you can get it, but we didn't do none of that.

James: We thought it would get around; be a little wind but when Camille went through, Camille was more wind. It was more destructive from wind. The water? It is kinda' unreal with that much water with Katrina.

Occupations Theme. A sixth theme, *occupations*, revealed occupations changed as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The occupation theme was revealed in Mr. Jones interview when he discussed family's long occupation as fishermen. After Hurricane Katrina fishermen could not catch shrimp, crabs, oysters, or fish. Therefore, their jobs changed while recuperating from the effects of Katrina. After the storm, all participants except Mary and Richard worked to repair their tools, homes and shops that were damaged. Some worked to clean debris from the surrounding waters. Because the family could not work doing what they routinely did, they were forced by circumstances to accept other jobs.

As stated above, some family members were hired by FEMA to pull debris from the water with their nets. One may think that dragging for debris rather than fishing would be demeaning. However, participants showed no signs of feeling demeaned. They were glad to get the job in order to survive while recuperating. However, they did say they did not like the job hauling debris. Jacob and Sarah said they hated the job.

Jacob: I remember making three drags a day working from daylight to after dark. You would make three 45 minute drags and the rest of the time you would be cleaning junk out of your nets. Bedsprings, trees, plywood, crab traps; you name it, you caught it so if to get paid and to get paid pretty good money. We thought, "Well, we will go for it because we were going to clean it anyway" [in order to drag for shrimp].

Sarah: But we were glad when it was over.

Jacob: Oh, I hated it.

Sarah: It was 12 hour days; 7 days a week for six weeks. We were glad when it was over.
It was work.

Participants talked about cleaning, about “getting back” to their routine including to their jobs, and about their temporary occupations while recuperating from the effects of Hurricane Katrina. Mary and Richard described how their jobs as ministers were not dependent on being near the water. James and David and Rachel and Sarah and Jacob discussed not being able to find workers to help in their shops after cleaning and repairing shops.

Needs and Losses Theme. In the analysis, when revealing the last theme, *needs and losses*, participants discussed their losses and needs compared to other people’s losses and needs. Participants responded differently to losses and needs. Participants justified receiving help when they did; others justified why they did not accept help. Some participants reported other fishermen received more than they deserved.

In spite of their losses, in every interview except James and David’s, participants reported feeling fortunate compared to others. However, even though they reported feeling fortunate, they followed with explanations of *their* losses. It was as if they struggled with the contradiction of their own needs compared to their losses and the losses of others. In other words, even though they lost less, they had tremendous losses themselves. Sarah seemed to reconsider whether they lost more or less when describing their losses and the losses of many relatives whose houses and businesses flooded.

Sarah: I felt there were so many people that had lost so much more that needed help with everything with not only their food and clothing but with getting back to work; back on their feet and building their homes. I felt like people needed help more than we did, but then when I think about my relatives I had a daughter and sister and brother and daddy and all those lost their homes. They got some help. I appreciated all the volunteers.

In the following example, it seemed that Louise wanted to include what they lost to the conversation, but Samuel seemed perturbed that she would reveal their losses when he stopped her by interrupting her. She seemed to concede by quietly stating they were fortunate compared to most.

Samuel: I didn't really have any major losses; not, I didn't have loss at all except time; not near the loss most people had.

Louise: You had

Samuel: BUT (volume) they weren't near the losses MOST (volume, pitch) had.

Louise: Compared to most people, we were very fortunate.

In interviews with Jacob and Sarah, with James and David, with Gabriel, Samuel, Louise, and Jacob, and with Mr. Jones, participants reported not accepting help because they were capable of helping themselves or because others needed help more or because they lost less. However, they said they did accept necessities such as water and ice, and food.

Louise: Right after [Hurricane Katrina hit], everybody needed ice. We went to the fire house. That was the main thing. They would throw MRE's in. If you didn't want them, they would throw them in anyway. Like ice and water, you are always going to run out of.

Gabriel: There were people that come around and offered (for us anyway). But they'd come around. People were just driving down here trying to help, but, I mean, I never took it because I didn't really feel like we needed it. There were people who needed it worse. I mean we had a house and we didn't need anything so.

Even though Mr. Jones's house flooded, he said his brother across the street needed more help than he did because his brother's wife was living. Therefore, Mr. Jones thought he needed less help because he lives alone.

Sarah and James and David mentioned others who could have helped themselves more and who accepted more money and help than they needed. They distinguished

themselves from other victims when they compared what they needed to what others needed and what they accepted compared to what others accepted.

James: Groups would come by and ask if we needed help but I would tell them, "Well I am able so I am doing fine. Go to somebody who is doing worse."

James and David seemed surprised that some fishermen thought that James and David needed less financial help because they owned their own shop. James explained, "You lost everything; we lost everything". He saw his losses and theirs as equally catastrophic while his acquaintances who did not own a business saw James' losses as less threatening and less devastating.

Mary and Richard described trying to fill needs of others by ministering to them and listening to them while filling their needs to help. Mary and Richard offered help to others by listening and showing empathy. However, Mary mentions her need for material items lost in the storm.

Mary: When we meet families that are down and out and need somebody to listen to them and somebody to care about them, just, you know, encourage them. It feels SO GOOD (volume) to do that. When you see them when you see them feeling encouraged and there is hope things is going to be better. And somebody cares about us enough to

Richard: Oh yeah.. That [to focus on other people rather than themselves] helped me.

Richard: But we used that situation, Katrina, to help other people. When people needed help I could tell them, "Hey, I have been right there with you." I know what it is like.

Robert: I guess it was equal the people [in LA and in AL] in need. Then right after Katrina, then Rita hit. So that was devastation.

Mary: Every now and then I get a little blue and I think , "I am starting over again" It is not EASY (pitch) but when you look around and you see what you don't have. I need this. I need that.

James and David felt others abused the system set up to help them by taking more than they had before the storm and by not helping themselves. They distinguished

themselves from other fishermen. They seemed stressed that members of their group (fishermen) were accepting things they did not need and inventing needs where there were none.

Being a member of a group whose actions were contrary to their actions caused stress to James and David. They clearly did not want to be identified as people who did not work to rebuild, who accepted help that was not needed, and who accepted more money than they had before the storm. They distinguished themselves by showing differences in them and others who accepted help. James said he did not want to be seen as “equal” to those who accepted money they did not need and who accepted help from others to repair their houses when they were capable of working to repair them. They also became upset when people who did nothing received help while they worked but did not receive help.

James: The storm was bad. You come back you look around, you are depressed but you decided it is done, nothings going to change. It has happened. The best you can do is deal with it, but after you are dealing with it and you look around and

David: Everybody else is not doing nothing. After you clean it up and two weeks later somebody else comes around to clean it for them, you get a little spiteful. I mean, you try not to be. You try not to let it bother you ‘cause like my dad told me, “You just make yourself mad”. It got to me a little bit. I still don’t like it. Some people are still having church members come down to help them.

According to participants, needed provisions were not available immediately after Hurricane Katrina. However, when supplies were eventually provided, there was over-abundance and waste. Jacob and Sarah and James and David and Louise mentioned the over-abundance and wasted MREs provided by the Red Cross. Jacob said food, ice, and water were “slow coming.” However, later ice melted on pallets and volunteers tossed MREs in their trucks when they did not request them, want them, or need them. Squirrels and rats eventually ate the meals in their shed. There were wastes and injustices. Mary

discussed the injustice of insurance companies not paying for losses even though victims had paid for coverage for years.

James and David discussed the unfairness of working to rebuild while others received an over abundance of money and an abundance of help. There was injustice in not being eligible for FEMA money because they were not in debt. They said had they been in debt, they would have been eligible for financial help. Even though they lost everything, they were not allowed to receive money. David admitted feeling resentment because they were working, yet received no reward while others did not work and received more money than they had before Hurricane Katrina.

James and David said that immediately after Katrina it seemed items including money and food were fairly dispensed, but as time went on there were abuses in the systems that were meant to help. They said things got out of hand and that people should stop helping (this was 2 years after Katrina). People were still coming to help victims. However, many victims still were suffering losses.

Sarah: I feel like there are some who could still use help. I think some got more help than others. But ah, I also believe there are some who could have helped themselves more and didn't. We have heard stories about people using a water hose to say their house had flooded.

Thematic analysis uncovered six themes and demonstrated how narratives about Hurricane Katrina revealed changed identities. All six themes : (1) values (family unity, work ethic, and material items), (2) feelings, (3) getting back to normal, (4) storm comparisons, (5) occupations before and after Hurricane Katrina, and (6) needs and losses represent elements of identity (Table 1).

Guba (1978) said it is necessary to discover meaning by preparing categories of observances which will lead to discovery and verification. Narratives express a set of

preferences and values and help individuals understand their experiences “in terms of thematic logic” (Heath, 2004, p.171). In thematic analysis of narratives in this research categories of observances were organized into themes which led to discovery about self-concepts of participants. Narratives make the world more coherent for those telling their stories by ordering events into themes that express values and guide actions (Heath, 2004). Narratives helped participants order events into thematic logic; narratives were then observed and analyzed revealing the themes.

How are the observed themes elements of identity? Gegas (2000) said identity is viewed by some as locating a person “in social space by virtue of relationships and memberships that it implies” including memberships in particular groups, organizations, and society as a whole (p. 93). Units or elements of identity such as occupational roles, family roles, ethnic groups, values, and value systems constitute locations of identity (Gegas, 2000) within a social space. Any self-characterization, according to Gegas (2000), such as wishes, desires, achievements, roles, values, goals, and attitudes, for example, can be considered elements of identity. Themes in this research were, like elements; values, feelings, getting back to normal which reflected goals of participants, storm comparisons which reflected feelings of regret for not preparing as they usually had in other storms, and needs and losses which showed attitudes and group memberships of participants.

These themes reflected how participants viewed themselves and contributed to our understanding of how Hurricane Katrina affected their identities. Stryker (1987) purports that self-concepts give structure and meaning to experiences which proved true in this research when themes reflecting self-concepts gave structure and meaning to participants’ Hurricane Katrina experiences.

Giroux (1993) points out identities occupy shifting and contradictory locations in changing contexts. In other words, identities change as contexts change (Giroux, 1993). Elements or themes of identity changed as the situation changed for participants in experiences surrounding Hurricane Katrina.

Changes in elements of identity can be explained by looking at how individuals respond to threats to identity based on motivations that shape identity. The desire for distinctiveness, continuity, high self-esteem, and efficacy are motivations that shape identity (Breakwell, 1993). Individuals strive to be distinct, they desire continuity, strive for high self-esteem, and desire control over happenings in their lives (Breakwell, 1993).

The continuity motive is the desire for certainty and stability in life. The self-esteem motive is the desire to view oneself positively; to try to maintain or enhance self (Breakwell, 1993; Gegas, 2000). The self-efficacy motive is the desire to control environment (Breakwell, 1993; Gegas, 2000). The distinctiveness motive is the desire for meaning and significance (Breakwell, 1993; Gegas, 2000).

A break in continuity or threats to self-esteem, self-efficacy or distinctiveness may cause changes to self-concepts. If positive self-concepts are threatened, individuals strive to maintain or to reconstruct their positive self-concepts (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Jung & Hecht, 2004). A break in continuity causes uncertainty; uncertainty causes stress. Individuals strive for certainty (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Without control (self-efficacy) individuals can experience helplessness, powerlessness, and inferiority (Gegas, 2000).

Hurricane Katrina caused breaks in continuity and threats to self-esteem, efficacy, and distinctiveness which caused threats to identity. Threats to identity caused some temporary or permanent changes to identity of participants. Each theme as an element of

identity was revealed as a part of self-concept by participants. As stated above, some of the elements changed; others did not. Below, changes in elements of identity revealed in interviews are explained based on breaks in continuity and threats to self-esteem, self-efficacy, and distinctiveness.

Changes in Elements of Identity

Thematic analysis revealed changes in some elements of identity in Hurricane Katrina experiences and no changes in other elements of identity. Some changes in elements of identity represented by themes were permanent; other changes were temporary. There were no changes to some elements of identity related to experiences with Hurricane Katrina. Permanent changes in this research referred to those elements of identity that remained changed two years after the storm as indicated by participant interviews. Temporary changes were those elements of identity that changed in situations surrounding the storm, but that later changed back to pre-Katrina states as indicated in participant interviews. Temporary changes were threats to identity with which participants coped and changed back or reconstructed. No changes referred to elements of identity that did not change in situations surrounding Hurricane Katrina experiences.

Table 2 shows whether themes as elements of identity changed permanently (perm), temporarily (temp), or did not change (no) based on Hurricane Katrina experiences. Column I of Table 2 consists of participants grouped as they were when interviewed. Each consecutive column lists a theme as an element of identity starting with values (family unity, Column II; work ethic, Column III; material items, Column IV), feelings (Column V), back to normal (Column VI), storms (Column VII), occupations (Column VIII), and needs and losses (Column XI).

Table 2

Narratives Revealed Permanent Changes to Elements of Identity (Perm), Temporary Changes to Elements of Identity (Temp), or No Changes to Elements of Identity (No)

Partici- pant Inter- views	I Value: Family Unity	II Value: Work Ethic	III Value: Material Items	IV Feelings	V Back to Normal	VI Storms	VII Occupa- tions	VIII Needs Losses
1. Sarah Jacob	No	No	Temp	Perm	Temp	Temp	Temp	No
2. Rachel Jacob Sarah	No	No	Temp	Temp	Temp	No	Temp	No
3. Gabriel Samuel Louise Jacob	No	No	Temp	Temp	Temp	No	Temp	Temp
4. James David	No	No	Temp	Temp	Temp	Temp	Temp	Perm
5. Mary Richard	No	No	Perm	Perm	*N/A	Temp	Temp (ministry) Perm (fishing)	Perm
6. Mr. Jones	No	No	Temp	No	N/A	No	No	No

*N/A represents not applicable because themes were not revealed

Rows represent participants in interviews while columns represent themes. There were no changes in identity revealed in any interviews in the *family unity value* (Table 2, Column I); there were no changes in identity revealed in any interviews in the *work ethic value* (Table 2, Column II); there was one permanent change and five temporary changes in elements of identity revealed in interviews regarding *material items* as values (Table 2, Column III). There were two permanent changes and three temporary changes in the

feelings elements of identity and one that did not change revealed in interviews (Table 2, Column IV). There were four temporary changes in the *back to normal* elements of identity; two not applicable (N/A) because *back to normal* was not a theme (Table 2, Column VI). In the *storms* element of identity, there were three temporary changes revealed and three interviews in which no changes were revealed (Table 2, Column VII). There was one permanent change and five temporary changes to the *occupations* elements of identity and one interview in which the element of identity did not change (Table 2, Column VIII). There were two permanent changes in the *needs and losses* elements of identity, one temporary change, and no changes in three interviews (Table 2, Column IX).

Reading the table, row by row indicates changes in elements of identity revealed in themes based on interviews. In Sarah and Jacob's interview (Table 2, Row 1) there were no changes indicated in *family unity* and *work ethic* values or in *needs and losses* as elements of identity; temporary changes in *material items*, *back to normal*, *storms* and *occupations*. In Rachel, Sarah, and Jacob's interview (Table 2, Row 2), there were no changes in *family unity* or *work ethic* values, *storms*, or *needs and losses* as elements of identity; temporary changes in *material items* as values, *feelings*, *back to normal* and *occupations* as elements of identity. In Gabriel, Samuel, Louise, and Jacob's interview (Table 2, Row 3) there were no changes to *family unity* and *work ethic* values, temporary changes to *material items*, *feelings*, *back to normal*, *occupations*, and *needs and losses* as elements of identity. In James and David's interview (Table 2, Row 4) there were no changes to *family unity* or *work ethic* values as elements of identity, temporary changes to *material items* as a value, *feelings*, *back to normal*, *storms*, *occupations*, and permanent changes to *needs and losses* as elements of identity. In Mary and Richard's interview

(Table 2, Row 5) there were no changes to *family unity* or *work ethic* as values in elements of identity, permanent changes to *material items* as values, *feelings*, and in *needs and losses*. Mary and Richard's interview was unusual in that two occupations were discussed; working in the seafood industry and ministering. In *occupation* (fishing) there were permanent changes to elements of identity; temporary changes in *occupation* (ministry) as elements in identity. *Back to normal* was not applicable because it was not a theme in Mary and Richard's interview. In Mr. Jones interview (Table 2, Row 6) there were no changes in *family unity*, *work ethic*, *feelings*, *storms*, *occupations*, or *needs and losses*; a temporary change to *material items*. *Back to normal* was not applicable as elements of identity because it was not revealed a theme in Mr. Jones's interview.

Changes in Values. The intangible values of *family unity* and *work ethic* did not reflect changes in identity in any interviews; however, tangible values (*material items*) did. *Material items* reflected temporary changes in five of the six interviews and reflected permanent changes in one interview.

There were breaks in continuity when items including houses and shops were damaged or destroyed; there was a threat to efficacy because participants had no control over losing things they owned during the storm. All participants were able to clean and rebuild and to replace lost and damaged items in time except for Mary and Richard. In addition to breaks in continuity and threats to efficacy, Mary and Richard experienced threats to self-esteem. The fact that they thought others had little regard for their things when they threw them away, lowered their self-esteem.

The threat to identity was temporary for others; permanent for Richard and Mary (Table 2, Column IV, Rows 1-6). Richard and Mary lost items that were irreplaceable; they mentioned losing part of their life when they lost pictures and books that represented

their lives that could not be replaced. Their identity was changed. They did not try to rebuild their house or to regain material items lost to the storm; they moved to a different state.

Changes in Feelings. In Sarah and Jacob's narrative and in Mary and Richard's narrative, permanent changes to identity in the *feelings* theme were revealed; in Rachel, Jacob, and Sarah's narrative, in James and David's narrative, and in Gabriel, Samuel, Louise, and Jacob's narrative, temporary changes in the *feelings* theme were revealed. No identity changes were revealed in Mr. Jones narrative regarding the *feelings* theme (Table 2, Column V, Rows 1-6). The storm caused breaks in continuity and threats to self-efficacy for all participants.

Participants viewed themselves as self-sufficient and determined. However, Hurricane Katrina threatened their identity as self-sufficient because it threatened efficacy; participants had no control over the storm. The feelings *theme* revealed feelings of security before the storm to worry and fear during the storm to feeling devastated, regretful, sad, overwhelmed, fortunate, and blessed after the storm.

The storm caused permanent changes in *feelings* for Jacob. Jacob said before Katrina he felt as if he could protect his family. The storm changed his view of himself from protector to the inability to protect. In this instance, self-efficacy and self-esteem were threatened and there was a break in continuity causing a permanent change in Jacob's view of himself. As Gegas (2000) suggested, individuals can feel helpless or powerless if self-efficacy is threatened. Jacob seemed to feel helpless and powerless because of his realization that in some experiences he could not protect his family.

In Mary and Richard's interview they expressed their feelings of helplessness and powerlessness exposing permanent changes in their identities. Their feelings of

helplessness were evident when they explained how they felt when they returned to their destroyed house. Later, their self-esteem was threatened when they felt strangers regarded their cherished possessions as not valuable.

In Rachel, Sarah, and Jacob's narrative, revealing the *feelings* theme showed that the storm caused Rachel's feelings to change from feeling safe to feeling overwhelmed. In Gabriel, Samuel, Louise, and Jacob's narrative, the feelings theme revealed they felt safe before the storm, worried during the storm and horrible after the storm. In James and David's narrative the feeling theme revealed they felt safe, then afraid, then overwhelmed after the storm. There was a threat to efficacy and a break in continuity when houses flooded, jobs were lost, and churches flooded. However, they were able to rebuild or repair their houses, replace items lost, and return to their jobs eventually. The elements of identity revealed in narratives in the *feelings* theme were threatened temporarily as shown in Rachel, Jacob, and Sarah's narrative, in Gabriel, Samuel, Louise, and Jacob's narrative, and in James and David's narrative. Because these participants were able to cope, their identities were not permanently changed.

James and David viewed themselves as knowledgeable about storms. However, James and David experienced temporary changes in their identities in their association with news reporters and FEMA representatives. When news reporters approached them, the reporters were well dressed and prepared while James and David were dirty from working all night and unprepared for an interview. Therefore, efficacy (no control) and self-esteem (unprepared, dirty) were threatened. They coped with the threats. The threats to efficacy and self-esteem caused temporary changes to elements of their identity regarding feelings.

Changes in Getting Back to Normal. In all interviews that revealed the *getting back to normal* theme, participants experienced temporary changes in elements of identity. Interviews revealed that participants like to maintain routines and that the storm had caused worry and breaks in their routines. They view themselves as organized and productive. There was obviously a break in continuity and a threat to self-efficacy which threatened self-esteem and, therefore, threatened identity. For example, Rachel felt everything in her life had stopped. Everything in her routine changed. She said, "It felt like everything would have to stop". Rachel had no control (threat to efficacy) over Hurricane Katrina and the damage it caused; her house was flooded, her place of work was flooded, her church was flooded. For all participants who revealed the *getting back to normal* theme, the changes were devastating, but not permanent because they were determined to get back to normal. They were able to cope with the threats to efficacy and self-esteem by working to get back to normal.

Changes in Storm Comparisons. There were temporary changes to identity as revealed in the *storms* theme in Sarah and Jacob's interview, in James and David's interview and in Mary and Richard's interview. There were no changes in elements of identity in Rachel, Jacob, and Sarah's interview, in Gabriel, Samuel, Louise, and Jacob's interview or in Mr. Jones's interview. Participants view themselves as knowledgeable about storms and organized and prepared when one approaches. Participants justified their actions or inactions during Hurricane Katrina explaining what they normally do when a storm is approaching compared to their actions or inactions before this particular storm. In the three interviews which revealed temporary changes to this element of identity, they said they are normally organized and prepared for storms, but in this case, they did not prepare.

Participants compared the approach and fury of Hurricane Katrina to previous hurricanes. The most damaging storms in the Mobile area (Hurricanes Ivan, Frederick, Camille, Dennis) had not flooded their homes; therefore, they did not think Katrina would be worse than the worst causing flooding of their homes. Ivan and Frederick were benchmarks they set as the worst storms to which they made comparisons. They did not think any other would surpass the damage. Participants said reporters had exaggerated previous storms' strength. Therefore, when this storm came, participants said they did not think it would be as strong as reported. Another reason given for not taking usual precaution is they had decided the storm was going to hit Louisiana, therefore, not affecting Alabama. Based on evaluations of wind and direction the storm was moving, they believed the storm would hit at a safe distance from them. However, Hurricane Katrina was more wide spread than other hurricanes in their experience and it changed direction from northwest to north; then northeast.

Individuals perform roles to fit definitions of themselves; success or failure of role performance affects self-esteem (Stryker, 1987). Self-esteem was threatened because participants take pride in knowledge of and preparedness for storms. There was a break in continuity that caused a threat to self-esteem. However, because participants were able to justify why they did not prepare, the threats were not permanent.

Changes in Occupations. In all interviews, except Mr. Jone's interview, there were temporary changes in occupations that caused threats to this element of identity. Mr. Jones is retired. However, he continues to identify himself and his family members as fishermen. In Sarah and Jacob's interview, in Rachel, Jacob and Sarah's interview, in Gabriel, Samuel, Louise, and Jacob's interview, in James and David's interview, determination to return to work in the seafood business after Hurricane Katrina. They

viewed themselves as fishermen. They were determined to return to their occupations. Therefore, the break in continuity and threats to self-esteem and efficacy were temporary for Sarah, Jacob, Rachel, Gabriel, Samuel, Louise, and James and David; permanent for Mary.

Mary worked in the seafood business with her sister, Sarah before Hurricane Katrina. The storm caused a permanent change in this element of her identity. The more important an identity is to an individual, the more likely individuals are to perform the behavior associated with the role (Stryker, 1987). All participants except Mary and Richard were tightly related to their occupations as fishermen; their occupations as fishermen were important to them. Therefore, other participants were determined to return to their occupations as fishermen. However, the relation to the seafood business was less tightly related and less important to Mary and Richard. Stryker (2000) stated the basic premise of identity theory is commitment to an identity; commitment affects identity; identity affects role choice. It was easier for Mary and Richard to give up their roles as workers in the seafood business because they were not committed to the occupation. They were committed to their role choice as ministers, not fishermen. Hurricane Katrina caused a temporary threat to identity as ministers because they continued their occupations as ministers after they moved to Louisiana after Katrina; the storm caused a permanent change in this element of identity for Mary as a seafood worker.

After the storm participants who made their living in the seafood business, could not work doing what they did routinely, forcing them to accept other jobs that indicated a break in continuity and a threat to self-efficacy. However, they were eventually able to return to their occupations so the threats were temporary.

Their interim jobs could have caused a threat to self-esteem by some standards. However, participants remained proud. They never quit viewing themselves as independent fishermen.

As stated above, the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) hired some fishermen to drag their nets to pull debris from the water. Dragging for debris rather than fishing could have been demeaning. However, participants showed no signs of feeling demeaned. They were glad to get the job in order to survive while recuperating. They did say they did not like the job hauling debris. For example, Sarah said they hated the job, they were glad when it was over. Jacob and Samuel said they did not like it, but were glad to be paid for doing it because it was necessary to remove debris before they could catch fish, crab, shrimp, and oysters again. Therefore, the change in occupation caused a temporary change, a break in continuity and a threat to efficacy. However, participants' concept of self, their identity as fishermen did not change. They saw themselves as fishermen who were temporarily catching debris to survive. They refused to change their identity as fishermen. All participants who had built their identity as fishermen over time and situations maintained their identity as fishermen. Participants who viewed themselves as seafood workers were able to cope with the threats because their occupations, their homes, and the waters where they work were not permanently damaged or destroyed. Therefore, the break in continuity related to occupations caused threats or temporary changes to identity, but did not cause permanent changes to participants' identities.

Changes in Losses and Needs. Sarah and Jacob's interview and Rachel, Sarah, and Jacob's interview revealed no changes to self-concept related to needs and losses; Gabriel, Samuel, Lousie, and Jacob's interview revealed temporary changes to identity;

and James and David's interview and Mary and Richard's interview revealed permanent changes to *the needs and losses* aspects of identity. James and David handled the threat by removing themselves from the group and Mary and Richard handled the threat by removing themselves from the area.

Participants viewed themselves as self-sufficient, honest, and hard-working. Therefore, needing and receiving help were threats to self-esteem. Justifying the reason they needed help allowed participants to continue to see themselves as self-sufficient. Participants whose identity was not affected as revealed in the *needs and losses* element of identity had no control over losses and needs, however, they refused help in order to maintain their identity as self-sufficient, hard working people who can provide for themselves. Sarah said, "We take care of our own as much as we can." In Sarah and Jacob's interview, they revealed they received some Meals Ready to Eat (MRE), but did not receive additional help other than from family members. In Rachel, Jacob, and Sarah's interview, Rachel revealed she, her husband, and children accepted help because they had dire needs when their house and business were flooded creating the needs. Her identity did not change because she was able to justify the receipt of help based on needs and losses.

Gabriel, Samuel and Louise revealed temporary changes in identity in their interview about needs and losses. There was a break in continuity and threat to self-efficacy because they had no control over the storm. They viewed themselves as fortunate in spite of their needs and losses. Their identity was threatened temporarily because they compared their needs and losses to others deciding they were more fortunate.

James and David experienced a permanent threat to identity as shown in their interview. They viewed themselves and their group of fellow fishermen as honest, hard-working, and self-sufficient. They were upset and stressed that members of their group (fishermen) were accepting things they did not need and inventing needs where there were none. Being a member of a group whose actions were contrary to their actions caused stress to James and David and caused a threat to self-esteem. They clearly did not want to be identified as members of a group of people who did not work to rebuild, who accepted help that was not needed, and who accepted more money than they had before the storm. According to Breakwell (1993), when a group member distinguishes another member as different, it can cause a threat to identity because it is a break in continuity of an assumption about being similar group members. James and David distinguished themselves by showing differences in them and others who accepted help. James said he didn't want to be seen as "equal" to those who accepted money and did not work to rebuild their houses but accepted help from others to do it. They removed themselves from the group of fishermen who they had associated with for years. Thus their group identity changed representing a permanent change to their identity.

Mary and Richard experienced permanent changes to identity based on needs and losses. Mary and Richard's identities were threatened by a break in continuity, threats to self-esteem and threats to efficacy. They were able to handle the threats by helping others while they received help. Mary and Richard described trying to fill needs of others by ministering to them and listening to them. They said it made them feel better to help others which gave them a boost to self-esteem. They were maintaining their identities as ministers.

However, even though Mary helped others, she described needing material items that she had lost during the storm. She went from being a home owner who had what she needed to a person without a home who lost all material possessions. Her view of herself as a self-sufficient home owner changed. Therefore, her identity changed related to needs and losses.

Analysis of participants' narratives revealed crisis victims' identities; revealed changes in victims' lives as related to their Hurricane Katrina experiences; revealed that these life changes caused threats, and therefore, caused changes in victims' identities. Changes in identity were caused by threats to victims' control over their lives (efficacy), threats to victims' positive self-esteem, and threats to victims' ability to continue their ways of life (continuity). How did narratives reveal crisis victims' changed identities? In thematic analysis, narratives in interviews about Hurricane Katrina experiences revealed themes that reflected elements of identity which indicated permanent, temporary or no changes in identity in circumstances surrounding Hurricane Katrina.

Dialectical Analysis

The dialectical analysis, helped to answer all seven research questions. Research question #1 asked how narratives reveal crisis victims' changed identities. This study emphasized participants' dynamic and changing relationships and identities to answer research question #1. Thematic analysis showed how identity changed with life's circumstances and dialectical analysis showed how identity was threatened and maintained in interpersonal communication in relationships surrounding the crisis.

Research question #2 asked what dialectical dimensions were revealed in crisis victims' narratives. Dialectical dimensions in the form of dialectical oppositions in

relationship maintenance and identity gaps in identity maintenance were revealed in analysis of crisis victims' narratives.

The analysis revealed how the tensions were manifested in the narratives to answer research question #3 which asked how dialectical oppositions were manifested in interpersonal communication. Dialectical analysis also revealed answers to questions #4 and #5 that asked what aspects of identity can be revealed in narratives of victims when using a dialectical lens (#4) and how identity gaps were revealed in narratives of victims (#5). The analysis also revealed how participants coped with dialectical oppositions and identity gaps answering questions #6 and #7.

Answering Research Question #2

Research question #2 asked what dialectical oppositions were revealed in crisis victims' narratives. Nine dialectical oppositions were detected in the four analyzed narratives. Table 3 below is a summary of what was found in the narrative-dialectical-structural analysis. Later the analysis of each narrative is discussed in detail. Table 3 depicts the individuals telling the narratives, relationships, the dialectics detected, whether the dialectic was manifested internally or externally, and which dialectical tension was manifested.

Even though all 6 interviews contained narratives, two of James and David's narratives, one of Sarah and Jacob's narratives, and one of Richard and Mary's narratives were chosen for dialectical analysis. The four narratives were chosen because they demonstrated the greatest likelihood of depicting interplay between opposing tendencies in social life and of depicting aspects of relationships and identity associated with Hurricane Katrina experiences because they were about relationships.

Narratives from Mr. Jones interview were not chosen because the interview was reconstructed from memory rather than from an audio recording. Therefore, the exact words and chronology of narratives were not preserved. Narratives from Rachel, Sarah, and Jacob's interview and from Samuel, Louise, Gabriel, and Jacob's interview were not chosen because they were sparse descriptions of the storm's approach, their experiences during the storm and their responses after the storm. Their narratives lacked descriptions of relationships and interactions with people.

Table 3

Dialectical Oppositions Exposed in Dialectical Analysis

Narratives by:	Relationships	Dialectic of:	Manifestation	Dialectical Oppositions
1. Mary/Richard	Anne vs shrimpers	Integration-Separation	External	Inclusion-Seclusion
		Integration-Separation	External	Inclusion-Seclusion
		Stability-Change	External	Conventionality-Uniqueness
2. James/David	James/David vs Reporters	Expression-Privacy	External	Revelation-Concealment
		Integration-Separation	External	Inclusion-Seclusion
		Integration-Separation	External	* Approach-Resistance
3. James/David	James/David vs FEMA	Integration-Separation	External	Inclusion-Seclusion
		Stability-Change	External	Conventionality-Uniqueness
4. Sarah/Jacob	Sarah/Jacob vs customers	Integration-Separation	External	Inclusion-Seclusion

*Indigenous to this narrative and overarching

“Dialectic begins with the view that every idea is based on relationships; we can think of something only by connecting it to something else” (Bochner, et al., 1998, p. 46).

Detection of dialectical oppositions creates structure (simulacrum) for narratives and in the relationships within the narratives (Conville, 1998).

Conville's (1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) narrative-dialectical-structural method to detect dialectical oppositions was used. The narrative-dialectical-structural method was expanded by Conville (1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) to study the structure of dialectical oppositions in narratives from Lévi-Strauss's (1967) method to study oppositions in the structure of myths.

In this research, lists of sentences were compiled in each of the four narratives as the first step in the dialectical analysis. Each sentence was important to the narrative. Then sentences were compared by asking if each sentence was similar to or different from previous sentences. Each sentence was placed in a column based on similarities and a row based on sequence. Columns were made up of groups of sentences of similar significance; similar sentences were deemed a constituent unit. Similar sentences were placed in the same column; different sentences were placed in separate columns which organized the data into a rows-and-column grid preserving chronology in rows and exposing similarities in columns. (Conville, 1998a). Step three involved interpreting the grid in light of the dialectical oppositions revealed (Conville, 1998b).

Mary, Richard, and their daughter Anne were victims of Hurricane Katrina. They lost their home and belongings to the storm resulting in a move from Alabama to Louisiana. When they lived near family members who made their living fishing, shrimping, catching oysters and crabs, Anne declared, "I don't want nothin' to do with no seafood people." Later, after the move to Louisiana as a result of Hurricane Katrina, Anne met and started dating a shrimper. Figure 3 shows the chronological list of

sentences of Mary and Richard's narrative in which they discussed their daughter, Anne's, changing impressions and changing relationships with shrimpers.

1. Mary: Her [Anne's] older sister would say, "You are going to marry one of them shrimpers over there [in southern Mobile Co. AL] and probably end up marrying one of them shrimpers."
2. Mary: And these were her [Anne] words, "I will never date no shrimper".
3. Mary: Anne said, "I don't want nothin' to do with no shrimper".
4. Mary: "I don't want nothin' to do with no seafood people" is what she [Anne] would say.
5. Mary: And so we moved to Louisiana [after Katrina].
6. Mary: She [Anne] met this little boy.
7. Mary: He is a shrimper.
8. Mary: And he has his own boat. He has been shrimping since he was 14.
9. Mary: He is 17 and takes this big boat out by his self for a week at a time. And shrimps.
10. Mary: I remind her. I say, "you met a shrimper way over here in Louisiana".
11. Mary: She [younger daughter, Anne] is shrimping and crawfishing and all that.
12. Mary: One time his parents were watching her [Anne] across the swamp.
13. Mary: They [his parents] told us they didn't think she [Anne] would do it. She didn't look the type.
14. Richard: Too dainty, you know.
15. Mary: They said she [Anne] was taking dead fish out of the traps (the old rotten ones that they have to take out).

Figure 3. Sentences in Mary and Richard's Narrative about Anne's Relationship

Table 4

Dialectical Structure of the Narrative about Anne's Relationship with Shrimpers

I Teasing	II Resistance	III Moves	IV Meeting	V Description	VI Similarity	VII Evaluation
1	2					
	3					
	4	5	6	7		
				8		
				9		
			10		11	12
						13
						14
					15	

Conventionality-Uniqueness

PIVOT

Inclusion....Seclusion

Seclusion.....Inclusion

Numbers on the grid (Table 4) refer to sentence numbers in the list (Fig. 3). For example, number one on the grid refers to number one in the list of sentences (sister teasing Anne). Following Conville's (1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) method, I read each sentence starting with number one in the list; then asked starting with sentence number two, "Is this sentence the same or different in meaning or significance from previous sentences"? With regard to sentences 1 and 2 in Figure 2, the answer was different in my judgment. Likewise, I asked if sentence 3 was similar or different than sentence 1 or sentence 2. It was similar to sentence 2. Therefore, it was placed in the column with sentence 2. Each sentence was placed in a column by asking if it were similar to or different from all previous sentences. Next, the columns were given names according to common significance among the sentences placed in each column (Table 4). Sentence 1 is about her sister teasing Anne. This same process resulted in placing sentences 2, 3, and 4 in the same column which became Column II (Table 4). These sentences show Anne's determination not to date or marry a shrimper or to associate with shrimpers, in general. Therefore, the column was named "resistance." Her resistance showed her rejection of the family norm to marry a shrimper. Sentence 5 was different from the previous sentences. Sentence 5 was placed in Column III (Table 4). Column III was named *moves* because it was about Richard, Mary, and Anne moving after Hurricane Katrina destroyed their house. Sentences 6 and 10 were about Anne meeting a shrimper, thus Column IV was labeled *meeting* (Table 4). Sentences 7, 8, and 9 were placed in the same column because they describe the shrimper. Thus Column V was named *description* (Table 4). Sentences 11 and 15 described Anne performing tasks that fit the role of a seafood person. Column VI was named *similarity* (Table 4). Sentences 12, 13,

and 14 were similar. They described the shrimper's parents' skepticism about Anne doing the work of a shrimper; thus Column VII was labeled *evaluation* (Table 4).

Step 3 of the analytical procedure was to interpret the grid to detect dialectical oppositions. As indicated at the bottom of Table 4, dialectical oppositions detected in Anne's relationship with shrimpers were Conventuality-Uniqueness (Table 4, Column I & Column II), Seclusion-Inclusion (Table 4, Column II & Column IV), and Inclusion-Seclusion (Table 4, Column VI & Column VII). Anne's sister predicts Anne will follow in the footsteps of other family members by dating and marrying a shrimper; the conventional thing to do (Table 4, Column I-*teasing*). Anne rejects the notion in sentences 2, 3, and 4 (Table 4, Column II-*resistance*). Anne resists conventional practice by declaring she will not marry or date a shrimper.

Column IV (Table 4) is the pivotal point of the narrative. Anne's decision whether to accept or reject the shrimper determined the outcome of the narrative. Sentences in Columns II and IV exposed a seclusion-inclusion dialectical opposition between Anne and the shrimper (Table 4). She stated she would not date, associate with, or marry a shrimper; she differentiated herself from the group. However, she then met a shrimper and made the decision to date him reversing the dialectical tension from seclusion from shrimpers, in general, to inclusion with him. Her meeting of the shrimper and dating the shrimper changed how she perceived herself from unique or separate from the group to her perception of herself as one of the group based on her decision to date the shrimper. Her self-concept, her identity changed. Columns VI and VII (Table 4) also reflect aspects of Anne's identity. Inclusion-Seclusion was manifested in sentences in Columns VI and VII when the shrimper's parents were evaluating Anne while doubting that she would perform tasks known to be those of a shrimper (Table 4, Column VII-

seclusion). However, Column VI (Table 4) contains Anne's actions showing she did perform tasks (inclusion). According to Mary's account, the shrimper's parents distinguished Anne from themselves and their son who she dated in Column VII (Table 4) when they proclaimed that she would not perform as they do as shrimpers (seclusion from the group). They distanced Anne from their group. However, Column VI shows that Anne performed tasks indicating connection to the group (inclusion). Anne's relationship with shrimpers changed from her proclamation indicating separateness to her actions indicating integration during the course of the narrative.

Dialectical oppositions were revealed in Mary and Richard's description of Anne's relationship with shrimpers. In Mary and Richard's narrative about Anne, the dialectic of integration and separation was manifested externally two times (between Anne and the larger social group of shrimpers) as inclusion-seclusion. (Table 4); the dialectic of stability and change was externally manifested as conventionality-uniqueness between Anne and the larger social unit of shrimpers. Baxter explained that dialectics are manifested between a pair or between a pair and the larger social unit. However, a dialectic opposition in Anne's relationship was manifested between her as an individual and the larger social group of shrimpers.

Following is one of James and David's narratives.

1. David: Reporters have prepared speeches.
2. David: They want to talk with you.
3. David: They are dressed up.
4. David: They catch you.
5. James: I watch them.
6. James: They have asked me.
7. James: I say no.
8. James: For some reason, you [I] look like an idiot.
9. David: They ask you questions.
10. David: You are not prepared to answer.
11. David: They have prepared for the response.

12. David: They catch you.
13. David: They try to catch us when we are at the fuel dock.
14. David: We have been working all night.
15. David: We haven't took showers.
16. David: We look rough because we have been working.
17. David: I feel like I have microminnow in my hair.
18. David: This girl comes up from the news wanting to interview people, me and my brother.
19. David: I ran inside real quick.
20. David: She [reporter]will ask you something you are not going to know how to answer.

Figure 4. Sentences in James and David's Narrative about Relationship with Reporters

Table 5

Dialectical Structure of James and David's Narrative about their Relationship with Reporters

I Prepared	II Attempts to talk	III Unprepared	IV Skepticism	V Resistance
1	2			
3		4	5	
	6			7
		8		
	9	10		
11		12		
		13		
		14		
		15		
		16		
		17		
	18			19
		20		

Revelation.....Concealment

Seclusion.....Inclusion

[**APPROACH**].....pivot.....[**RESISTANCE**]

Again, following Conville's (1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) method for analyzing narratives, I read each sentence starting with number one in the list; then asked starting with sentence number two, "Is this sentence the same or different in meaning or significance from previous sentences"? With regard to sentences 1 and 2 in Figure 4, the

answer is different in my judgment. Likewise, I asked if sentence 3 was similar or different than sentence 1 or sentence 2. It was similar to sentence 1. Therefore, sentence 3 was placed in the column with sentence 1. Each sentence was placed in a column by asking if it were similar to or different from all previous sentences. Sentences that had similarities were placed in the same columns. Next, the columns were given names according to common significance among the sentences placed in each column.

Sentences 1, 3, and 11 were indicative of reporters' preparedness. Therefore, Column I (Table 4) was labeled *prepared*. This same process resulted in placing similar sentences 2, 6, 9 and 18 in Column II (Table 5) which indicated reporters' attempts to talk to James and David. Thus Column II was named *attempts to talk*. Sentences 4, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 20 were similar thus placed in Column III (Table 5) indicating James and David were unprepared to talk with reporters. Therefore, Column III was named *unprepared*. Sentence 5 was placed in Column IV which was named *skepticism* (Table 5). Sentences 7 and 10 were placed in Column V which was named *resistance* because the sentences revealed James's and David's resistance to reporters (Table 5).

Three dialectical oppositions (revelation-concealment, seclusion-inclusion, and approach-resistance) were revealed in James and David's narrative about their experiences when reporters attempted to interview them as victims of Hurricane Katrina (Table 5). The three dialectical oppositions manifested in James and David's narrative about reporters were external manifestations between the pair and the larger social order of news media. One overarching dialectical opposition around a central pivot was revealed when the narrative was structured. Columns I and II (Table 5) to the left of center focused on actions of reporters' attempts to communicate; Columns IV and V (Table 5) to the right of center focused on actions of participants to resist attempts for

communication creating a dialectical opposition that I called approach-resistance. The approach-resistance dialectic was played out around central Column III that describes the reasons for resistance (unpreparedness). Conville (1998b) called a pivot a “kind of armature or nearly still point around which the rest of the discourse frantically circulates” (p. 146).

Columns I and II (Table 5) together were labeled *approach* because sentences in Columns I and II were about reporters’ approach to interview fishermen while sentences 5, 7, and 19 about participants’ resistance to approaches in Columns IV and V were labeled *resistance* (Table 5). The approach-resistance dialectic is unique because it encompasses the entire narrative and I gave the oppositions names unique to this study. Conville (1998b) called dialectical oppositions that are unique to the particular circumstances and not ones typically used by researchers *indigenous*. This overarching opposition is an example of an external manifestation of expression and privacy. The dialectical opposition is external because it is manifested between James and David and reporters, a larger social unit.

In Table 5, Column I (*Prepared*) and Column II (*Attempts to Talk*) represent the *Approach* opposition or struggle; Column IV (*Skepticism*) and Column V (*Resistance*) represent the *Resistance* opposition. Column III, the center column labeled *Unprepared* was the pivotal point in the analysis. Not only did the analysis reveal a unique manifestation of a dialectical opposition, it revealed an addition to the relational frame of identity.

In addition to the dialectical opposition surrounding Column III (Table 5) encompassing the whole narrative, two dialectical oppositions were manifested *within* the narrative. The external dialectic of expression-privacy was manifested in the narrative as

revelation-concealment (Table 5, Column II & Column V); the external dialectic of integration-separation was manifested as inclusion –seclusion (Table 5, Column I & Column III). Both were manifested between James and David and the larger social order represented by the news media. Column II (revelation) shows reporters’ attempts to talk with James and David; and Column V (concealment) shows James’s and David’s refusal to talk with reporters.

Column I (Table 5, inclusion) shows reporters were prepared in contrast with Column III (Table 5, seclusion) which shows James and David were unprepared and wanted separation. James and David distinguished themselves from the reporters and attributed their being unprepared to external causes such as being caught off guard and to working all night. In other words, they gave reasons for the fact that they were unprepared to talk with reporters.

In the interview with James and David, another narrative in addition to the narrative about their relationship with reporters contained information about their relationship with a larger social order after Hurricane Katrina; FEMA representatives. Therefore, the dialectical oppositions were external to the relationship in this narrative.

1. James: That’s the way FEMA works.
2. James: If you have a few dollars in the bank, you don’t qualify.
3. James: Even though you lose half of what you have got, you don’t qualify.
4. James: You gotta’ lose the other half.
5. James: I work for mine.
6. James: I don’t want somebody who is laying around doing nothin’ being equal with me.
7. David: I had one [FEMA representative] come down [to meet with him].
8. David: I heard him talk.
9. David: He wanted me to sign a thing.
10. David: She was doing a survey on FEMA money.
11. David: Wanted me to sign a thing saying how helpful they were.
12. David: How much they got me straightened out [after Hurricane Katrina].
13. David: How much they had done.
14. David: I said, “You didn’t help me none!”

- 15. David: She said, "I want you to tell me how good we done".
- 16. David: "How happy you are".
- 17. David: "I'm not"!
- 18. David: "I'm not signing nothing".
- 19. David: "You need to get up and leave".
- 20. David: I told her she should leave.
- 21. David: "I am not signing that".
- 22. David: "Go find someone you gave \$20,000 to sign it.
- 23. David: "I got nothing".
- 24. David: "I am not a fool".

Figure 5. Sentences in James and David's Narrative about Relationship with FEMA

TABLE 6

Dialectical Structure of James and David's Narrative about their Relationship with FEMA Representatives

I Unjust	II Worthy	III Unworthy	IV Attempts	V Suspicion	VI Refusal	VII Directives
1						
2						
3						
4	5	6	7	8		
			9			
			10			
			11			
			12			
			13			
14						
			15			
			16		17	
					18	19
						20
					21	22
23						24

Inclusion..... Seclusion

Conventionality.Uniqueness

Again, following Conville's (1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) method, I read each sentence starting with number one in the list; then asked starting with sentence number two, "Is this sentence the same or different in meaning or significance from

previous sentences"? With regard to sentences 1 and 2 in Figure 5, the answer was they were similar in my judgment. Likewise, I asked if sentence 3 was similar or different than sentence 1 and sentence 2. It was similar to sentence 1 and 2. Therefore, it was placed in the column with sentence 1 and 2. Sentence 4 was similar to sentences 1, 2, and 3. Sentence 5 in my judgment was different. Therefore, it was placed in Column II (Table 6). Each sentence was placed in a column by asking if it were similar to or different from all previous sentences. As before, sentences that had similarities were placed in the same columns. Next, the columns were given names according to common significance among the sentences placed in each column. Sentences 1, 2, 3, 4, 14 and 23 (Figure 5) indicated what James and David perceived to be unjust with regards to FEMA. Therefore, Column I was labeled *unjust* (Table 6). This same process resulted in placing similar sentence 5 in Column II which was named *worthy*. Sentence 5 showed pride in work. Column III showed that others were unworthy because they did not work (Table 6). Therefore, Column III was labeled *unworthy*. Column IV showed attempts to talk to James and David. Thus Column IV was named *attempts* containing similar sentences 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, and 16 (Table 6). Sentence 8 was different and placed in Column V which was named *suspicion*. Sentences 17, 18 and 21 were placed in Column VI which was named *refusal* because the sentences revealed James's and David's refusal to talk with comply with FEMA representatives' requests (Table 6). Column VII contained sentences 19, 20, 22 and 24 which were labeled *directives* because James and David were making direct requests for FEMA representatives to leave (Table 6).

The external dialectic of stability and change was manifested in the narrative as conventionality-uniqueness (Table 6, Column II & Column III); the external dialectic of integration-separation was manifested as inclusion-seclusion (Table 6, Column IV &

Column 7). Both were manifested between James and David and the larger social order represented by FEMA representatives. Column IV (Table 6, inclusion) shows FEMA representatives' attempts to include them in the list of victims who signed survey forms stating FEMA had helped them after Hurricane Katrina; and Column VI (seclusion) shows James's and David's refusal to sign because they had not received help.

Column II (Table 6, conventionality) shows that James and David work to help themselves in contrast with others in their group of fishermen who did not work after Hurricane Katrina to help themselves (Column III-uniqueness). James and David seemed surprised at members of their group who they thought valued justice, hard work, and self-sufficiency as they did. James and David distinguished themselves from others in their group who did not work because work ethic and self-sufficiency were important to them as indicated in the thematic analysis. In Column I (Table 6) labeled *unjust*, they gave reasons that they refused to sign and showed the injustices in the FEMA system; those who worked did not receive help. However, those who did not work did receive help.

Sentences in Sarah and Jacob's narrative also reflected dialectical oppositions.

1. Jacob: We used the generator for the pump to start cleaning early.
2. Sarah: Yea. We did use the generator and pressure washer.
3. Sarah: Everything was fine.
4. Sarah: We had customers before we had electricity [after Katrina]
5. Sarah: They would come to check on us.
6. Sarah: They would buy shrimp out of the chest freezers on the porch.
7. Jacob: We had a lady that come the second day, didn't she?
8. Sarah: Yeah, a couple of days after the storm [customer came].
9. Sarah: She bought some shrimp.
10. Sarah: I didn't want people to come see our mess.
11. Sarah: I didn't like people to come to see the debris and the mud.
12. Sarah: That's why we started cleaning up right away.
13. Sarah: We don't want people to see that even though we don't have anything to do with it.
14. Sarah: We wanted to start cleaning it up and making it presentable again.
15. Sarah: We feel self sufficient.
16. Sarah: We take care of our own as much as we can.

- 17. Sarah: As far as FEMA; we didn't go ask for anything.
- 18. Sarah: I did fill out the application that if there is some there that is available, we would take it.
- 19. Sarah: But I felt like we could do it on our own, without their help.
- 20. Sarah: Had I lost everything, it would have been a different story.

Figure 6. Sentences in Sarah and Jacob's Narrative about Relationship with customers

TABLE 7

Dialectical Structure of Sarah and Jacob's Narrative about Their Relationship with Customers

I Cleaning	II Customers	III Discomfort	IV Self-Sufficient	V Circumstances
1				
2				
3	4			
	5			
	6			
	7			
	8			
	9	10		
		11		
12		13		
14			15	
			16	
			17	18
			19	20

Inclusion.....Seclusion

Again, following Conville's (1978, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) method to analyze narratives, I read each sentence starting with number one in the list; then asked starting with sentence number two, "Is this sentence the same or different in meaning or significance from previous sentences"? Sentences 1 and 2 in Figure 6 are similar. Therefore, they were both placed in Column I (Table 7). Likewise, I asked if sentence 3 was similar or different than sentence 1 and sentence 2. Sentence 3 was similar to sentence 1 and 2. Therefore, it was placed in Column I with sentences 1 and 2. Sentence

4 was different than sentences 1, 2, and 3. Therefore, it was placed in Column II (Table 7). Sentence 5 in my judgment was similar to sentence 4. Therefore, it was placed in Column II. Each sentence was placed in a column by asking if it were similar to or different from all previous sentences. As before, sentences that had similarities were placed in the same columns. Next, the columns were given names according to common significance among the sentences in each column. Sentences 1, 2, 3, 12, and 14 (Figure 6) pertained to cleaning. Therefore, Column I was labeled *cleaning* (Table 7). Sentences 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (Figure 6) were similar in that they were about customers. They were placed in Column II which was labeled *customers* (Table 7). Sentences 10, 11, and 13 (Figure 6) indicated discomfort of Sarah and Jacob when customers came to their shop before it was cleaned. Therefore, Column III in was labeled *discomfort* (Table 7). Sentences 15, 16, 17, and 19 (Figure 6) were placed in Column IV (Table 7) because they were similar. Column IV was labeled *self-sufficient* because it contained sentences pertaining to Jacob and Sarah's self-sufficiency (Table 7). Sentences 18 and 20 (Figure 6) were placed in Column V which was labeled *circumstances* because the sentences describe under what circumstances they would accept help.

There was an inclusion-seclusion (Table 7, Column II & Column III) dialectical opposition manifested in Jacob and Sarah's relationship with their customers. Column II describes actions of customers after Hurricane Katrina had flooded Sarah and Jacob's seafood shop. Column III describes Sarah's discomfort with customers seeing her shop in disarray. The dialectic of integration and separation was manifested externally as inclusion-seclusion between Sarah and Jacob and the larger social unit of customers. The dialectical opposition was between Sarah and Jacob and their customers.

Answering Research Question #3

Research question #3 asks how dialectical oppositions are manifested in interpersonal communication. “Narrative depicts relationships and, thus, provides a unique means of observing the interpersonal communication that constitutes them” (Conville, 1998, p. 147). In this research, narratives depicted relationships and provided a unique means of observing interpersonal communication. Dialectical analysis gave the means to detect dialectical oppositions at work in the described relationships in narratives.

Dialectical oppositions are listed in Table 8 along with the manifestations in interpersonal communication. All three of the dialectics (stability-change, expression-privacy, integration-separation) recognized by Baxter (1994) were observed in this research. The dialectic of stability-change was manifested as conventionality-uniqueness, the dialectic of expression-privacy was manifested as revelation-concealment, and the dialectic of integration-separation was manifested as inclusion-seclusion and as an indigenous, overarching dialectical tension named approach-resistance. The dialectical oppositions were manifested in interpersonal communication (Table 8).

TABLE 8*Dialectical Oppositions in Narratives and How they were Manifested in Interpersonal Communication*

I Narratives by:	II Relationships	III Dialectic of:	IV Dialectical Oppositions	V Interpersonal Communication
1. Mary/Richard	1a. Shrimpers vs 1b. Anne	Stability- Change	Conventionality- Uniqueness	Sister-teasing Anne-Denial
	1c. Anne vs 1d. shrimpers	Separation- Integration	Seclusion- Inclusion	Anne's denial Anne's meeting
	1e. Anne vs 1f. Parents	Integration- Separation	Inclusion- Seclusion	reporting similarities reporting differences
2. James/David	2a. Reporters vs 2b. James/David	Expression- Privacy	Revelation- Concealment	Reporters attempts J/D's resistance
	2c. Reporters vs 2d. James/David	Separation- Concealment	Seclusion- Inclusion	differences in reporters differences in self
	2e. Reporters vs 2f. James/David	Integration- Separation	*Approach- Resistance	Reporters' attempts J/D's inaction
3. James/David	3a. FEMA vs 3b. James/David	Integration- Separation	Inclusion- Seclusion	FEMA attempts J/D's resistance
	3c. James/David vs 3d. Group	Stability- Change	Conventionality- Uniqueness	Describe Self Describe other
	4a. Customers vs 4b. Sarah/Jacob	Integration- Separation	Inclusion- Seclusion	Customers' attempts S/J's resistance

Table 8 shows who was telling the narratives (Table 8, Column I), the individuals in the relationship (Table 8, Column II), the category of dialectics (Table 8, Column III), the dialectical oppositions that were manifested (Table 8, Column IV), and how oppositions were manifested in interpersonal communication (Table 8, Column V).

Column I was labeled *Narrative* and shows who was telling the narrative. Column II was

labeled *Relationships* and shows whom the oppositions were between. Column III was labeled *Dialectic Of* showing the category of dialectics. Within the dialectic category were dialectical oppositions which are represented in Column IV, labeled *Dialectical Oppositions*. Column V was labeled *Interpersonal Communication* and shows how the dialectical oppositions were manifested in interpersonal communication.

Table 8 can be read down to see information pertaining to the column heading or can be read across starting with Column II to see who in the relationship (Table 8, Column II, Relationships) corresponds with which dialectic (Table 8, Column III, Dialectic of), which dialectic corresponds to which dialectical opposition (Table 8, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions), and how each opposition was manifested in interpersonal communication (Table 8, Column V, Interpersonal Communication). For example, when reading Sarah and Jacob's narrative (Column I, Narratives by) across, the relationship is between their *customers* (Table 8, Column I, Narratives by, 4a) and *Sarah and Jacob* (Table 8, Column II, Relationships, 4b). In Column III, the dialectic of *integration* (Table 8, Column III, Dialectic of, 4a) corresponds with customers because customers were trying to integrate; in Column III, the dialectic of *separation* (Table 8, Column III, Dialectic of, 4b) corresponds with Sarah and Jacob because they wanted to remain separate from customers for a while after Hurricane Katrina. In Column IV, *inclusion* (Table 8, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 4a) is the dialectical opposition corresponding to integration and customers while *seclusion* (Table 8, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 4b) is the dialectical opposition corresponding with separation and Jacob and Sarah, and in Column V, *customers attempts* (Table 8, Column V, Interpersonal Communication, 4a) to integrate correspond to inclusion and integration while *Sarah and Jacob's resistance* (Table 8, Column V, Interpersonal Communication,

4b) correspond to seclusion (Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions) and separation (Column III, Dialectic of). Jacob and Sarah (Table 8, Column I, Narratives by) described the actions of their customers and their responses to their actions which manifested the dialectical opposition of inclusion-seclusion. In table 8 each narrative (Column I, Narratives by) corresponds with the person in the relationship (Table 8, Column II, Relationships, a & b). Each person in the relationship (Table 8, Column II, Relationships, a & b) corresponds with a dialectic (Table 8, Column III, Dialectic of, a & b), with a dialectical opposition (Table 8, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, a & b) and with a manifestation (Table 8, Column V, Interpersonal Communication, a & b)

Answering Research Question #4 and Research Question #5

Research question #4 asked what aspects of identity were recognized using a dialectical lens and research question #5 asked how identity gaps were revealed. Identity gaps, which are aspects of identity, were revealed in the dialectical analysis as were dialectical oppositions.

Through social interaction individuals create realities about how they perceive who they are (their identities). In this research, participants created realities about how they perceive who they are. Their realities created by interpersonal communication were observed when dialectical tensions including dialectical oppositions and identity gaps were revealed in dialectical analysis.

Dialectical oppositions and identity gaps are aspects of identity. Dialectical oppositions and identity gaps were revealed in the narrative-dialectical-structural-analysis in the structure of the grid. Hecht (1993) and Jung and Hecht (2004) described identity gaps among frames of identity in which inconsistencies between frames of identity cause identity gaps. Dialectical analysis exposed nine identity gaps in the four

analyzed narratives (Table 9); four gaps between relational and personal frames, one gap between personal and enactment frame, three gaps between relational enactment frames, and one gap between personal and enactment frames.

In table 9, Column I was labeled *Narrative* and shows who was telling the narrative. Column II was labeled *Relationships* listing who was in each relationship described in the narratives, Column III was labeled *Identity Gaps* and shows the identity gaps revealed in the dialectical analysis, Column IV was labeled *Dialectical Oppositions* and shows the oppositions that were revealed in the dialectical analysis. Column V was labeled *Interpersonal Communication* and shows how the dialectical oppositions and identity gaps were manifested in interpersonal communication.

Table 9 can be read down to see information pertaining to the column heading or across starting with Column II to see who was in the relationship (Table 9, Column II, Relationships). Starting with Column II, a's line up with corresponding information all the way across the table; b's line up across the table, c's line up across the table, etc. For example, the person listed in Column II (Relationships) corresponds with the identity gap in line with the person (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps); the identity gap corresponds to the dialectical opposition in line with it (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions), and each opposition corresponds to how it was manifested in interpersonal communication (Table 9, Column V, Interpersonal Communication).

TABLE 9*Identity Gaps Exposed in Dialectical Analysis*

I Narratives by:	II Relationships	III Identity Gaps	IV Dialectical Oppositions	V Interpersonal Communication
1. Mary/Richard	1a. Shrimpers vs 1b. Anne	Ascribed relational/ personal	Convention ality- Uniqueness	Sister-teasing Anne-Denial
	1c. Anne vs 1d. Shrimpers	Personal/ Enactment	Seclusion- Inclusion	Anne's denial Anne's meeting
	1e. Anne vs 1f. Parents	Enactment/ Ascribed Relational	Inclusion- Seclusion	reporting similarities reporting differences
2. James/David	2a. Reporters vs 2b. James/ David	Relational/ Enactment	Revelation- Concealment	Reporters attempts James/David's resistance
	2c. Reporters vs 2d. James/ David	Perceived Ascribed relational/ Personal	Seclusion- Inclusion	differences in reporters differences in self
	2e. Reporters vs 2f. James/ David	Relational/ Enactment	*Approach- Resistance	Reporters' attempts James/David's resistance
3. James/David	3a. FEMA vs 3b. James/ David	Ascribed relational/ Personal	Inclusion- Seclusion	FEMA attempts James/David's refusals
	3c. James/ David vs. 3d. Group	Personal/ Communal	Convention- ality- Uniqueness	Describe Self Describe other
	4a. Customers vs 4b. Sarah/ Jacob	Perceived ascribed relational/ Personal	Inclusion- Seclusion	Customers' attempts Sarah/Jacob's resistance

When reading Mary and Richard's narrative (Column I, Narratives by) describing their daughter, Anne's relationship with shrimpers (Column II, Relationships, 1a & 1b) reading across while lining up rows horizontally, *Shrimpers* (Table 9, Column II, Relationships, 1a) lines up with *ascribed relational identity* (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 1a), which lines up with *conventionality* (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 1a) which lines up with *sister teasing* (Table 9, Column V, Interpersonal Communication, 1a).

In Mary and Richard's narrative (Column I, Narratives by, 1) about Anne's relationship with shrimpers (Table 9, Column II, Relationships, 1a & 1b) there were identity gaps between the ascribed level in the relational identity frame and personal identity frame (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 1a & 1b), between personal and enactment identity frames (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 1c & 1d), and between enactment and ascribed relational identity frames (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 1e & 1f).

When Anne expressed her desire to distance herself from shrimpers, she displayed an aspect of her identity. She saw herself as different from family members who are shrimpers (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 1a, conventionality & 1b, uniqueness). Her identity is threatened when her sister tries to categorize her as a part of the group of shrimpers even though her sister was teasing her (Table 9, Column V, Interpersonal Communication, 1a). Anne distinguished herself by denying that she would date or marry a shrimper (Table 9, Column V, Interpersonal Communication, 1b).

In Anne's relationship with shrimpers, the conventionality-uniqueness contradiction (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 1a & 1b) corresponded to an identity gap between Anne's ascribed relational frame of identity (the identity her sister

ascribed) and her personal frame (her self-concept) [Table 9, Column IV, Identity Gaps, 1a & 1b]. The conventional thing to do in Anne's family was to work in the seafood business. She described herself as unique by denying she would date or marry a shrimper. The dialectical analysis corresponded to the dialectical opposition, seclusion-inclusion (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 1c & 1d) and an identity gap between Anne's personal frame (her self-concept) and enactment frame (the act of dating a shrimper) [Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 1c & 1d]. Anne met a shrimper who she considered dating. When Anne met the shrimper, she was forced to decide whether to continue her denial that she would date or marry a shrimper distancing herself from shrimpers or to join the group by dating a shrimper. She decided to date the shrimper acting in contrast to how she described herself, which revealed a gap in her personal frame of identity and her enacted frame of identity (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 1c, personal, 1d, enactment). Her decision to date the shrimper changed the course of the narrative and her identity. She became a part of the group she had denied she would join. After she met the shrimper, she began to perform tasks that reflected the identity of a shrimper (Table 9, Column III, Identity gap, 1d, enactment). She was acting in contrast to how she said she felt about shrimpers. Through her actions dating the shrimper and performing the tasks, she showed her personal identity changed. She became what she declared she would not become; a shrimper.

A third dialectical opposition between inclusion-seclusion was revealed in the dialectical analysis of Anne's relationship with shrimpers (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 1e, inclusion & 1f, seclusion). The analysis revealed an identity gap between the enactment frame and the ascribed level of the relational frame of identity (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 1e, enactment & 1f, ascribed relational)

corresponding with the inclusion-seclusion dialectical oppositions (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 1e, inclusion & 1f, seclusion). Anne was secluded from the group of shrimpers by her boyfriend's parents. The inclusion-seclusion dialectical opposition indicated the third identity gap between Anne's enactment frame of identity and Anne's ascribed relational frame by the shrimper's parents (Table 9, Columns III, Identity Gaps & Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 1e & 1f). Anne performed tasks that shrimpers perform like baiting traps. Mary described the shrimper's parents saying they doubted that Anne would perform the tasks that would make her a shrimper (Table 9, Column V, Interpersonal Communication, 1f). They said they later saw Anne performing the tasks. She contradicted the shrimper's parents' ascription causing an identity gap between the ascribed relational frame and the enactment frame (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 1e, inclusion, 1f, enactment).

In James and David's narrative (Table 9, Column I, Narratives by) about their relationship with reporters (Table 9, Column II, Relationships), identity gaps between relational and enactment frames (Table 9, Column III, Identity gaps, 2a & 2b), between perceived ascribed identity in the relational frame and personal frame (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 2c & 2d) and between relational and enactment frames of identity (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 2e & 2f) were manifested in interpersonal communication and revealed in the dialectical analysis. The gap between the relational and enactment frames of identity (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 2a & 2b) and dialectical opposition revelation-concealment (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 2a & 2b) was manifested in interpersonal communication when reporters attempted to talk by asking questions and when James and David refused to communicate by resisting. They said "no" and ran inside. The gap in the personal identity frame of

James and David and the *perceived* ascribed identity of reporters was manifested when James and David described how they defined themselves compared to how they *perceived* reporters defined them (Table 9, Column III, 2c, *perceived* ascribed relational & 2d, personal). Jung and Hecht (2004) would explain an identity gap between the personal frame and the ascribed relational frame as a gap between the way individuals define themselves in contrast to the way others define them. The third identity gap and dialectical opposition were manifested in James and David's narrative about reporters as a gap and opposition that encompassed the entire narrative. In other words, in the dialectical analysis there was a noticeable division manifested in interpersonal communication as reporters' attempted to communicate with James and David and their resistance (Table 9, Column V, Interpersonal Communication, 2e & 2f) which revealed identity gaps (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 2e, relational & 2f, enactment) and dialectical oppositions (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 2e, approach & 2f, resistance.)

In James and David's narrative (Table 9, Column I, Narratives by) about their relationship with FEMA representatives (Table 9, Column II, Relationships), identity gaps between the ascribed relational frame and personal frame (Table 9, Column III, Identity gaps, 3a & 3b) and between the personal and communal frames (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 3c & 3d) were revealed in the dialectical analysis. There was a gap in the personal identity of James and David and an ascribed relational identity (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 3a & 3b) that corresponds with the dialectical opposition between inclusion-seclusion (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 3a & 3b). Attempts made by FEMA representatives to convince James and David to sign showed an ascribed relational identity whereas their refusal showed a personal identity.

James and David saw the attempt as a threat to their self-esteem because they asked representatives to leave and David declared defensively, "I am not a fool."

In their relationship with FEMA representatives, there was also a gap in the personal identity frame of James and David and their communal identity frame (Table 9, Column III, Identity Gaps, 3c & 3d) the gap corresponds with dialectical oppositions conventionality-uniqueness (Table 9, Column IV, Dialectical Oppositions, 3c, conventionality,& 3d, uniqueness). Unlike them, group members were not working. James stated, "I don't want somebody who is laying around doing nothin' being equal with me." He did not want to be associated with members of his group of fishermen who did not work and who received help unjustly. The identity gap between the personal frame and the communal frame indicated that James and David define themselves in contrast to the way they define their group.

In Jacob and Sarah's narrative (Table 9, Column I, Narratives by) about their relationship with customers (Table 9, Column II, Relationships, 4a & 4b), an identity gap between perceived ascribed relational frame and personal frame of identity (Table 9, Column III, Identity gaps, 4a & 4b) was revealed in the dialectical analysis.

The dialectical oppositions of inclusion-seclusion (Table 9, Column IV, 4a & 4b) corresponded to the identity gap between Sarah and Jacob's personal identity and their *perceived* ascribed relational identity (Table 9, Column III, 4a & 4b). They thought customers would have a negative opinion of them if they saw their shop in disarray even though Hurricane Katrina caused the damage and filth. Because they value cleanliness and self-sufficiency, customers seeing the shop in disarray caused an identity gap between the way they perceived their customers defined them and the way they defined themselves.

Answering Research Question #6 and Research Question #7

Research question #6 asks how victims cope with dialectical oppositions and research question #7 asks how victims cope with gaps in identity. Participants coped with dialectical oppositions and identity gaps through interpersonal communication and their actions. Table 10 shows dialectical oppositions, identity gaps and coping strategies. They coped by differentiation, compliance, withholding information, by external attribution, passing and negativism.

TABLE 10

Strategies used to Cope with Dialectical Oppositions and Identity Gaps in Narratives

I Narratives by:	II Relationships	III Identity Gaps	IV Dialectical Oppositions	V Coping Strategies
Mary/Richard	Shrimpers vs Anne	Ascribed relational/ personal	Conventionality- Uniqueness	Differentiation
	Anne vs shrimpers	Personal/ Enactment	Seclusion- Inclusion	Compliance
	Anne vs Parents	Enactment/ Ascribed Relational	Inclusion- Seclusion	Compliance
James/David	Reporters vs James/David	Relational/ Enactment	Revelation- Concealment	Withholding information
	Reporters vs James/David	Perceived ascribed relational/ Personal	Seclusion- Inclusion	Differentiation External Attribution
	Reporters vs James/David	Relational/ Enactment	*Approach- Resistance	Passing
James/David	FEMA vs James/David	Ascribed relational/ Personal	Inclusion- Seclusion	Negativism
	James/David Group	Personal/ Communal	Conventionality- Uniqueness	Differentiation
Sarah/Jacob	Customers vs Sarah/Jacob	Perceived ascribed relational/ Personal	Inclusion- Seclusion	External attribution

* overarching dialectical opposition

Breakwell (1986) said individuals cope with threats to identity by expunging threats or by moving to a new social position. According to Breakwell (1986) interpersonal coping strategies involve negotiation with others. Individuals use isolation, negativism, passing, or compliance to negotiate their identities in order to cope with threats to identity (Breakwell, 1986). Isolation is removing oneself from others, negativism is outright conflict with anyone who challenges identity, passing is removing self from threatening positions, and compliance is doing what is expected (Breakwell, 1986). Tajfel (1978) called passing the “exit option.” Goffman (1959) would say compliance is playing expected social roles. People attribute negative evaluations to outside, external causes rather than to self or internal causes in order to maintain positive self-esteem (Kelley, 1973).

The dialectical analysis of Mary and Richard’s narrative regarding Anne’s relationship with shrimpers revealed Anne used differentiation to cope with the threat of being associated with shrimpers. In her eyes, she was different so she differentiated (Table 10, Column V, differentiation). Anne used strategies to cope with the oppositions by comparing herself to others who had conventionally dated and married shrimpers. She distanced herself by communicating her different views. Anne compared herself to shrimpers, others in her family, and was using an “othering” strategy by giving herself a more positive identity than her family in her view at that time. Later, however, she made the choice to join the group by dating a shrimper and later performing tasks associated with the occupation which showed the connection to the group (Table 10, Column V, Coping Strategies, Compliance). Therefore, she coped with the tension by differentiating herself at first but later the opposition was alleviated by dating a shrimper and by performing tasks or playing roles like the group (Table 10, Column V). Anne used

compliance to cope with the threats which were revealed in identity gaps (Table 10, Column V).

The dialectical analyses of James and David's narratives revealed that they moved to new social positions by distinguishing themselves from others (reporters and FEMA) and they expunged the threat by refusing to take requested actions and by departing or asking others to depart. Distinguishing themselves from others enabled them to move to a new social position from one of perceived powerlessness to one of power when they refused to take actions requested by the more powerful reporters and FEMA representatives.

Reporters threatened the self-esteem of James and David because they were prepared while James and David were not prepared and reporters were clean while James and David were not. James and David attributed the lack of preparation needed to answer questions to the fact that they were "caught off-guard" and they attributed their dirtiness to working all night. The dialectical tension of inclusion-seclusion captured their plight. James and David coped with the tension (and the threat to self-esteem) by making attributions to reasons out of their control (external causes) rather than by labeling themselves as unknowledgeable or dirty people (internal causes) (Table 10, Column V). They were dirty because of work not because they are generally dirty; they would have known the answers if prepared rather than being caught unprepared. The situation was to blame for their being unprepared and for their dirtiness; not themselves.

James and David coped by saying no and by removing themselves from the situation as revealed in Column V (Table 10, passing). James and David perceived that reporters thought they looked "like idiots" when caught off-guard and asked questions they could not answer even though James and David saw themselves as knowledgeable.

Their self-esteem and, therefore, their identity was threatened by reporters who approached them when they were unprepared. They had not been given the opportunity to prepare for the interview or to clean and dress for the interview. They handled the threat to identity by avoiding the situation (Table 10, Column V, passing). They refused to talk and they removed themselves from the situation by running away so they would not be humiliated which answers research question #6 concerning coping with dialectical oppositions and research question #7 concerning coping with gaps in identity. James and David coped by refusing to answer (withholding information), by external attribution, and by removing themselves from the threats (passing) [Table 10, Column V].

Ways they coped with dialectical oppositions and identity gaps were also recognized in James and David's narrative about their experiences with FEMA representatives. The attempts by representatives to persuade James and David to sign forms were insulting to them because they had not received the help that FEMA representatives claimed. They coped by negativism which was an outright conflict and by differentiation which was distinguishing themselves from others (Table 10, Column 5, negativism, differentiation). The attempt was a threat to their identities because as indicated in the thematic analysis, James and David value working for themselves as shown in the thematic analysis (Table 1).

To cope with threats to identity in the narrative about FEMA representatives, James and David (1) distinguished themselves from others who did not work to protect their self-esteem because they value work ethic and self-sufficiency, (2) refused to sign forms stating they received help, (3) used examples to justify their claims that FEMA did not help them, (4) asked representatives to leave, and (5) David declared that he is no fool to show he could not be coerced; he had the power to refuse.

Jacob and Sarah handled the threat to identity by cleaning quickly (removing the source of the threat) and by explaining that they value cleanliness. By explaining that circumstances caused the filth (attribution) and working to change the situation, Sarah and Jacob protected their self-esteem (Table 10, Column 5, external attribution).

The dialectical analysis revealed dialectical oppositions, identity gaps, and coping strategies. Therefore, aspects of participants' identities in their relationships were exposed. Nine dialectical oppositions and nine identity gaps were revealed in the four analyzed narratives. There were five inclusion-seclusion, two conventionality-uniqueness, one revelation-concealment, and one approach-resistance dialectical oppositions. All oppositions in the analyses were external manifestations; they were about relationships between pairs or individual participants and a larger social unit. All three of the dialectics described by Baxter (1994) were noticed in the study (Dialectic of Integration-Separation, Dialectic of Stability-Change, and Dialectic of Expression-Privacy) manifested externally as inclusion-seclusion, conventionality-uniqueness, and revelation-concealment. There were four gaps of identity between personal and relational frames of identity, three gaps between the enactment and relational frames of identity, one gap between the personal and enactment frame of identity and one identity gap between the personal and communal frame of identity revealed (Table 9).

Research question #1 was answered in thematic analysis. Additionally, research questions #1 through #7 were answered with dialectical analysis of narratives. Narratives about relationships were analyzed revealing how dialectical oppositions and identity gaps were manifested in interpersonal communication. Identities of Hurricane Katrina victims were threatened by discontinuity, threats to self-esteem, and by threats to efficacy. In their narratives they revealed what they saw as threatening and they revealed how they

were able to cope with the threats to their livelihoods, threats to their housing, and threats to their identities.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study (1) affirms that identity is constructed and maintained through interpersonal communication; (2) that individuals strive to maintain or to reconstruct a positive identity; (3) exposes a connection between crisis and identity by looking at crisis from an interpersonal communication perspective; (4) broadens the meaning of crisis communication to include interpersonal communication aspects; and (5) contributes to our understanding of the role of identity in crisis.

Both thematic analysis and dialectical analysis revealed aspects of identity in crisis situations. Conville's (1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) narrative-dialectical-structural procedure of analyzing narratives proved useful in analyzing crisis narratives to reveal answers to all seven research questions. Thematic analysis and dialectical analysis revealed how narratives exposed crisis victims' changed identities; dialectical analysis revealed what dialectical dimensions were revealed in crisis victims' narratives, revealed how dialectical oppositions and identity gaps were found in interpersonal communication in narratives, and the analysis showed how individuals coped with dialectical oppositions and identity gaps.

Based on findings, this research expanded dialectical and identity research in several ways. This study (1) revealed dialectical oppositions as well as identity gaps using Conville's (1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) narrative-dialectical-structural method, (2) revealed dialectical tensions that were manifested between individuals and larger social units, (3) revealed that some coping strategies were unique to this study, (4) revealed an additional level to the relational frame of identity and, (5) revealed a unique overarching dialectical tension (Table 9). These expansions of dialectical and identity

research are described in more detail below. First, definitions of crisis and identity from an interpersonal perspective are shared.

In this research identity was broadly defined as a changing concept of self that varies with life's circumstances and with one's interaction with others. This definition fit the context of this study and applies to many other contexts. The definition encompasses self concept (identity), life's circumstances (including crisis) and interaction with others (communication).

Millar and Beck's (2004) definition, "crisis is associated with the loss of control, with the breaks from the routine, with the turning point (or threshold) from order to disorder" (p. 163) is also applicable. The loss of control in this study was referred to as a threat to efficacy, breaks in routine were referred to as breaks in continuity, and turning points from order to disorder represented the public crisis itself (Hurricane Katrina). However, Millar and Beck's (2004) definition omits threats to self-esteem that can also result from crisis or can motivate crisis. Based on findings in this research, crisis can be defined as a personal or public situation or event that signifies a turning point that causes a break in continuity, threat to self-esteem, or threat to efficacy. There are many kinds of personal and public crisis with many levels of severity which this definition encompasses.

Dialectical and Identity Research Expanded

Dialectical Oppositions and Identity Gaps Revealed

The first expansion focuses on the unusual findings revealed using Conville's (1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) narrative-dialectical-structural method for analyzing narratives. The method has revealed dialectical oppositions in relationships in past analyses (1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b). However, in this study identity gaps as well

as dialectical oppositions were revealed using the method (Table 9). Finding identity gaps when using a dialectical method helped confirm Hecht's (1993) and Jung & Hecht's (2004) claims that identity is negotiated dialectically.

Conville (1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b), Baxter (1988), Baxter and Simon (1993), Baxter and Montgomery (1998), and Montgomery and Baxter (1998) refer to dialectical tensions in relationships. Identity gaps are manifestations of dialectical tensions in identity negotiation while dialectical oppositions are manifestations of dialectical tension in relationship negotiation (Fig. 7). This is not to say that identity is not manifested in interpersonal communication in relationships; both dialectical oppositions and identity gaps are manifested in interpersonal communication in relationships. However, one focus of concern (relationship or identity) may be more prevalent than the other in particular *contexts* and according to particular *content*.

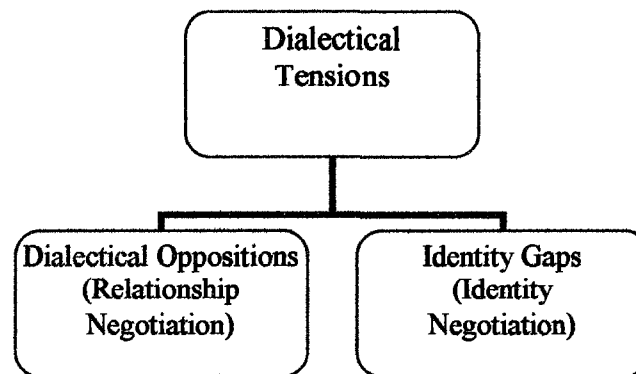


Figure 7. Dialectical Tensions in Relationship Negotiation and in Identity Negotiation

“Self knowledge can only be obtained through interpersonal processes and indeed implicitly involves other people” (Baunmeister, 1998). Identity is a social process constructed and negotiated through interaction (Cooley, 1964; Cushman & Cahn, 1985;

Hecht, 1993; Jung & Hecht, 2004). Relationships are “created, constituted and sustained” in communication (Conville, 1998b, p. 52). Based on findings in this research, relationships and identity are changing interactive processes of communication that are influenced by what has taken place in the past based on particular social, economic, cultural, and personal experiences. Dialectical tensions (dialectical oppositions and identity gaps) were manifested in relationships.

Both relationships and identity are constructed through negotiation and maintained in relationships by the process of communicating. However, in some dialogue, the relationship itself is at stake or the focus of concern; in others identity may be at stake or of concern. In other words, through communication, individuals may strive to negotiate or maintain their relationship or they may strive to negotiate or maintain a positive identity or both. It is necessary to look at the context and the content to know whether the relationship or identity or both are the important issues in particular conversations.

One way to decide if a relationship is at stake or identity is at stake in a particular dialogue, researchers should first look at the relationship itself. Is the relationship a close personal relationship to which the individuals in the relationship are committed? Is the individual committed to the relationship’s survival or is identity the salient issue in a particular context and time and conversation.

Stryker (1987) explained that identity theory claims that “the distribution of identities in the salience hierarchy will reflect the varying level of commitment to the roles underlying the identities” (p. 90). This means that some roles are more important to individuals than others; the more important a role the more committed an individual will be to that role. It makes sense that an individual would want to protect the most

important roles. Which role is threatened in a particular context (the role as defined by a particular relationship or a role pertaining to identity)? Researchers are challenged to look at evidence for relationship salience and identity salience when studying dialectical tensions. Is the relationship more important or is the identity more important in the context and content of the narrative?

In this research, in the particular conversation below, participants' relationships with customers are important. However, judging by the context and content, the dialogue in the following example was more about Sarah's identity as self-sufficient while running a clean, presentable shop than it was about her relationship with customers. Therefore, in this example, the content tells us Sarah was discussing what she did (cleaning up) to preserve her positive identity which would help her continue a positive relationship with customers.

Sarah: I didn't want people to come and see our mess. I didn't like people to come to see the debris and the mud. That's why we started cleaning up right away. We don't want people to see that, even though we didn't have anything to do with it. We wanted to start cleaning it up and making it presentable again. But yeah, I agree with that; that we, that we do feel self-sufficient. We take care of our own as much as we can. As far as FEMA, we didn't go ask for anything.

James and David discussed their relationship with news reporters in one analyzed narrative (Table 4) and their relationship with FEMA representatives in another (Table 5). In the following example, the content tells us that David was insulted by the way he was treated. He felt he was treated as if he were a fool by being asked to sign a form stating he had received help from FEMA when he had not. We know from the "work ethic" theme, revealed in thematic analysis, that David valued working to help himself and his family rather than accepting help from others. The importance of self-sufficiency was evident in the content of the messages in the "needs and losses" theme. James and

David had relationships with FEMA representatives. However, judging from the context and the content of the narrative, negotiating or maintaining a positive identity was more important than maintaining a positive relationship with FEMA representatives.

David: I had one come down. He; I heard him talk; wanted me to sign a thang. She was doing a survey on FEMA money; wanted me to sign some saying how helpful they were, how much they got me straightened out, how much they had done. I said, "You didn't help me none". [FEMA representative said] "Well, I want you to tell how good we done, how happy you are." [James said] "I'm Not! I am not signing nothing; you need to get up and leave." I told her she should leave. I am not signing that. Go find someone who you gave \$20,000 to sign it. I got nothing. I am not a fool.

Mary and Richard discussed, not their relationship, but their daughter's relationship with shrimpers. In their narrative, dialectical tensions were revealed (Table 3). Content and context indicated Anne was negotiating her identity by comparing herself to the larger social unit of shrimpers.

Mary: When we first moved back to Alabama, her older sister would tease her and say, "Anne you are going to meet one of them shrimpers over there and probably end up marrying one of them shrimpers or datin' one of them shrimpers." And these are her words, "I will never date no shrimper, I don't want nothin' to do with no shrimper, I don't want nothin' to do with no seafood people," is what she would say.

In this research, the tensions were found between individuals and larger social units; not between individuals in close personal relationships. As shown above, tensions were between participants and customers, FEMA representatives, and shrimpers; all larger social units.

Dialectical Tensions Manifested with Social Units

The second discussed expansion concerns manifestations of dialectical tensions with larger social units rather than between individuals in close relationships. Not only was this research unique in that dialectical oppositions *and* identity gaps were manifested in dialectical analysis, but it was unique in that the oppositions and gaps were manifested

between individuals and larger social units rather than between each other as couples or as a couple and larger social units which are typical in manifestations as revealed in dialectical analysis. Conville (1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b), Baxter (1988), Baxter and Simon (1993), Baxter and Montgomery (1998), and Montgomery and Baxter (1998) looked at dialectical oppositions in couples' relationships.

In all four analyzed narratives in this research, dialectical oppositions and identity gaps were manifested by participants describing their relationships or others' relationships with larger social groups. In dialectical analysis of the narratives about participants' relationships with larger social units, dialectical oppositions as well as identity gaps were exposed between participants and larger social groups. The dialectical analysis revealed the tensions; looking at content, context, and at coping strategies indicated whether relationships or identities were more salient as indicated in interpersonal communication in narratives. In this research, analysis revealed participants used strategies to cope with tensions.

Coping with Dialectical Tensions

A third expansion of research focused on coping with dialectical tensions in relationship negotiation and on coping with dialectical tensions in identity negotiation. Strategies observed by Montgomery and Baxter (1998) to cope with dialectical oppositions in relationships include spiraling inversion, segmentation, balance, integration, recalibration, and reaffirmation. Strategies observed by Breakwell (1993) that individuals used to cope with threats to identity include compliance, passing, negativism and isolation. None of the strategies demonstrated in Montgomery and Baxter's (1998) research were used to cope with dialectical tensions by participants in

this study. Rather, participants used some of the coping strategies Breakwell (1986) had observed individuals use to cope with threats to identity.

In this study, participants coped by differentiation, by withholding information, by external attribution, by compliance, by passing, and by negativism (Table 10). Differentiation, withholding information, and external attribution were not mentioned as strategies by Breakwell (1986) as strategies to cope with threats to identity or by Montgomery and Baxter (1998) as strategies to cope with dialectical tensions.

In Mary and Richard's narrative about Anne's relationship with shrimpers, Anne used differentiation and compliance as coping strategies; in James and David's narrative about their relationship with reporters, they used withholding information, differentiation and external attribution as coping strategies; in James and David's narrative about their relationship with FEMA representatives, they used negativism and differentiation and in Sarah and Jacob's narrative about their relationship with customers they used external attribution as a coping strategy (Table 10). Table 10 displays participants who are telling the stories, displays who are in the relationships in narratives, dialectical oppositions revealed, identity gaps revealed and strategies used to cope with threats to identity. . Participants devised coping strategies to protect their identities which were threatened by representatives of larger social groups in circumstances surrounding their Hurricane Katrina experiences.

Montgomery and Baxter (1998) analyzed coping strategies in dyadic relationships in which the relationship between individuals in a pair was at stake. In this study, participants were not protecting their relationship as a pair; they were protecting their identities in relationships as individuals or as a pair of individuals with larger social groups. And, it seems based on context, content, and coping strategies, and the salience

of or commitment to the relationships, in this study, the goal was not to improve relationships, the goal was to protect identity. Therefore, in this study, identities were at stake. Participants manifested identity gaps and coped with them. The gaps were oppositions between frames of identity. Some of the gaps were manifested because of participants' perceptions of others' ascriptions of them.

Additional Level of Relational Frame of Identity

A fourth expansion pertained to Jung and Hecht's (2004) and Hecht's (1993) relational frame of identity. Their research on identity gaps was expanded when a *perceived ascribed* level of the relational frame of identity surfaced during the dialectical analysis. The general framework of Jung and Hecht (2004) consisted of four frames of identity (personal, relational, enacted and communal).

Personal, enacted and communal frames have only one level while the relational frame is divided into four levels (Jung & Hecht, 2004). Within Jung and Hecht's (2004) relational frame, on the first level "an individual develops and shapes his/her identity partially by internalizing how others view him/her" (p. 266). Jung and Hecht (2004) referred to this level as an ascribed level because it is an identity that is ascribed by someone else. On another level of the relational frame, the relationship frame, an individual identifies self according to relationships with others such as someone's friend, someone's teacher, someone's wife or husband, etc. (Jung & Hecht, 2004). Third, the multiple identity level of the relational frame is an identity that relates to other identities; one that describes multiple relationships with others (Jung & Hecht, 2004). In other words, one can be teacher and student, parent and child, etc. (Jung & Hecht, 2004). A fourth level in the relational frame is the easily identifiable relationship itself (Jung &

Hecht, 2004). A couple itself can have an identifiable relationship such as that of lovers or that of parents of a particular child, for example.

In the ascribed level of the relational frame, Jung and Hecht (2004) do not make the distinction between an explicit, stated ascribed identity and a perceived ascribed identity. However, they did acknowledge that perceptions of ascribed identities exist (Jung & Hecht, 2004).

Because perceptions of ascribed identities; were manifested in narratives in this research, a perceived ascribed level was added as a sublevel of the ascribed level to designate it as different from a stated ascribed identity (Fig. 8). As I see it, there is a needed distinction between a stated ascribed identity and a perceived ascribed identity.

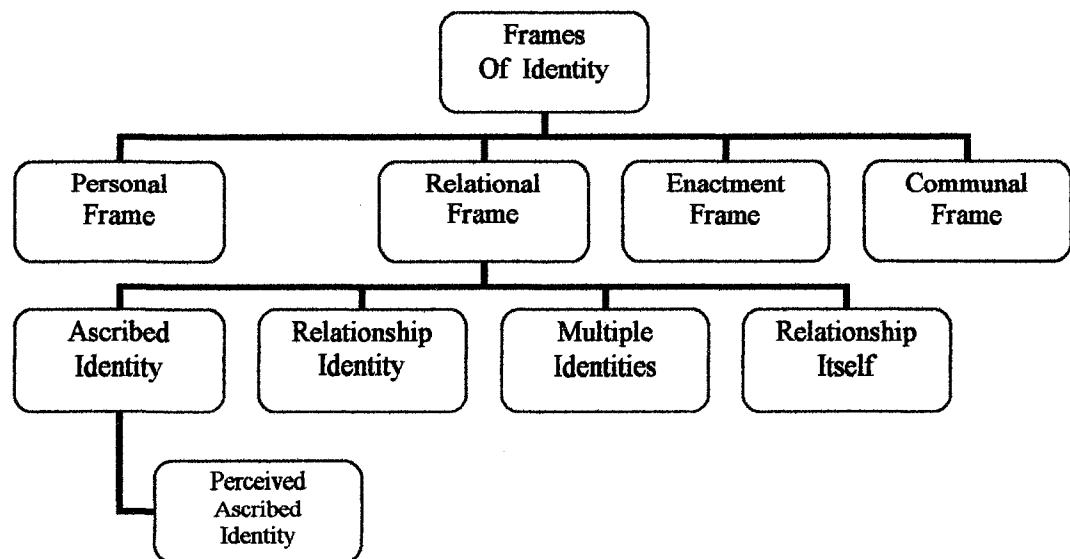


Figure 8. Jung and Hecht's (2004) Frames of Identity including Additional Perceived Ascribed Identity Level

In the newly revealed level of ascribed relational identity in the relational frame, a *perceived* ascribed level is the identity that an individual *perceives* another individual is ascribing to him or her. In Sarah and Jacob's narrative, there was an identity gap

between their personal identity and their perceived ascribed identity (Table 9). The personal identity was how they identified themselves; they saw themselves as clean, organized, and orderly. The perceived ascribed identity was how they perceived that their customers ascribed their identity because their shop was dirty and in disarray after Hurricane Katrina.

One learns about self from others in relationships with others. Shrauger and Shoeneman (1979) looked at whether individuals perceive themselves as similar to or different from how others describe them. They (Shrauger & Shoeneman, 1979) found people's perceptions of self were *not* consistent with how others identified them. However, how people *believed* that others perceived them had an impact on how people perceived themselves (Baumeister, 2000). In other words, people's views of themselves are similar to how they *think* others see them.

People do not generally explicitly say what they think of someone else to that person (Baumeister, 2000). Therefore, people perceive how others see them and construct their identity based on perceptions ascertained from interactions Shrauger and Shoeneman (1979). However, in some cases, people do make statements explicitly stating an identifying characteristic of others to them directly (or to someone else who shares the information). In this case, the identity is explicitly ascribed, whereas if there were no stated ascription the identity would be perceived. Because in this research the dialectical analysis revealed some perceived ascriptions and because it is important for people to learn that perceived ascriptions are not necessarily how people actually identify others, I thought it was important to distinguish between ascribed identities which are explicitly stated and perceived ascribed identities.

The dialectical analysis of James and David's narrative about reporters also manifested a perceived ascribed level of the relational frame of identity (Table 9). They perceived that reporters ascribed a negative identity for them because they were dirty and could not answer questions (perceived ascribed identity). However, they considered themselves knowledgeable when prepared and they considered themselves clean when not working (personal identity). Dialectical tensions indicated that others' views were different from participants' views of themselves. Jung and Hecht (2004) remind us that individuals "seek others' views that are consistent with their own self-concepts" (p. 270). However, individuals usually can not know others' views according to Shrauger and Shoeneman (1979).

An unusual tension was manifested in the narrative-dialectical-structural analysis of one relationship in this research. The unusual dialectical opposition and identity gap were manifested in James and David's narrative with reporters.

Overarching Dialectical Tension

A fifth expansion of research involves a dialectical tension manifested in the analyzed structure of the narrative that was unique to this research. The opposition of approach-resistance (Table 5) and the corresponding identity gap between the relational and enactment frames of identity encompassed the entire narrative in the dialectical structure rather than a small segment of the narrative (Table 9). I named the tension that encompassed the entire narrative around a pivotal center an overarching dialectical tension. The overarching dialectical opposition and the corresponding identity gap are overarching dialectical tensions (Table 9).

Usually, in the structure, a dialectical opposition exists between events within a narrative (represented by two columns of the structure in Table 5); this unique tension

was manifested between the first half of the structure of the narrative and the second half of the structure of the narrative. Approach was represented in the first half of sentences in columns in the structure and resistance was represented in the second half of sentences in columns in the structure around a pivotal center column. The overarching opposition of approach-resistance and the overarching identity gap between the relational frame and the enactment frame were manifested in James and David's narrative about reporters (Table 5). The overarching tensions were observed in the structure of the narrative using the narrative-dialectical-structural method of analysis. However, I have no idea of the importance of the observation. However, it will be interesting to see if looking at narratives in the structure from a more macroscopic lens; will reveal more overarching tensions which encompass entire narratives rather than using only the usual microscopic lens to reveal tensions within narratives.

The field of communication will benefit if further research looks at the methods and results from this research. Findings from qualitative research are not meant to be generalizable to other populations. However, findings are valuable. This study can generate more research using content, methods, and results to test the findings. Below I have suggested using the narrative-dialectical-method to generate more research. However, I would like to see some quantitative research generated and more qualitative studies using different methods based on this research as well. Former research inspired this study as described below.

Future Research

One aim of research is to prompt future research. Hecht's (1993) and Jung and Hecht's (2004) research, Conville's (1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) research, Montgomery and Baxter's (1998) research and Breakwell's (1986, 1993) research were

heuristic in prompting future research with this study. Jung and Hecht (2004) set the ground for this study. They confirmed in their research that identity is constructed by communication, they identified and named frames and levels of identity, and they named inconsistencies in identities, identity gaps. Therefore, this study was conducted with the assumption that identity is constructed through communication, that there are frames of identity with inconsistencies in the four frames of identity causing identity gaps. Jung and Hecht (2004) state, “results [of their study] support theory that suggest the utility of identity gaps as a means for understanding the role of identity in social relations” (p. 265).

Conville’s (1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) narrative-dialectical-structural method offered the means to observe interpersonal communication in narratives and to reveal dialectical oppositions and identity gaps as well as coping strategies. Therefore, it offered the means to understand the role of identity in social relations. The narrative-dialectical-structural method used in this research revealed coping strategies that reduced identity gaps when participants coped with threats to identity. Jung and Hecht (2004) surmised, “Developing strategies or models for reducing the identity gaps will add strong practical and theoretical power to the theory” (p. 280). Therefore, this research added practical and theoretical power to their communication theory of identity..

How can findings in this research offer the means of understanding the role of identity in social relations in future research? There are many contexts in which researchers can use findings about identity gaps as a means for understanding the role of identity in social relations while using Conville’s (1978, 1983, 1991, 1998a, 1998b) narrative-dialectical-structural method. Researchers can look at identity gaps using the narrative-dialectical-structural method: (1) to look at existing crisis research that asks for

means to pinpoint victims' problems (e.g., Harvard Medical School, 2007; Pennebaker & Seagal, 1999), (2) to examine research that mentioned oppositions from other than a dialectical perspective (e.g., Jaworski & Coupland, 2005), (3) to examine narratives from previous dialectical research (e.g., Rawlins, 1998), (4) to examine previous crisis research that looked at public or private crisis (e.g., Harwood & Sparks, 2003; Sparks, 2005a) and (5) to look at existing narratives in research that did not use a dialectical lens (e.g., Meyer, 1995).

After a brief description about how the results of this research can be applied to the above suggestions for future research, I will elaborate about how this research could extend the Harvard Medical School (2007) research and Jaworski and Coupland's (2005) research. The Harvard Medical School (2007) researchers attempted to pinpoint ongoing problems associated with victims of Hurricane Katrina, a public crisis. Jaworski and Coupland (2005) pinpointed oppositions associated with victims of gossip which could indicate a personal crisis.

Recently Harvard Medical School has asked for any means that may explain why mental problems in Hurricane Katrina victims have increased rather than decreased with the passage of time (2007). Looking at identity issues using the narrative-dialectical-structural lens regarding the crisis may help answer the call.

Another study that can offer benefits by expansion is Jaworski and Coupland's (2005) research about gossipers. Using a narrative-dialectical-structural method to pinpoint oppositions in identity may call attention to threats to identity caused by gossip.

Rawlins (1998) used excerpts from interviews with people ranging in age from 14 to 100 years old to look at dialectical tensions in communication in friendships across the lifespan. I propose that researchers use these excerpts from interviews using the

narrative-dialectical-structural method to study identity gaps found in narratives from different age groups. Would identity gaps be detected in friendships in different age groups? If so, what are the differences in the narratives and the gaps in different age groups?

Harwood and Sparks (2003) looked at public crisis when they studied victims' communication about terrorists' attacks. Sparks (2005a) looked at personal crisis when she studied victims' communication about their experiences with cancer. I propose that researchers use the narrative-dialectical-structural method to expose dialectical oppositions and identity gaps in narratives in their research. Revealing dialectical tensions could uncover needs and coping strategies of crisis victims.

Meyer (1995) gathered narratives from staff members at a community childcare center. He analyzed narratives revealing organizational values. Narratives from Meyer's (1995) study could be analyzed using a dialectical lens to reveal dialectical tensions between and among staff members and between staff members and larger social units (the organization, parents of children, etc.). Dialectical oppositions and identity gaps may be revealed exposing challenges in relationships or with identity or both. Results may benefit organizations as a whole and on individual levels such as with staff members.

Now I discuss in more depth, Jaworski and Coupland's (2005) research. Then I discuss in more depth, the Harvard Medical School (2007) research giving ideas for future research.

Jaworski & Coupland (2005) looked at communication of gossipers. They discussed identity issues and pinpointed oppositions. However, they did not look at oppositions from a dialectical perspective nor refer to identity gaps. Jaworski and

Coupland (2005) reported gossiping friends (gossipers) were “negotiating the identity status of gossipees” (p. 667). Jaworski & Coupland (2005) discussed differentiation and theorized “three intersecting dimensions of identity formation: sameness vs. difference, genuineness vs. artifice, and institutional vs. structural marginalization” (p. 687). The researchers do not call the pairs dialectical oppositions or identity gaps. However, could these oppositional dimensions represent dialectical tensions which would surface as dialectical oppositions relating to relationship maintenance or to identity gaps relating to identity maintenance?

By looking at “gossipy storytelling” through a narrative-dialectical-structural lens, one could reveal dialectical oppositions involving the group (the larger social unit of gossipers) versus the one (the gossipee) from the perspective of the gossipers and the gossipee thus exposing what was at stake for each. For example, the gossipee may suspect friends are gossiping about him or her; usually gossip contains negative attributions. In that case, there may be an identity gap between the gossipee’s positive identity and the negative identity that he or she perceived gossipers were ascribing. Therefore, there would be an identity gap between the gossipee’s personal frame of identity and her perceived ascribed identity in the relational frame of identity. Identity of both gossipers and gossipees may be at stake. If gossipers were damaging the identity of the gossipee, they would be denying the gossipee an opportunity to construct a positive identity for him or herself. The gossipers could cause a personal crisis for the gossipee (victim) if a threat to self-esteem, threat to distinction, threat to efficacy, or a break in continuity resulted. Crisis can cause threats to identity; identity threats can be the cause of a personal crisis.

The fact that victims of personal and public crisis face identity problems is worth noting. Results of this research suggest there may be connections between identity gaps and psychological issues. Further research is needed in the fields of communication and psychology regarding the connection. In this research, thematic and dialectical analyses supported Breakwell's (1993) notion that threats to self-esteem, breaks in continuity, and threats to efficacy can cause threats to identity. In this study, it was revealed that Hurricane Katrina caused damage to houses, shops, occupations, and threats to identity. Damage and threats caused stress. Victims in this study coped with losses and threats starting with basic needs. However, many victims of Hurricane Katrina have not had opportunities or means to cope.

Hurricane Katrina caused breaks in continuity, threats to self-esteem, and threats to efficacy when jobs were discontinued and houses and belongings were damaged or destroyed and when others' threatened their identities causing stress and uncertainty. According to Berger and Calabrese (1975) and Berger (1993), individuals strive for certainty and feel stressed when faced with uncertainty. Berger (1993) argues that in order to adapt to social and physical environmental changes, individuals strive to reduce uncertainty. Individuals devise ways to cope with threats to identity (Breakwell, 1993).

This research has provided means to pinpoint dialectical tensions related to relationships, crisis, and identity and to understand how participants coped. Identity issues may seem insignificant on the surface or in the scheme of things. For example, when life, safety, and security are at risk, identity issues may seem unimportant. However, Harvard Medical School researchers (2007) asked that scholars continue to try to determine Hurricane Katrina related stress factors in order to understand why stress is increasing rather than decreasing among victims long after the crisis.

“Unrecognized phenomena are neither noticed nor studied” (Wood, 1992, p. 350).

It may be that scholars have not recognized identity issues related to stress in crisis victims. Looking at identity issues such as identity gaps and strategies used to cope with threatened identities may offer a way to recognize the phenomena. According to Huitt (2004), individuals seek coping mechanisms to fill basic needs such as physiological, safety and security, love needs, and esteem needs. Participants in this study used strategies to cope with threats to identity, an esteem need, after coping with more basic needs. However, many Hurricane Katrina victims continue to try to fill basic needs (Elias, 2007). Maslow describes a hierarchy of needs (1954) that explains the order in which victims cope.

According to Maslow (1954), needs are attended from lowest (most important) to highest (important, but less crucial for survival), the lowest are physiological needs such as hunger, thirst, and bodily comforts; then safety and security needs; then belongingness and love needs such as affiliation and acceptance; then esteem needs such as to gain approval and recognition, to achieve and to be competent. The highest need is self actualization; needs to find fulfillment and realize potential.

When Hurricane Katrina was approaching, participants in this study were concerned about security and safety; they secured their important belongings, later, during the storm as the water rose, safety became a factor. Therefore, the storm plunged victims into a lower level of needs. Immediately after, they continued to be concerned about safety. After Hurricane Katrina, ice, water, and food and housing (security) for some participants became issues. Interviews revealed victims were concerned that they did not prepare as they usually do; they had not bought additional food and water which they realized in the aftermath of the storm, were important needs. They had focused on

belongings rather than basic physiological needs before Hurricane Katrina. They felt they made mistakes not purchasing food and water when preparing for the storm. Some participants reported receiving ice, food, and water from government agencies after the storm.

After basic physiological and safety needs were filled, participants in this study, were concerned about cleaning, working, and “getting back to normal. When they were interviewed in this study, two years after Hurricane Katrina, some participants revealed threats to identity which were indicative of esteem needs. Participants were unlike many storm victims who have not had opportunities to return to their towns, houses, and occupations. Victims are “feeling trapped” because they cannot return to their routine lives (Elias, 2007, p. 1A). Immediately after Hurricane Katrina, victims were “happy to be alive,” however, they now “want a house to live in” (Elias, 2007, p. 1A).

Because some victims are not at a level to cope with esteem needs, it is reasonable to wonder what needs would be revealed in a dialectical analysis of narratives about their Hurricane Katrina experiences. The analysis may expose needs, reveal identity gaps, and reveal what is at stake at the time of the analysis. At the time of participant interviews in this study, identity was revealed to be one concern.

Limitations and Conclusions

The narrative-dialectical-structural method and identity gap research provided the means to understand the role of identity in social relations in crises. The results of the study can be applied in order to help crisis victims cope with identity issues. Not only can the results be used to benefit victims, the actual process of gathering narratives is thought to benefit participants. Narratives simplify, provide order, facilitate the

attribution of motivation, segment and give meaning to events and actions in people's lives, give themes continuity, direct action and express a set of preferences (Heath, 2004).

Through narratives participants in this research were able to reconstruct their identities pertaining to situations surrounding Hurricane Katrina which helped them to maintain or reconstruct positive self-concepts (identity). Narratives allowed participants opportunities to talk about their experiences which, according to a study by Pennebaker and Seagal (1999), "is critical and is an indicator of good mental and physical health" (p. 1243). Therefore, allowing crisis victims to tell their stories may be beneficial. Further research is suggested in order to look at issues related to needs, identity, and communication in the wake of crisis. In this case, pinpointing dialectical oppositions in narratives exposed how individuals constructed, maintained, and reconstructed identity through interpersonal communication which revealed threats to identity and strategies used to cope. There are limitations to the study, however.

As in all narrative analyses, results in this study are interpretations of representations. In other words, the researcher presented her point of view of participants' interpretations of their Hurricane Katrina experiences from their points of view. Goodall (2000) reminds us that all representations are partial, partisan, and problematic. Interpretations are partial because they represent only the point of view of the teller; interpretations are partisan because, naturally, the researcher occupies a unique limited standpoint. Phenomena and meaning exist from particular social, economic, political, institutional and personal situations (Wood, 1992). Representations are problematic because they show only one excerpt of participants' life or situation. Even though representations are partial, partisan and problematic, researchers "want to use what we

write and what we write about to make positive differences-positive, productive-in the lives of people” (Goodall, 2000, p. 198).

One goal of this study was to expand knowledge of how individuals communicate about their identities which are affected by crisis situations. Another goal was to inspire future research about crisis and identity. This study looked at characteristics associated with public crisis and individual crisis which have affected the lives and identities of a family of fishermen in south Mobile County, Alabama.

This study will (1) enable researchers in several fields of study including communication and psychology to better understand how crisis affects identity, (2) enable researchers to understand problems associated with threats to identity in order to offer help to individuals after crisis, and (3) inspire more research pertaining to how crisis affects identity. In this study, the researcher showed that crisis can affect identity and that individuals strive to maintain positive identities. In addition, individuals strive to maintain positive identities by using coping strategies to repair identities that have been damaged.

APPENDIX A

HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW FORM



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Institutional Review Board

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 Tel: 601.266.6820
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 www.usm.edu/irb

**HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE
 NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION**

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Human Subjects Protection Review Committee in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months. Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: R27051402

PROJECT TITLE: Communication, Crisis, and Identity: Dialectical Tensions in Family Narratives About Hurricane Katrina

PROPOSED PROJECT DATES: 05/29/08 to 05/28/09

PROJECT TYPE: Dissertation or Thesis

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Laura P. Rogers

COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Arts & Letters

DEPARTMENT: Speech Communication

FUNDING AGENCY: N/A

HSPRC COMMITTEE ACTION: Renewal of a Previously Approved Project

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 05/29/08 to 05/28/09

Lawrence A. Hosman

 Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
 HSPRC Chair

7-1-08

Date

APPENDIX B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH FORM

The University of Southern Mississippi

Consent to participate in research form:

COMMUNICATION, CRISIS, AND IDENTITY: A FISHING FAMILY REVEALS DIALECTICAL TENSION IN NARRATIVES ABOUT HURRICANE KATRINA

I, the undersigned, am 18 years old or older. I hereby voluntarily agree to participate in a research project which I understand involves taking part in conversations with Laura Rogers so that she may learn to understand events in the lives of people involved in the fishing industry in Mobile County, Alabama. I understand that the knowledge Laura gains will be used to write accounts which will be shared with others in order to expand understanding. I realize that sharing information with Laura will take time. However, I realize that I am free to decide how much time I am willing to give and when I will talk with her.

I have been assured that all information I provide is anonymous. I will not be identified by name as a participant in the project. I also understand that articles and papers written by Laura may be shared in academic journals and/or at academic conventions. I also understand that audio tapes will be returned to me after transcription and written accounts will be stored by Laura in a file cabinet in her home.

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent to participate in the project at any time without penalty or prejudice. I understand that I may contact Laura Rogers at 251-343-7215 if I have questions regarding her research. I further understand that I am free to contact the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board at 601-266-6820 if I have any questions about the appropriateness of these procedures.

Participant (over 18 years of age)

Date

Witness (may be Laura Rogers)

Date

This project has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, Box 5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406, (601)266-6820.

APPENDIX C

AUDIO RECORDS RELEASE CONSENT FORM

The University of Southern Mississippi**AUDIO RECORDS RELEASE CONSENT FORM****RESEARCHER:** Laura Rogers**PROJECT TITLE:** COMMUNICATION, CRISIS, AND IDENTITY:
A FISHING FAMILY REVEALS DIALECTICAL
TENSION IN NARRATIVES ABOUT HURRICANE
KATRINA

As part of this project I wish to make an audio recording of you while you participate in the research. In any use of the recordings, you will not be identified by name.

Please indicate your consent for use of audio recordings by placing your initials on the line next to the permission statement.

_____ The researcher, Laura Rogers, has my permission to audio record conversations with me to be studied for use in the research project.

SIGNATURE

INITIALS

DATE

APPENDIX D
PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS
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Names of people, rivers, and names of small towns are changed in interviews to protect identity of participants.

1. Interview with Mr. Jones

July 19, 2007, 9:30 a.m.

Text from memory immediately after discussion:

I was visiting Mr. Jones when the conversation turned to his Hurricane Katrina experiences. I asked Mr. Jones if I could have his permission to write about our conversation about Hurricane Katrina for my research. I felt if I asked permission for taping the conversation, it would have interfered with the flow and relaxed mood and intensity of the conversation. He signed the consent form. I think it would have made him uncomfortable to be recorded.

From memory an hour after discussion:

Mr. Jones: "Look at where the bad storms have hit. There is a nudist colony on the other side of Pensacola where people; Ivan hit. In Cross Roads [substitute name] there are a lot of Orientals; they started a Buddhist church. In Biloxi, there is gambling. In Louisiana there is gambling and Voodoo. Hurricane Ivan wiped out Pensacola, Katrina hit Cross Roads and Mississippi and Louisiana. Things are bad. God is sending these storms. It is like Revelations in the Bible. The Bible says the earth gets so hot that the eyes of man melt and storms get bad before the end of the world".

"The day of Hurricane Katrina, I was in the bed back there. James, my son, came over and said, 'the water is rising we got to go to Samuel's house'. Samuel lives on the hill on Magnolia Road [substitute name] (about 2 miles inland). James had gone down yonder and seen the water rising (less than ¼ miles away near the oyster shop). I walked up to the cemetery and prayed that God wouldn't take the graves (Mr. Jones's wife, father, mother, brothers, grandfather and grandmother are all buried in a cemetery less than ¼ mile away). I prayed for God to save the graves and my house. We went to Samuel's house. When the tide went out at Samuel's house, I drove home. The water was up to the door on my truck. My house was here. Water had been in my house leaving a water line and thick mud all over inside. The water was up to the steps then".

He said he wasn't scared during the storm. He was glad he had a house left. He has lived in the house since he was 14 years old. He will be 80 soon. He said his grandparents had lived next door. His brothers lived across the street. His son now lives across the street. A brother lives across the street. His grandson lives next door. He said he has watched his parents die, his brothers die, and his wife die. He said he doesn't understand why God is letting him live, but he thinks there is a reason.

I showed him an article from a local book which contained stories written by people in the area (Alabama coastal area). I asked him what he thought about the comments of one of the writers when she says, "we are a self-sufficient people who prefer to give and are uncomfortable taking from others". He said, "I think it is good that people came here and did things for people. Some people from a church, I have forgotten the name of the

church, I can't remember too good, they came and fixed my brother's house across the street". He said, "I didn't take nothin' because it is just me. I didn't need nothin'". His brother's wife is still living.

2. Interview with Sarah and Jacob

July 22, 2007

L is researcher

Sarah: You want to start?

Jacob: I guess. We just started watching it on the TV; get updates and decide whether it was something; basic early preparation, just tried to figure out what we had to do to keep whatever safe. As I say, the basics to do whatever we had to do to stay safe.

You do everything you can in a little time we can and nothing ever gets totally done.

We had went through Ivan and [before] Ivan we did quite a bit of preparing. First thing, you start thinking about your flashlights and your batteries and your water; gasoline. We were so fortunate in Ivan that Katrina caught us off guard. We didn't go get supplies like we did, we didn't have any lunch meats or anything other than what we had here to start with. We, we felt reasonably safe when it got past a certain point that we weren't going to be affected. Kinda' breathed a sigh of relief, but we were still tensed up and worried, but we had already worked; what? Two days preparing. We got the boat secure. We got a lot of stuff moved out of the shop... frozen food, shrimp; we brought a lot of it up here.

Sarah: To begin with, we brought the chest freezers up here on the porch. We just lined the chest freezers and filled those as much as we could and the rest we were gonna' put in Gabriel's freezer and then he decided he was going to move all of his stuff in case of a power outage. He couldn't get a generator that would carry it, so we decided we would go with him to take our seafood to Mobile freezer storage or one of those freezer storage places; Atlas Freezer Storage in Mobile. They were kind enough to let us take it there and we just loaded what we could on the trucks and took it up there and felt safe about that. We had a generator that would supply these freezers here. So we had everything moved out that we could think of.

Jacob: It was a lotta' extra work that you don't plan real well for... we thought, "Well, we will go to Gabriel's." And I think we had it boxed up and then realized we had to redo things to get it to Mobile...

Sarah: a lot of double handling the same items

Jacob: And that takes... At the time was J.B. working here?

Sarah: Yea and C and T [substitution for names of two sons-in-law].

Jacob: He wasn't actually here. He just came to help. C came to help and T came to help; son in laws. Justin [another son-in-law] was busy with his.

Sarah: Rachel came to help.

Jacob. It took the whole family to help. That was part of the preparation.

Sarah: There are all sorts of things at the shop that you have to put up and, your mind, the whole time you are working your mind is thinking, "What do you have to do next? And you really?"

Jacob: The whole time you are working you are thinking just

Sarah: Is all of this necessary?

Jacob: Yea. Will it pass us by and you just get a little ripple and a shift of wind? Will it be over or will we get hit?

Sarah: It is almost overwhelming to your brain because you think what the most important thing to put up? When do we do this? And the first thing you know, everything is all running together, you don't know what to do, you are kinda' running around in circles. You put this up, then you go do something else and you get side-tracked and then, you know, you don't get a lot accomplished because you are just running back and forth, but eventually you do all that you can do; put up everything, secure things, you get the boat secure, and you look around the yard and see what else you have to do and then you go to the house and then you come to the point where you think, "That's all I can do. I am not doing any more." Then you quit.

Jacob: You get to the point where you are just exhausted. If those chairs blow away, so be it.

L: Did you leave the boats here?

Jacob: The crab boats and oyster boat, I tied inside those pilings over there that you see beyond those trees. I put space between the boats; 5 foot and long lines between the pilings and tied them to the trees over here and they did fine. And the shrimp boat; I went down to the slip where the ship yard used to be. We had Samuel's boat, Edward's [son-in-law] boat, and my boat and we spaced those out. We probably had 50 lines going out from those boats in different directions and some of those lines may be 50 feet line, so if tide came up extremely high; and the morning after the storm you come and look at all the junk in the yard and the mud and the this and the that and you just; and it is terrible. And it takes probably 3 hours to tie the boats secure. Like we did with mine and Edward's and it took me and Edward and Richard and Gabriel and don't know whether Tim was there or not but it took us about 3 hours to get them secured; or maybe more and then walk away from it. You say, "Well, I hope they are floatin'." But you know what you done, if you get a Katrina full force, it's not enough. It won't be enough.

Sarah: After we did all we were going to do and we didn't prepare like normally; people [normally] go to the store buy extra bread and food. We really were thinking, "Ok, it's not going to be that bad here".

Jacob: The last-minute preparations that the storm was about south of us and moving north or west, north west, so that was going to put us, you know, on the better side and that night she started shifting and we didn't leave here until two o'clock.

Sarah: I didn't do anything in the home as far as picking up because I was not expecting any water this high so I didn't pick anything up. I didn't make any preparations inside the home. I didn't pack any clothes or blankets or anything because I just assumed we were gonna' stay here.

Jacob: We had a little cash. We took food. We took

Sarah: We did have gas for the generators. [I] had my important papers and things all together. I did do that much. About two o'clock; Jane and I had already gone to bed. About 2 o'clock Jacob woke us up and said, "You know, I think we better leave". Then I start panicking because if he, if he gets nervous. it makes me nervous. If I know he is ok with it, then I am ok with it.

Jacob: I didn't see any reason. You know. When you go from north to northwest to almost north in about six hours time, there is nothing to stop it from coming northeast. When it went due north I said, "We better clear out and at that time, too, she was raging".

L. Did you see water here at that time?

Sarah: Not at that time; not until later that morning. During all this preparation, too, I'm worried about my kids, you know, there is Beth and Tim and I didn't think they would get any water, but they are in that position, where they can get tornadoes and they are going to get force of the wind.

Jacob: At that time, they had a huge oak tree that had limbs right over their house.

Sarah: You know, we were concerned with them. Are y'all gonna' stay home or are you gonna' come here or are you gonna' go some place? And they are determined they were just gonna' stay. They felt secure there. Valerie and Charles were going to ahum, were going to some friends' in Mississippi; north Mississippi.

Jacob: Did they even go?

Sarah: I can't even remember now, but we knew Gabriel was going to stay at his house; Samuel at his house, Rachel and, I think, Rachel was going to go with us. Normally they go to her mother's-in-law, but they were going to come with us. So we were trying to make sure everybody was going to have a place to stay and not be on the roads in the middle of the storm; and we had talked to Samuel and said, "We may come over there, but we may just stay home but then when he wakes us up and I start panicking and get Jane up and said, "Just throw some clothes in a bag and we'll go; so we did that; we just got pillows and blankets and some extra clothes, bare necessities, and went to Samuel's to stay and this was 3 o'clock in the morning. And we were the only ones there besides your mama and her husband, right? They were there.

Jacob: No, I called them.

Sarah: Oh, that's right, Jacob called them; his mama and said, "We are going over there and ya'll come, too". So they did. And Rachel came and at Gabriel's house was daddy and James. He (Mr. Jones) probably told you all that and so we were just waitin' it out, watchin' the wind. Gabriel got ½ inch of water in his house; just enough to get the carpet wet.

Jacob: At that point it was probably coming from the bay side, but we wouldn't have had to leave. [We] could have been fine throughout all of it.

Sarah: IT (volume) would have been scary staying here because the water came up under the house; and all around. It would have gotten in the cars.

Jacob: At day light, if we had gotten up at day light probably 7 o'clock, we could have got up and got out of here. And I didn't know we were going to have that much time to where we could have got out.

Sarah: When we were at Samuel's we came over here that morning at about 7:30 or 8:00 and we were coming down the road; the water was rushing across the road just like you see on the flood on the news when you see the water pushing the cars. It was just rushing across the road. It was up to the top of the tires in some of the lowest places. We came in; everything looked ok but we decided we better get out before the water came any further.

Jacob: At that point it would have been down the hill.

Sarah: It wasn't up

L. How were y'all feelin' at that time?

Jacob: I felt good at that time.

Sarah: I felt ok. I didn't. I still didn't think it would get

Jacob: I thought that was as bad as it would get. I really did. We go back to Simon's. It's still rainin' and it's still blowin'. Then we watched the water come up and, hey, the wind, to my notion, was not as bad as Ivan and nothing like Frederick. Frederick was

Sarah: Horrendous

Jacob: I thought, "All is well". [I] had no idea we would get that much water, but after Rachel went home, we sat on Samuel's back porch and watched the water just continually come up. And then it got to the point where Gabariel realized, "Hey if it don't stop, it's gonna' get in my house". That was a

Sarah: We stayed in contact with each other with cell phones and Gabriel called one time; called my cell phone and said, "I think it is gonna' come in my house" because it was already getting' real close. So I said, "Well just, just everybody come up here, It is

not going to get in Samuel's, we don't think". They said, "We'll wait a little while". Well, after an hour he called back and he says, "We are bringin' the kids". It was pouring rain and, the children, and you know, one is just young, real young. How old was Cindy then? One? And here Lucy brings the car up with two babies and we run out with rain coats on; just like you see on storm stories. We run out and grab the babies, wrap them up, and bring them in, and, you know, it is not that they were in danger, but the water was coming in the house and, you know, they didn't want to be there in that environment, so they came and everybody was fine. Daddy and the others went next door to Gabriel's house. And, ah, it was just, it was scary. I wasn't really afraid of anybody getting hurt or, or any danger, that way, but it was scary to see what a storm could do and messin' up everybody's house up. It was scary.

Jacob: The thing that got me with the storm was the water in relation to amount of wind. Had we gotten that much wind like Frederick had; we realize they had more wind to the west, but Camille hit here or hit Gulf Port we might have had 6 foot of water here; the kind of storm you set an example by. It wasn't supposed to get any worse than Camille. But here it is 30 years later, we get one that makes Camille look like a little squall. We got 6 foot of water, this time we got 10.

L. When you say 10 feet of water you mean above the normal tide?

Jacob: What I measure by is where the barnacles quit growing on the pilings.

Sarah: That is kind of a normal tide line.

Jacob: That's what I base it on. I measured up from there. My measurement was 9'4" high, but I tell you, if you wanted to look down. See the crab traps? There is a piling this side of that. It covered it.

At this point we moved from the front porch to inside the house. It was too hot on the porch.

Jacob: I wouldn't have liked being here. It got up on the porch. That's what had me really upset. As long as it had a little westerly movement, I was content, but when it turned due north... worried me. I thought that Camille was the worse. I have gained a new respect for storms. Before this storm I felt I could protect my family. Now I know I can't. I think they have a different personality like people and if you ever put the worst of all of them together you would look at something that was catastrophic...you couldn't

L. I was thinking about the 1906 storm the other day. Then almost 100 years later

Jacob: Actually, that was horrible. It sounds like, and the reason I say that, is the people that; Gulf Port was new at that time. It was a little port. They thought they got a direct hit, the people in Mobile thought they got a direct hit, and Pensacola also. It had to have been huge.

L. What about after the storm? I couldn't remember when you could get back to work or what you had to do.

Sarah: It was a few months before we got the shop back in operation, but initially, you know, like the day after, you wonder where to start. You look around and start cleaning up and you wonder where to start and you just try to make things livable while the power is out. And you just do all you can in anticipation to what you would call normal, but it was a long time before things got back to normal. We, ah

Jacob: We made a joke about that, People would say, "Are up getting back to normal?" And we would say, "We never were normal".

Sarah: We weren't normal to begin with so (laughter) But you know we survived like everybody else with the gas grill cookin' and that sort of thing. I have a gas stove. And then when the power comes back on, you start doing what cleaning you can around the shop and there is just so much to do.

Jacob: We used the generator for the pump to start cleaning early.

Sarah: Yea. We did use generator and pressure washer.

Jacob: I kept thinking that after the storm, here we are living down a mile of road with two houses on it. Guess whose power came on first?

Sarah: Ours came on first. We had a generator. Everything was fine. We had customers before we had electricity. They would come to check on us so they would buy shrimp out of the chest freezers on the porch.

Jacob: We had a lady that come the second day, didn't she?

Sarah: Yeah; a couple of days after the storm. She was worried about us and she was afraid she wasn't going to get any more shrimp. She bought some shrimp. She lived in Mobile I think.

Jacob: I thought she lived over on the bay some where. I don't think she lives that far.

Sarah: Oh, may be, so when we start getting things cleaned up, Samuel told us about the clean up with FEMA.

Jacob: Samuel, probably in about three weeks, he is going up there to the city where they did the clean up work after Ivan. One of the guys says, "How is the family doing? Are they catchin' any shrimp"? and, ah, Samuel told him, "They can't shrimp. There's too much junk out there". He said, "What? Junk in the Water"? Samuel says he slammed his hand down on the desk and says, "We need to get this on the ball".

Sarah: He makes a phone call right then

Jacob: He goes out of the room to make a phone call and starts calling. In another two or three weeks we are working to get stuff out of the water so this guy's got contacts, you know, he got things on the ball and told them they are devastated to start with part of the industry and now [indecipherable word]

Sarah: So while we are working, cleaning up out there, doing the water clean up so we would have an income, Rachel and the girls are here trying to get things back together to operate the crab shop. They operated in October, maybe the end of October. We had set some crab traps and some of our other [indecipherable word] had set some; they worked the crab shop while we did the debris clean up. Probably by the end of November, the middle of November, we were back to about 75% operation.

Jacob: We couldn't find workers.

Sarah: Yeah. We couldn't find enough workers.

Jacob: Crabs unbelievably good; couldn't find crab pickers. Nobody could afford to work. We were actually crabbing, me and Sarah; running the traps, coming home in the evening, cookin' um' It was about to kill us.

Sarah: By Christmas or a little after, we were in full operation. We still couldn't find the workers. We still had

Jacob: We still couldn't find the workers

Sarah: We had everything back in place; we had the freezers, our products, freezer storage. We had everything back in place; back in operation.

Jacob: Yeah. That was unbelievable. You know, you get the impression some times that big business is trying to rip you off but Atlas took our product in at the last minute.

Sarah: Last minute. Yeah. Just said, "Yeah you can put it

Jacob: We put it all there, for what; Six or eight weeks? Something like that.

Sarah: and [they] just charged us a very minimal fee maybe

Jacob: It was like \$120.00 or something like that.

Sarah: Just a real small fee; and, you know, they told us after a certain day we will have to start charging you a normal fee, but we were able to get it back.

L: Did you know the owner before the storm?

Sarah: No, they didn't know us either, but they know Gabriel, our son, and I guess that helped. But you know we felt very fortunate and blessed that we didn't lose our home, or our business, or our boats. We lost some equipment, we lost some crab traps and that sort

of thing, but we felt very fortunate that way. However, many of our family members lost their homes. Pretty much; let me rephrase that, they didn't lose their homes but their homes had to be gutted. They lost all their appliances, their furniture, their possessions, ah, but they still had their homes standing so they could...

L. Who all was it that lost their homes?

Sarah: James, daddy, aunts, uncles, cousins, and Rachel and many other relatives .

Jacob: I had a second cousin, two of them, brother and sister that lived next door to each other and they both had nice house right on the bay up above the bridge and both of them's houses, I think, they took about 10 foot of water inside the houses, but one of them had a huge, big log house, beautiful place, but it floated the logs and turned it sideways; destroyed it.

L. How did you feel about doing the debris clean-up?

Jacob: That was a deal where you were gonna' do it if you went shrimping. I am still, you wouldn't believe it. You wouldn't believe the amount of junk I still pull up. A couple of areas nobody goes, good shrimping areas, you just stay away from. And that was basically where we did most of the clean up; an area you still don't go in today because there is too much stuff there. But like I told one of the guys from FEMA, I cleaned up behind Camille, a little bit, and every other storm since and never got paid for it. So in order to get paid that was a plus because we were gonna' get out there and clean it up anyway. If you were gonna drag a troll and try to catch shrimp, you were gonna' catch the junk. You cannot imagine the junk we caught after Frederick. I was working on a smaller boat, well about the size of this one down here. It had to be. I remember making three drags a day working from daylight to after dark. You would make three 45 minute drags and the rest of the time you would be cleaning junk out of your nets; bedsprings, trees, plywood, crab traps. You name it, you caught it, so if to get paid and to get paid pretty good money was; we thought well we will go for it, because we were going to clean it anyway.

Sarah: But we were glad when it was over. It lasted about 6 weeks?

Jacob: Oh, I hated it.

Sarah: It was 12 hour days, 7 days a week for six weeks. And we were glad when it was over. You didn't just ride out on the boat. It was work so we were glad when it was over

Jacob: Sarah can show you. She photographed about everything.

Sarah: I had it on my computer and that's when my computer quit.

Jacob: Oh you lost it? Well, Samuel has it on a CD.

Sarah: We took pictures of it every day.

Jacob: You know what the worse thing was to have to deal with? Palm trees.

Sarah: Well, they suggested that we do.

Jacob: They had a root as big as

Sarah: Palm trees. They were the worse. They were the worst to pick up; and mattresses.

Jacob: I wish they would outlaw them and mattresses.

Sarah: It was like a big balloon. You would think since it was cloth it would drain, but it wouldn't. You would have to cut it open.

Jacob: Another thing with the clean up was; it had us baffled for a little while. We would go out and catch, you know, like clothing materials like mattresses, pillows, cushions. Some would be just rubber and some would be nasty, horrible, and rotten; then you would catch a shirt and ask, "Why did that rot so quick"? Then you would catch another shirt and it was tough. You wanted to wash it and bring it home. What we were doing is catching Ivan debris, and Katrina. And actually I think we caught Camille debris. We caught stuff. I just hauled a hot water heater off yesterday that I caught and Jeremy put it in the back of the truck that I caught pretty quick after Katrina; when we first went out. It had oysters growing inside of it, but the bottom had rusted out and it had [indecipherable word] that big around.

Sarah: It had to have been from Ivan.

Jacob: No. That was probably Georges or one of those. It somehow another; the bottom shifted and washed it out.

L. What did you think about how news portrayed victims? And how did y'all feel compared to others? I am asking too many questions at one time.

Jacob: I can tell you this but I am kinda' buttin' in but, sympathy and heart went out to people on Mississippi coast. That's who I felt bad for.

Sarah: (Loudly) Well, I could feel sympathy for people in New Orleans and all the lower places in Louisiana, you know, and Mississippi. I felt sympathy for all of those people because they lost everything. Some of them even lost family members, but the way the news portrayed New Orleans was outrageous because they were focusing on New Orleans as if New Orleans was the only place that was hit.

Jacob: It wasn't just New Orleans. It was the state.

Sarah: Ahh They said very little about Mississippi or the other places that were hit hard by the storm and I felt like they focused too hard on New Orleans. A lot of New Orleans problems they brought on themselves I believe. So you know, I wasn't as sympathetic as

I should have been about the people in New Orleans. But we felt relieved that we weren't totally destroyed. We felt fortunate and blessed.

Jacob: I think the biggest problems with New Orleans was that had the water been able to run off, they would have been fine. I would have thought they should have had, after the levies busted, they would have been better off. They were pinned in. I know New Orleans is supposed to be below sea level, but some of those places aren't. Where the city started; it is not below sea level, but the edges of the city were. I think they could have gotten rid of a lot of water without having to use pumps. But for sure it was a pond. They had a pond there.

L. In the book of stories about the storm, a woman talked about the pride of the people in the area. I think she is talking about fishing families being proud and self-sufficient.

Sarah: I didn't want people to come and see our mess. I didn't like people to come to see the debris and the mud. That's why we started cleaning up right away. We don't want people to see that, even though we didn't have anything to do with it. We wanted to start cleaning it up and making it presentable again. But yeah, I agree with that; that we, that we do feel self-sufficient. We take care of our own as much as we can. As far as FEMA, we didn't go ask for anything. I did fill out the application, that if there is some there that is available, we would take it, but I felt like we could do it on our own without their help. Had I lost everything, it might be a different story.

L. I was wondering if you were comparing your damage to other peoples' and thought other people needed it more.

Sarah: I did. I felt there were so many people that had lost so much more that needed help with everything with not only their food and clothing but with getting back to work; back on their feet and building their homes. I felt like people needed help more than we did, but then when I think about my relatives I had a daughter and sister and brother and daddy and all those; they got some help. I appreciated all the volunteers.

Jacob: That was amazing. What people would do to come down here to help.

Sarah: The generosity of people in general has just amazed me. People coming from, people coming from, all over the country, people coming to this little area and helping people rebuild their homes and cleaning up their mess. It was just amazing to me what they did; bringing money and food and supplies and just everything.

L. Do people still need help, you think? Or are people back on their feet now?

Sarah: Well, I personally I don't really know, but I feel like there are some who could still use help. I think some got more help than others. But, ah, I also believe there are some who could have helped themselves more and didn't. We have heard stories about people using a water hose to say their house had flooded.

L. The shop was flooded? There was mud in it?

Sarah: Oh yeah. Actually there was mud from the drive way all the way down. There was a thin layer of mud up here and the mud got thicker and thicker as you went down. There was probably about 6-8 inches in the shop.

L. How did you get it out?

Jacob: Power washer

Sarah: Power washer and he had a pump.

Jacob: We had the power washer and the generator we hooked up out here. We started power washing down the drive way. And I would have never thought where those Crepe Myrtles are growing. I thought we would be tracking mud from now on, but the grass took off and started growing. Most of it was bare; just mud.

Sarah: In the shop, first we used a sea water pump. You know, a pump that would take the river water and wash.

Jacob: I think I used the boat pump.

Sarah: The boat pump. You did, because the other one flooded, didn't it? So he washed as much out as he could. Then you have to use bleach, then you have to pressure wash it again.

Jacob. Basically, what we were trying to do was to get tired enough to sleep good.

Sarah: We did. When we came home the night after the storm we came home at 9:30 with no air conditioning; it was hot that night. There was not even any breeze.

Jacob: I laid right there.

Sarah: He had the door open and he just made a little pallet there and I stayed in the bedroom and some time during the night he heard a noise and there were some dogs

Jacob: I looked up and there were some dogs. I was right there in the front door. I looked up and there were dogs looking down at me. I hollered and they ran, but I went and got in bed after that.

Sarah: That was a horrible night.

Jacob: I think back on how spoiled we are because when a storm is approaching you think, "Oh God spare our lives", and then as whatever takes place happens, you say, "God, I wish the power company would get the power back on", and you are irritated and mad because they don't have service like that (clicking fingers). My grandmother or great

grandmother spent the night with her newest child in her arms in a tree with their cloths ripped off her.

Sarah: The wind blew so hard that it ripped her clothes off. She was hanging on to a tree wondering where the rest of her children and husband were; not knowing. Can you imagine going through a storm like that?

L. No.

Jacob: That is what everybody, and when day light comes or when the storm subsides you can't go find bottled water; contaminated. They more than likely knew where some good water was. There was some good water 4 or 5 miles up the way, but all of their food

Sarah: Unless they had canned goods that survived without being burst.

Jacob: The house was lost

Sarah: Most of them lost their houses

Interviewer's Husband: What services did they have?

Jacob: If anybody had a place high enough they would go, but I think they were living south of the store. They moved up the road. They found a hill; what they called a hill. They moved up there. Anyway, Grandpa found his debris where the water stopped. So he went up to top of the hill to build his house. He showed us when we were kids where the water was, but I think Katrina actually went up a little further but the landscape might have changed in 100 years. You don't know what took place.

L. That is so neat that you have that continuity to say where your grand daddy was in this area 100 years ago. I thought that was Sarah's grandparent's house.

Jacob: About relationships; he was living where James's house is now.

Jacob: Actually it would be good if someone would go to the Mississippi coast to get stories. It is unbelievable. They lost everything.

Sarah: One of our friends who lives on the Mississippi coast lost his business and was not able to put it back because of city council and everything, but he talked about how traumatic it was to him because it changed everything. Because he was disoriented, it was hard to find his way where he grew up. He grew up there knowing the places and he forgot how to get home.

Jacob: No landmarks. We went down there what? Two months back?

Sarah: Maybe a little longer.

Jacob: We went down there and took them out to eat and he showed us around. He was kinda like a kid. He was about to cry. He would say, "That is where so and so lived. And that was so and so's business; it is gone" There is nothing left there because most everything was gone.

Sarah: It is very emotional. When you drive around there is nothing.

Jacob: Just slabs.

Interview with Samuel, Gabriel, Louise, and Jacob

August 15, 2007

L. is the researcher

L. I just want to hear what happened. Think about it like this, if you were writing chapters in a book. Think about it as a sequence of events.

Gabriel: Getting ready. Anticipate. Lot of getting ready; moving boats, shuffling boats around, strapping down, putting plywood on windows, a lot of moving boats, strapping them down, moving shrimp to freezer.

L. How were you feeling about it?

Samuel: Dreading it. dreading it.

L. The first part of sequence would be getting ready? Preparation

Samuel: In my case, if I've got nets around the place, I gotta' pick them up, get them out and away of possible flooding and drifting off, get boat secured, get the house ready for flooding, getting boats secured, put plywood over windows. I'm sure I'm probably forgetting.

Gabriel: We were watching it while we were out fishing; keeping a real close eye on it, but still thinking about everything we got to do when you come in. [We] didn't really anticipate until the last minute because we had so much to do. I actually helped him board his up.

Samuel: My back was out

Gabriel: It hit on the week end, shrimp in my freezer, so couldn't get to cold storage. Loaded trucks and brought them back to the boat because we knew we had power on the boat. We had a generator. We took most of mama's shrimp; everything she had in her freezer and loaded it on the boats; tried to get boat as secure as we could. We come to the house, we figured out where everybody was gonna' be and all that kind of stuff, and we were hoping it was all a waste of time while we were doing it. Helping out; helpig out the ones that can't really get out and do what they need to do to get ready; grandmas, grandpas, in-laws, you know, more than one house ,we took care of.

Samuel: Yea. That would be the first I reckon; getting ready; preparing would be first; getting ready would have to be the first.

L. What would next chapter be if the first chapter was getting ready?

Samuel: Probably the chapter of just watching it come...

Gabriel: Yeah.

L. Were you watching on TV or could you tell by weather or what?

Louise: [We were watching] out the window

Samuel: Both watching it come and listening to vhf [radio]. You could see, I don't know if it Katrina or Ivan, but

Gabriel: You could actually stand on our porch and hear the waves breaking on the beach.

Jacob: With power going off. You could hear everything

L. Breaking near your granddaddy's house? Then what?

Samuel: No, no, on the island

Gabriel: The power was off and it was very quiet; no other noise just

Samuel: Next would be knowing that it is coming and everybody getting together. We had a house full here.

Louise: *having your family come just piling in (laughter). We were sitting there talking; not thinking about what was going on. If it had just been us, I probably would have been a lot more nervous because I was thinking.*

L. Did you think about leaving?

Louise: We talked about it but, I don't know, how do you run off and leave?

Gabriel: That's true. Right here where we are at or where Samuel is at next door, that's where the old timers moved to. The worst storm didn't flood here.

Louise: in the 1906 storm, where our house is didn't flood so we felt pretty safe but we think the water came higher this time, or Samuel's grandfather does, think that the water came higher this time than it did then.

Louise: Either this storm or Ivan, I had the truck packed. He didn't know it (laugh) so we would be ready. (laugh)

L. Your grand daddy told me about that. What did they call this, the hill?

Samuel: unhuh

Gabriel: I have seen a lot of water before, the water would build up, and wouldn't drain. He kept asking me, "Is that tide water?" I said, "No, it's rain water." I was watching then. I got kinda' worried then because it kept comin' and comin'.

Louise: You could see it blowin'.

Gabriel: Well, that was when it first started. After it started coming up that's when I got kinda' concerned. We had a house full of people.

L. This house is built up higher than I thought. So y'all went to Samuel's?

Gabriel: We stayed until it got up; just watching it. When it got up on the porch, I was thinking, "Well, we don't know how high it is going to get so we better leave."

Louise: The storm part was over by then. It was just the water was still rising. I mean, it was blowing, but it was a lot calmer than it had been. They were getting out moving. It wasn't dangerous to be out. It was just blowing.

Samuel: North, southeast, northeast then shifted to northwest. Typically by the time the water starts coming, the worst is over. You know what. I was telling you about the places that were still down there. There was grass and trees grown up. There are many houses gone in between Slidell and Chalmette near New Orleans. There are some; you could ride through a patch where 2 or 3 houses were standing; big tall grass, trees, bushes growing. If you look at it now, you would think it was there. It's done grew over where houses were.

L. Next, after water rising?

Samuel: Worriation over boats and what else is floating off...

Jacob: Different things going through your mind. Everything you can't see, you worry about; what about the boats?, what about the shop?, what about the neighbors? are they still tied up? Think about the neighbors and all of their places and beyond that what about the oyster reefs? Is there going to be any crabs or shrimp or what?

Gabriel: Right after, whenever the water had started going back, I was just relieved mostly. I mean It is just barely enough water in the house. You couldn't measure in inches. Relief.

Louise: Just enough to ruin the carpet.

Gabriel: Yeah, not just relief for me, but for everybody else that it was over. Whatever has happened has happened and now we just have to deal with it.

Louise: And all of us were still ok

Gabriel: Yeah. And everybody that we knew of immediately, there was nobody hurt. But then

Louise: Had you talked to the guy on your boat?

Gabriel: No, not yet

Louise: Have you told her about that? (laughter)

Gabriel: I had a deck hand that stayed on my boat or one boat on the bayou. Actually, I seen it on the news a couple of times. On the bridge I could see the boat was still there, but during the highest of the water there was a guy that (he just died about a month ago), he had a real big hunch back. You've seen him probably walking around (to Louise), but he was in his house in the bayou somewhere on the bayou. Anyway, the water got up over his counter tops so he couldn't get out. He went out on his porch and he wound up floating on his steps trying to swim somewhere and I don't know how he wound up in the middle of the bayou, but he ended up there. He let go of the steps and tried to climb up on the boat, but we've got tires hanging over just to use as bumpers. That particular boat didn't have tires. He lost his steps, so he was, tide was still rising, so he hung onto my boat. I'm sure he is in his sixties and had some kind of problem with his back. He had a real bad hunch back, so he wasn't in good shape anyway, but he managed to climb up on the boat. And, ah, the deck hand on mine, he and his wife were just sitting there waiting the storm out and there was this wet; this old man that walked up.

Louise: I thought they had saw him and helped him in.

Gabriel: I thought that, too, to start with, but they didn't.

L. How did he get up?

Louise: [He got up] on a tire. There were other people that floated out...

Gabriel: He stayed there through the rest of the storm.

L. I didn't realize that happened in this area. I mean I knew there were people in Mississippi who got washed out. What about your jobs and everything right after the storm?

Samuel: They were just put on hold more or less.

Gabriel: Pretty much the same with me. We couldn't go shrimping right then. We had too much other things to do. We got back fairly quick after but, ah, I guess it was 10 days or so before I went back to shrimping.

Jacob: You were cleaning, weren't you?

Samuel: before I was, yeah, from Ivan

L. Were you still cleaning up from (Hurricane) Ivan?

Louise: He was.

Samuel: Actually that weren't Ivan stuff; that was just cleaning out Weeks Bay's trees and

Louise: It was Ivan.

Samuel: NO It wasn't.

Louise: When you first started doing it.

Samuel: That was Ivan but Weeks Bay wasn't.

L. Were you getting paid to do Weeks bay?

Samuel: Oh yeah. I was getting paid, but it just wasn't from Ivan.

Louise: The first clean up he did was cleaning up, was a contract to clean up Ivan debris, but then he is saying when he cleaned up Week's Bay, it wasn't from Ivan.

Samuel: that was just household stuff that had been there a long time.

L. This article that your grand daddy gave me in the talks about how proud fishermen are about doing what you do. Was there a fear of not being able to fish again?

Louise: They had a lot more fear of not being able to fish after the net ban issue.

L. I know. My paper is about crisis. I know you have had several other crises since Katrina. Some times media will portray people unlike the way they feel they are. Did y'all see that happening?

Samuel: We didn't watch much TV (chuckle)

L. That's right. You probably didn't have TV for a while. How long was power out?

Louise: It was out for a while. I mean we had; we hooked up generator. Some times we turned on the TV, but most of what was on TV was New Orleans, so we can't know whether that was real or not. But, as far as here, I don't really remember seeing anything that I thought .They did show the bayou with all the boats and all but, TV afterwards?

Jacob: I thought they did some good work showing the Mississippi area. New Orleans was nothing compared to the Mississippi coast, but they showed New Orleans. I know New Orleans was a mess, but New Orleans problems, a big part of it, was, they neglected to do what they should have done. No amount of work would have saved Biloxi and Gulf Port.

L. We drove to Waveland probably a year after and there was nothing. Did you have to struggle to get back the way you were or was it that you took it as it came?

Gabriel: We pretty much took it as it came. For me any way everything kinda' fell back into place.

Samuel: I didn't really have any major losses; not. I didn't have loss at all except time; Not near the loss most people had.

Louise: You had that

Samuel: But that weren't near the loss most had

Louise: Compared to most people we were all very fortunate.

Gabriel: I was worried. I remember when I went to the Bayou, oh man, that wasn't the worst thing. Justin rode me down there and we got to the middle of the bayou at the light and I could see Rodney's boats up on the beach. I was just sick. The cops stopped us hollerin, "You gotta' get out of town". I remember telling him, "Please, just let me go look at my boat". He said, "If you are here in five minutes you are going to jail". He didn't tell us to leave, but he said you better go look and then leave. Just seeing my boat was just relief. I could see. I got out to check the lines; just seeing those other boats all laid over gave me a sick feeling. I knew I was going to have a mess.

Louise: It was sick for anybody so I can't imagine what it would be like for anybody that had a boat laying over to see it. For me, it was horrible. I've never seen anything like this and you know that's people's lives. They are people.

Gabriel: A lot of boats on the beach. If I had tied them up they wouldn't be on the beach. Some of them probably would have, but for the most part,

Samuel: No, for the most part they wouldn't have. There were repossessed boats and they just don't have boat sense.

Louise: Some were trying to keep their boats together and keep them running. They were on the

L: What about help after? Did you need help or get any help from anybody like volunteer groups?

Louise: Right after everybody needed ice. We went to the fire house. I mean that was the main thing. They would throw MRE's in. If you didn't want them, they would throw them in any way. Like ice and water, you are always going to run out of.

Gabriel: There were people that come around and offered, for us, anyway. But they'd come around. People were just driving down here trying to help. But I mean, I never

took it because I didn't really feel like we needed it. There were people who needed it worse. I mean we had a house and we didn't need anything so

Jacob: The ice and MRE's may have been a little bit slow coming, but once it started coming it got ridiculous because ice, MRE's were kept in the shed so long, squirrels got into it and rats. It was overwhelming. And they were people, if you wanted it, they would load a pick up truck.

L. I am not using your name.

Jacob: I don't want Samuel and Gabriel to say anything to mess it up (laughter)

L. Can you think of anything else to add? Did it change you? Do you think it changed you in any way?

Gabriel: I would be a little more cautious. I mean I never thought I would see water in my house. I never dreamed that I would have water in the house.

Louise: I would be more afraid if another storm was coming. With a lot of water, if it came, we may have water in my house. Another 10 foot, we would have water in our house, right?

Samuel: 10 foot, definitely.

Louise: People at work were concerned because we stayed home and I, we

Gabriel: I couldn't just pack up and leave because, I told my wife, "I don't want to be stuck on the road somewhere." You might be 200 miles up north and get stuck in a valley and get washed away.

Louise: Where ever it goes you have tornadoes and all that so you might be safer here in some hotel.

Gabriel: I would feel more at risk getting in a wreck on a road than I would here. And that's another thing, before Katrina came, I was fishing right at the mouth of the Mississippi River and the water was so hot. I have never seen it that hot. When you turn the deck pump on, the water is, the first water that comes through the hose is hot because it is pumping it through the engine room but it never did cool off. It was just hot.

L. Is it like that now?

Gabriel: No. It is not, but I remember before the power went out watching the weather channel and they showed the infrared from the satellite. That patch of water was the hottest in the Gulf and that's where it was coming. I knew it would be the worst of the worst. I think it will be a long time, I hope, it be a long time before we see one like that again.

L. It took up the whole Gulf on that satellite.

Gabriel: Huhuh If I saw conditions like that again, I would think about leaving.

L. Come to Mobile. If you want to come to Mobile, y'all can come to my house. That's close. Mama always thinks we should go further than Mobile, but I am like you, I think it is more dangerous on the road than at my house.

Samuel: I would like to see statistics of how many people in wrecks.

Louise: If my house was in town, wouldn't you feel like there is surely no reason to leave? Here it is getting the water. Tornadoes can be anywhere.

L Thank you. Is there anything else?

4. Interview with Rachel, Sarah, and Jacob

August 23, 2007

L. is researcher

Jacob: What is yawl's take on it? It seems like every storm now is worse than the one before.

L. You would have to tell me that. You know more about the environment than I do.

Jacob: Is it the publicity what they are looking for?

Sarah: Yeah.

L. I don't know. I remember. I felt foolish because two weeks before it happened [Katrina hit] I was talking to the dean. We were talking about storms to make conversation. The new teachers were there. I was one of them. I said, "You know on the news they'll show a puddle of water in New Orleans and say, "there is a huge storm coming." I felt awful because I said they were making a big deal out of nothing then two weeks later Katrina hit. They would sensationalize everything.

Jacob: They would. I was staying on the island. They'd be down there at the east end saying, "She's starting to really get bad." The wind wouldn't be blowing. I think that was premature. I think they should have said, "It's not bad yet, but it's coming." You know.

L. Maybe that is why people were thinking it was not going to be as bad because it is like the little boy that cried wolf.

Sarah: Right. Right

L. It had been said so many times.

Rachel: It was to me. I remember a little bit about Frederick, and, of course, Ivan was bad but as far as having gone through a real major damaging storm, it hadn't been one here.

Sarah: You were about 5 when Frederick came through.

L. We went to mama's [house]. We couldn't get back in the city. They wouldn't let us back into Mobile Co.

Sarah: That's one reason none of us want to leave; because if you want to check on everything you can't get through. For one thing because of downed trees or authorities might stop you.

L. We didn't know what had happened to David's office. We were there. It was scarier than staying here because radio stations went off. The last thing we heard was everything, roofs were gone. We thought all of our friends were being killed by Frederick.

Jacob. Well, they, on the TV, some of the last reports one of the reporters said (this was in Frederick), "We don't know if there is anyone left living in Baldwin Co."

Sarah: They were making these comments, too, after Katrina. They were saying, "No contact in Bayou la Batre."

Jacob: I will never forget, I brought a TV home from the boat. It ran by battery. I wired it up to a car battery. It kept the TV going.

Sarah: We played movies all night.

Jacob: No, we did not (volume)! Schroedder was on.

Sarah: Well, we played movies most of the night when that went out.

Jacob: He was sitting in some little 8x10 strong house. He sat there in front of the camera. He just talked all night. Any communication he got, he would relay to you. He got dried out. He said, "Will somebody please get me some water?" (laughter)

L. Who said that?

Sarah: Don Schroedder. He was an anchorman.

L. That's what I thought; then I thought you were talking about a friend.

Jacob: Anyway, when they handed him the water, it was so funny. Remember seeing Jack or Jackie on some of the Westerns? He just turned it up- gulp, gulp, gulp. (laughter). We got a good laugh during the night.

L. Y'all didn't get flooding during the night, did you?

Jacob: It got up to the road- 7 foot. From the time I was 18 years old, I had lived on this river my entire life, I don't think I saw it in ANY (volume) storm come up more than 4 foot. Camille comes up, I think, 6-8 foot, then we have Frederick. In the Bayou, Frederick looked like it came up 10 foot. I don't think we got that around here but the main, I'm not sure. That was a span of 10 years, 4 little small storms, then we had Ivan. Ivan got up pretty good; then we had Katrina, so from the time before I was 18 nothing got above 4 foot.

L. Then another Category 5; the storm that just hit Central America.

Jacob: Go back and look. The same year Katrina came through, you had Katrina, Rita, Wilma; both hit Cat 5's. Then we had a year that didn't hardly produce anything. Almost

starting off again with Dean as a Cat 5. I know their reconnaissance is; their instruments are better. Were they just missing a lot before or what?

L. I don't know. Is it because of Global Warming you think?

Jacob: Ahhhh. I heard a guy talking to Steve Lyon. Steve Lyon, the guy was a meteo-meteo- a weather man (laughter). He was saying the pattern we are in now is the same pattern we were in in the 20's and 30's. He said to go back and get data from that era and it matches what we've had in the last 3 or 4 years from the Pacific (the northern Pacific). See what the temperature is in the northern Atlantic, see what the temperature is in the Southern Hemisphere. We have got better instruments now, but what they recorded back then was same as now. Then we went through a long stretch where it reversed. The waters where they were warm were cooler; where they were cooler they were warmer. You hear the debate going on and on and on about the warming and some are more die hard believers in it [Global Warming] and some ones that you give just as much credit to are not.

L. I don't think they know for sure.

Jacob: But I am gonna' tell you what my take on it is. I think we've got bigger worries. I think Global Warming, if it's true, it's going to get us bad in about 30 or 40 years. President Tom will get to us quicker than that.

L. President Tom?

Jacob: You don't watch Glen Beck? Watch Glen Beck. He calls this Iranian president, President Tom; more mafia a better job.

L. Scary

Jacob: In my opinion. I heard on the news for the first time yesterday. You know the United Nations guy? I can't remember his name. He represents our country. I can't remember his name now. [He is a] sensible talking guy probably my age or a little older with a white mustache. Anyway, who was with him? I can't remember who it was now but they asked him, this guy, does he believe that U.S. is talking about a military strike against the Iranian army. I believe that's more of a threat.

Rachel starts to talk.

Rachel: We pretty much didn't start getting ready until the day before. We knew it was going to be pretty bad so, at home; there was not much to do really just putting lawn furniture in the shed and all that. We did come over here [to her parents' house] and helped move shrimp in freezers and our shop on the island. We spent most of the time down there getting that ready. Ahm.. We had freezers to move out. We just loaded them on a trailer and moved them out. We had a lot of shrimp in the freezers. It just so happened that a friend that Edward works with in Mississippi had wanted shrimp and he

came at a good time and loaded up almost everything we had frozen and bought it all the day before we actually left the island so

L. So you didn't have to put anything in storage?

Rachel: No, we had a little bit of bait, frozen bait, and just a few pounds of shrimp that we wound up later eating. No loss in that way.

L: I hope the friend was in northern Mississippi.

Rachel: He was. He was. He was. So like I said before it was pretty much a day or two days before that we were really busy working at it. Ahm Then the day of, I just, ahm, I stayed at home as long as I could. We always go to Justin's mother's house which is in Greenleaf, but always at the last minute because I hate leaving everything (chuckle). I hate even having to go there.

L. Yeah.

Rachel: Even having to go there. It is only 10 miles; not far, but it is not home. We never go far. I would rather be at home.

L. Me, too.

Rachel: It is just far enough so that we know the water is not, the flood water is not; that's really what we are worried about. So we go out there and stay and usually all his brothers and sisters all gather up there so it is a house full so we just, just wait.

L. Are they all in the seafood business, too?

Rachel: No, they are not. Justin's daddy catches live bait. His brothers are in construction so I just; his sister works for a law office.

Sarah: Tell her how we texted each other.

Rachel: Yeah (chuckle) During the storm that was the worse thing because I wanted to know what; I wanted to know what was going on here. We couldn't talk to each other so we would send text messages so when you would get a signal for a few minutes then the text messages would come through. So we could read a little bit about what was going on.

L: Was that before the storm?

Rachel: During

Sarah: We would text, (loud enthusiasm) "We are ok. We love you!" (Laughing)
One of the messages they sent was, "Gabriel is getting water in his house." When they sent that and I got that, I knew my house had to have water in it. It had to have been; I

just got [incomprehensible word]

L. So your house is further south and closer to the water?

Rachel: It is lower elevated and it is closer to the river, Mullet (substitute name) River here, than Gabriel's.

L. Is it on the same road as Gabriel's?

Rachel: No it's not: When you go out mama's road, I'm just to the; you go to the right, first house that way

L. So you are closer to the river?

Rachel: Yeah, yeah. Not far from the bridge; the Mullet River bridge.

L. That had to be scary. Was that after the storm?

Rachel: That was during the storm. It was [addressing her mother], "When did the water start coming in Gabriel's house? Do you remember?"

Sarah: About 10 o'clock that morning.

Rachel: About 10 o'clock that morning you said it started coming in? Ah, so it was probably, it may have been around 12 or 1 before we came back. It flooded the [incomprehensible word] The worst of it was over. Justin came; he has got a 4-wheel drive truck so he left Greenleaf and came home and saw, you know, by then he said the water was up to the windows in the house. He was able to get close enough to see that. Ah, that was probably about 12 or 1 o'clock.

L. What an awful feeling.

Rachel: Yeah. So he came back and picked me up. At the time, the water was going down so he came back and picked me up. We just left the kids there at his mother's house and we came back and we were able to get in the house. By then it was still knee-deep inside so it was a mess. You know. Everything had floated from where it was supposed to be. The refrigerator had turned over and everything spilled out so it was, it was, it was creepy walking in it. Even outside, you know. There were spiders floating on top of the water and bugs and. Ugh

L. Was it muddy?

Rachel: It was clear enough. You could see down through it. You could see the ground; your feet walking through it. You could see it. I wasn't worried about, but then, after the water went down and settled, there was about an inch of mud all over the floors. But then after that, we left our house. We came here to check on mama's house, ahm because I knew they hadn't been able to get over here yet and, ah. But it was fine. So we went to

my brother, Samuel's where they were all staying. We ended up staying the night there with them so.

L. How were you that day?

Rachel: I was fine. I guess because I kinda' expected it. I take that back. I didn't expect it, but I knew it was a possibility and then when they called and said Gabriel was getting water. I was sure so (in a slower pace, sadly) yeah I was ok. I was. I mean I didn't like it, but I was ok. I was glad. I had a mess to clean up, but I was glad mama's house didn't flood because we had a place where we could come to stay. So

L. How long did ya'll stay here?

Rachel: We stayed here for about, I think it was about a week and half to two weeks before we got a camper. It seemed longer.

L. Did FEMA give you the camper?

Rachel: They did. We had insurance. But they still, they were able to get us the camper so it was about two weeks before we got the camper. I think we were without power for, ah, for what, a week? Six days. So during those 6 days, 6 days without power the first 3 days the insurance company when I called the 1-800 number they said, "don't mess with anything, don't clean anything yet," you know, just wait for the adjuster. It was about 3 days later I talked to the adjuster and he said start cleaning out. He said, "It is going to be a while before I can get to you because there are so many." But ah he did say to go ahead and start cleaning it up so we took pictures and started cleaning everything out. When we got in there, we did sweep mud out, but as far as furniture, we had to leave it like it was. We didn't want to mess anything up and then have them tell me I shouldn't have done it, so I left it all like they said. Ahhh I think it, it didn't take long to get all the furniture and everything just out but as far as walls; we did not have to leave that for the adjuster. I think it was about a month before he got there. You know to see it.

L. What about the shop?

Rachel: The shop we just left. It got about 4 foot of water. I was surprised. I thought it would have been more being we had so many feet in my house and it was on the island. There was about 4 foot of water in it. Ah No real major damage. Everything was a muddy mess; same thing there. Just have to clean it. Just clean it all up. The biggest things with the shop, you know, was there was nobody coming to the island any more so it pretty much sat there until business started picking up so -- which was- that was end of August. We were able to do some roe mullet that winter, so I guess by November we were back working and doing business.

L. Does Justin fish and own the shop?

Rachel: Yes. He does the net fishing; bait. He was catching a lot of bait selling dead bait and we were unloading shrimp boats and fish boats. All of that just stopped. The only

thing we were able to do later that year was when he started roe mullet fishing again. He would fish [incomprehensible] to the shop. Other boats would come to us and we would cut the mullet.

L. Did you ever fear you wouldn't get back?

Rachel: Yeah. TO START WITH (loud emphasis) from just looking around I thought, "How can we ever be normal again?" It didn't seem like we could. We didn't see how we could, how we could, how we were gonna' be back in business, but we did. It was a matter of getting shop cleaned up. All the fishermen, yeah, I think all the fishermen that fished for us and unloaded to us had their own damage. All their houses flooded and they lost such as that. Everybody wanted to get back to work. We had to, you know.

L. You never did think you might not do it again?

Rachel: No No. No. I always knew we would, it just seemed so impossible. It seemed so; such a big task having to get the house back together and, you know, everything with the shop; getting all the boats and hoping everybody else would still bring that fish to us. Be able to fish.

L. Did you see other's handled the situation differently from you or did you?

Rachel: I think everybody was pretty much the same. I think I spent most of my time at home at my house instead of tending the shop. It seems like that's the way it was with most of the other families that I knew of. Like there was a family who lived on the island. They were the same way and a family in Cross Roads [substitute name]. They were the same way. The women mostly wanted to get their house livable. Justin was more concerned, you know, with getting back to work; making a living again.

L. Ya'll were determined to get back?

Rachel: Oh yeah

L. to the lifestyle you had. Did you feel like your life was totally wiped out?

Rachel: It FELT LIKE (loud emphasis) Like everything would have to stop, you know, because we couldn't work anymore; the church we were going to flooded so it seemed like everything was stopping until it was all cleaned up and it seemed like such a big task to get it all back, you know, back to normal. It was gonna' take a while.

L. Did you have help? Did people come in and help?

Rachel: Yeah. We did. Actually friends of ours who didn't have any damage they would come in and help clean up and our church; people would come to our church. They sent a group of men over. They helped actually tear out floors and walls and that kind of stuff and Justin's brothers and sisters. They live in areas where they didn't have any damage so they came and worked and helped. I think, I only went to Papa Jone's, my grand

father's on the bay. I went two days to help him work on his house but I wanted to help more but there was more to do at home, too, and at the shop and

L. You were there [at her grandfather's house] the day my sister and I came, weren't you? Ya'll might have been leaving.

Rachel: No, I don't think I was over there.

L. It was so sad because he had left your great grand mother's things [it was actually Rachel's grandmother's things] in drawers like they were. I felt I was invading his privacy but they had to be taken out. They were wet.

Rachel: Yeah. Something had to be done.

L. It was sad.

Rachel: It was sad. Like for us; we had insurance. We felt like were, were capable of doing what we had to do to get back to work, to get things back to normal, but seeing Papa and the elderly; that WAS sad, but EVERYBODY did what they could to clean up. They did what they had to do.

L. My sister and I went down just 1 day. We felt like we made such a tiny difference. I mean, you know, we did our little part. He seemed to adjust well.

Rachel: Yeah. Most people did, after the initial shock. It seemed like this horrible thing initially. After that passed, the next days you go to work and start working until you get back like it should be.

L. Since then do you feel differently about storms when you hear?

Rachel: NOT really, but I guess that seems odd, but I knew our house in this area I had seen storms before like Frederick. I believe our house [her parents' house] had a couple of inches during Fredrick. Where our house is, I knew there was the possibility and with the big storms, you know how it is. As a matter of fact, I think I feel different about it now because, like I said at the time, it seemed so devastating like it was going to take a lot longer to get back going. We've been through it now. We can do it again so

L. When you look back it's different than it would have been closer to time [the time of the storm]

Rachel: Definitely

L. Do you have anything else to add?

Rachel: Can't think of anything. I know Justin is still catching debris. When he was bait fishing and daddy, too;, shrimping. They are still catching debris. I guess they'll be catching it for a long time.

L. Does that tear up nets?

Rachel: It does. It's more aggravating, I think. You have to stop what you're doing. There were 200 houses from the island washed away so you know a lot of that stuff is right there where they are trying to work.

Sarah: Shingles. Tin.

L. Didn't you get tin in the shrimp net?

Rachel: She cut her finger.

L. It healed ok?

Sarah: I kept thinking about Tetanus. Then I read some stuff about Tetanus. You mentioned our house and how much [water] was in the house during Frederick. It was up to 2 foot.

Rachel: Oh, I didn't think it was that much. 2 foot?

Sarah: 2 foot

Rachel: We had 32 or 33 inches (laugh) While we were cleaning there was a glass setting on the window sill in the bedroom. Justin had drunk a glass of tea and left it [before evacuation during Katrina]. There it was; a little fish swimming around in the glass.

5. Interview with James and David

September 19, 2007

David: It seems like when you have a reporter wanting to talk to you, they have a prepared speech. They are dressed up. They catch you.uhhhhh

James: I watch them. They have asked me, but I say no. For some reason you just look like an idiot.

David: They ask you questions that you are not prepared for. They have prepared for the response. They catch you. They try to catch us when we are down at the fuel dock. I mean we have been working all night; we haven't took showers. We kinda' look rough. I can. I feel like I have micro minnow in my hair and this girl comes up there from the news. I can't remember her name; one of them and she comes up there wanting to interview people, me, my brother and; I ran inside real quick. I mean she'll ask you something. You are not gonna' know how to answer it.

L. This paper won't have your names in it.

David: Is this going to be a study about the storm and stuff. Is anybody writing a story about the storm?

L. This is a paper about the storm.

David: I hate to get on a rant about it, but there was a lot of money after it.

James: That is something I didn't agree with. It looked like the government coming in to help and even lots of the church groups. All this was fine and it started out ok but it has gotten carried away. It has went too far. They should stop.

L. That's what I was wondering. I think a lot of people

James: They had good intentions, but it got abused.

David: We hardly got any help with our business. You seen the pictures of the sacks [of oysters].

James: We done this ourself.

David: We threw it away. Nobody replaced that money. We had to just work ourselves to do it. Others that hardly had anything, they weren't working. I looked at one driving a \$20,000 Silverado truck. He's got money. Where did this goober get money?

James: I have seen them give them money; \$17, 18 THOUSAND [emphasis on thousand] dollars... never had anything, you know.

L. I was wondering about some of the boats in Cross Roads.

James: There was a lot of waste there.

David: We got down and cleaned the house right after, but other people decided, "No, I am just going to sit and wait until"; then a church group would come clean it out and then they applied for a FEMA loan. How many times do you clean it out before it is clean? They didn't just fix it. They redesigned the house.

L. Make it better than it was?

David: Yeah

James: That's the way FEMA works, anyway. If you have a few dollars in the bank, you don't qualify. You never; even though you lose half of what you have got, you don't qualify. You gotta' lose the other half. They want to; I work for mine so I don't want somebody who is laying around doing nothing to be equal with me.

David: I had one come down. He; I heard him talk; wanted me to sign a thang. She was doing a survey on FEMA money; wanted me to sign some saying how helpful they were, how much they got me straightened out, how much they had done. I said, "You didn't help me none" [FEMA representative said] "Well, I want you to tell how good we done, how happy you are". [James said] "I'm Not! I am not signing nothing; you need to get up and leave." I told her she should leave. I am not signing that. Go find someone who you gave \$20,000 to sign it. I got nothing. I am not a fool.

L. I wonder if she recorded that?

David: No, she went and looked for somebody who would sign it.

James: One, of the lawyers, who works for the FDA called me. I would have to mortgage everything. I own everything. I don't owe no note on my house and I would have had to get a mortgage to borrow any money until I got back [recuperated from Katrina damage]. I said I really believe that the next time a storm comes through, we would all be better off if the government would stay in Birmingham or Montgomery. Don't come down and help. If you want to come down like the Red Cross did where you haul meals in; all that helps. We were working on houses and we would just go get a meal to eat. We had food, but, it was easy that way; you didn't have to stop. When we finally got the business back, I couldn't get no one to work. They would rather go stand in a line down there and get something for nothing instead of to come here to work. That nearly put us out of business again.

David: I wish the military would do the roads, but leave everything else alone; stay out of it, health care; everything else. I mean if the National Guard comes in like they do to help people get out that are stuck in places; bring food, water, and ice, stuff like that; water, Ice MREs, that's fine. You gotta' My brother, he likes them [Meals Ready to Eat, MREs]

James: I ate two of them things, but after a while the smell of heatin that up.

L. What's in them?

James: It is that chemical heat that I couldn't take the smell.

David: It's a military ration. It stands for Meals Ready to Eat. We went over there. All I wanted was water and ice. After Ivan, I remember going over there and they done the same thing. They had a semi full of ice. Well, they set it on the ground; the pallets on the ground; and you rode by the next day; after about a week there are bags blowing around in the parking lot; big pallets of them melted.

James: I did go over there and grab a couple of bags to put in the deep freeze to try to hold me.

David: The pallets just throwed over there.

James: We had a generator. We had our refrigerator.

L. Did you have oysters here that you lost?

James: Oh yes.

David: We had bags of them. We had over 100 big sacks that I had bought in Louisiana. We had 100, 120 sacks, \$100 per sack, and we had gallons; \$40 \$45 per gallon. We lost that and we didn't get nothing. We lost more than anybody else. Those who had something, got nothing; those who had nothing got a lot. We had that and we were expected to get; everybody said, Well y'all got your own business so you don't need anything."

James: We were like, "We were out of work and y'all were out of work." We always figure. The ones who had nothing, got something; the ones that had something got close to nothing. And

L. How did it change your life after?

James: It really hasn't. It slowed us down for a while. We had a bad year after. We just slowly built back. We are back up to speed where we were.

L. Right after did you feel like you wouldn't be able to get back the way you were?

James: No. I don't think it bothered me like that. For a short time, you come home and it looks like you have so much work it is overwhelming to try to straighten up. It is so much work. You gotta rebuild the house, the whole shop. It gets kinda' depressin' after a while but the way I go at anything; one project at a time; today we clean out the house, after that we gotta' get our refrigerator cleaned and going.

David: After we got his cleaned out and then we got the shop cleaned out, I had bought the house from my grandfather that he was renting and it needed to be cleaned. It hadn't

really been cleaned. Now I gotta' clean mine out. I was engaged. She came down. We said you gotta' wear boots.

James: She was coming over. Just bring her home you know. You are walking around your house in boots. It was hard for a girl, you know. She done real good and jumped in and helped. She cleaned out cabinets.

L. She must really love you. (laughter)

David: Yeap. Her grandma brought us some stew and we ate on that for a day. She brought some cokes. And ice.

James: It caught us unexpected you know. It was going to Louisiana so we didn't pick things up that normally we would. After it got to comin in we didn't have time. We seen it coming across the highway, I called at 4 o'clock in the morning; said we all got to leave. So we went up to Samuel's and when were there the water keeps coming up. We came back and we start cleaning. You put things up like the washer and dryer up on cabinets. You get things as high as you can get it.

Johnny: But we didn't do none of that.

David: We thought it is get around be a little wind but, when Camille went through.

James: Camille had more wind. It was more destructive from wind. The water? It is kinda' unreal with that much water with Katrina.

L. It is scary because two category 5's have come ashore in Central America this year.

David: They focused on New Orleans. We said, "You are a bowl, it knocked a hole in it. Don't get mad because you went under water."

James: New Orleans is built under water any way.

L. The blame was what bothered me. Nobody could know.

David: They said the levees weren't built strong enough, but it is not going to survive everything. Things like that you can't prepare for.

James:right, right You just want to get it over with. You start calling around and you find out everyone is ok right there. You have to realize what is important. Everyone's life is ok.

L. When you realized what happened when you came back, what did you do?

James: We pitched in right then.

David: We are one of the few. Most people looked around and sat; didn't do a lot. We, wife come, soon as the water got low enough that we could drive the vehicles back down

here, get in here where we could drive them back down, we started sweeping out the house and getting back to work.

L. Can you think of anything else you want to add?

James: The storm was bad. You come back you look around, you are depressed, but you decided it is done, nothings going to change; it has happened. The best you can do is deal with it, but after you are dealing with it and you look around and

David: everybody else is not doing nothing. After you clean it up and two weeks later somebody else comes around to clean it for them, you get a little spiteful; I mean, you try not to be. You try not to let it bother you cause like my dad told me, .You just make yourself mad.” It got to me a little bit. I still don’t like it. Some people are still having church members come down to help them. And it is kinda’ like , If you ain’t got it clean by now

James: If you had a house and you got out there and cleaned it up quick and let it air out, you wouldn’t have mold. What about inside your walls? Water got behind the paneling, but it drained out and we bleached it, but we opened up and let it dry out.

David: They kept their doors closed. They didn’t sweep it out. They were happy just to live outside. Some lived in tents. There is no way in the world I am going to sleep in tents for long without cleaning the house out. They just left it.

James: Groups would come by and ask if we needed help, but I would tell them, “Well, I am able so I am doing fine. Go to somebody who is doing worse.”

David: One group came by; they were contractors; they got paid to do repairs. They paid people to paint their own house. Contractors got paid and they hired the people to paint their own house. Now if that don’t sound...they, I thought it was a little bit.

L. How did it change your life the month after Katrina?

David: You don’t have money! (Laugh)

James: I don’t think it affected me too much that way, you know. We just tightened up a little. I don’t have a note for anything and if you do that you can deal with that kind of thing.

L. You were so busy all the time, at the shop before doing work.

James: The work just changed.

David: Our work always changes anyway.

James: I roofed my house. I put a roof on the place up in Littleton. The house she is living in now I had a chance to buy after the storm. I put a roof on it. And remodeled it

and I paid a couple of workers to help me do that. I found work wherever we could to keep us all busy. It was 2-3 months before we were back in the shop actually working but it was difficult 20%-25% of what we were; you couldn't find oysters. 2-3 days a week was all we could afford. We couldn't find workers.

David: Mississippi just now opened up for oysters. Louisiana was a mess. And it is harder to bid for it. Everybody along the Gulf Coast wanted oysters. Everybody said you can get them in Alabama. It run the price up. It doubled. The day before Katrina, it doubled after. They would tell them, I will give you 25, I'll give you 26, 30, 35,40.

L For a gallon?

James: No, for a pound in shells.

David: Before we were paying 27. It went from 20 to22 before the storm to 40 after.

James: We pay for them.

L. How can you tell when you look at them?

James: You look at size; make sure they are a decent size.

L. Sarah and Jacob came over to eat one night and I said, "Why don't you bring oysters in the shell so you can show me how to open them?" It was tough

James: You don't know how we open ours do you?

L. No.

James: Let me show you how ours works...

L. OK, let me turn this off.

6. Interview with Mary and Richard

October 7, 2007

L. is interviewer

L. Where do you live?

Richard. In Louisiana; in a little town south of Lafayette.

L. Were you living here when Katrina hit?

Mary: Had moved away traveling. We had moved back in May that year [2005, the year Katrina hit]. We had come back. We had just remodeled. Two months later that storm.

L. And y'all had gotten the grand piano and everything.

Richard: Right

L. So you weren't as attached to the seafood business as the rest of your family?

Mary: No

L. Had you decided to come back and get into that again or not?

Mary. No. We just decided to come back to ministry and to be close to the family again. [However, Mary was working in Sarah's seafood shop before Katrina] But after the storm it was like another blow so we decided, you know, we didn't want to go through that any more.

L. And your roots here weren't quite as deep since you had been away to live some.

Richard: Right

L. The Chinese call some crises a chance for opportunity some times, but it is also horrible so it is kinda' interesting to think of it that way.

Richard: Yeah. It can be a change but later you can look back and see that it could be a positive change. Do you see that? Some times it takes time to look back and say, "Well the change might have been positive even though it was horrible."

Mary: Different situations for different people, you know, it may be causing a change and all, but someone that's been here for a while, it is hard.

L. Yea

Mary: Frederick was our real bad storm the first time.

Richard. 79

L. We were here.

Mary: That was hard getting through that. Then we went through a couple of other little storms and then we started traveling and living in different places; seeing different lives. It was not really wanting to come back to that. Then when we did come back and it come again it was like such a reminder; a fresh reminder of the reason we really kinda' left the first time; part of the reason.

L. Did you flood during Frederick, too?

Richard: We had four foot of water in our house then, but we didn't have the damage; near the damage what Katrina did. We had almost 7 foot of water in the house then. It was devastating when you came back everything was gone.

L. So ya'll left for the storm?

Richard. Yes..

L. Where did you go?

Richard: Oakhill, north Alabama Oakhill We know some people who live there and we stayed with them.

Mary: We didn't expect it to be that bad because I believe it was [Hurricane] Dennis. Was that the storm right before?

Richard. Yeah

Mary: We was told it was gonna be bad and coming through and so we took all his ministerial books that he had collected over 20 years.

Richard: I put them in the car. I filled the car; the back seat and front seat; there was just enough room in there for me. The trunk was full and I took the car to high ground thinking Dennis was coming; so Dennis didn't come.

Mary: We had raised the grand piano. We had raised it up so

Richard: Yeah. People had helped me raise it so it wouldn't Well maybe if the water comes in it won't get that high based on other storms. Well when Dennis didn't come, we go back home and we put everything back like it was. So then when Katrina was coming and we was told it was going in there and we wasn't to get that much we didn't really pack everything up. We should have.

L. Nobody knew.

Richard. Right, Right, Right

L. Even though when you looked on the map, the thing was huge, you just didn't think it would come here, because it was predicted to go way over in Louisiana. I am so sorry. That's awful. So did you lose all of your books?

Richard: Oh yes; my library. About 20 years I had been building that library. Some of the books are out of print so I would never get those back. But I have been slowly replacing the ones that I had lost.

L. Later on I will find out the ones that were your favorites so that we can look online at a place that sells out of print books, so we can find some of the ones you lost. Did the children want to leave? How did they feel about it? Was it just Anne at home?

Mary: Anne was the only one and she had not ever experienced anything like that so she didn't know really what to expect. But when we got back it was such a shock to her. She cried; teen age girl, you know. All she could think of was all her little things was gone and when

Richard. All her stuff. yeah

Mary: and when people come and started, you know, they pretty much raise your windows and just throw everything out. That's heartbreaking cause the things are real sentimental to you, but the peoples are trying to help ya, but you are wantin' to cry. And for Anne; she was just heartbroken so after that when we would ride down the roads seeing, you know, and when we went to Louisiana and saw that over there and I would see all these children's toys and their stuff sittin' out on the edge of the road, I would cry because I would wonder how those little ones [felt]. That's their little life right there throwed to the highway for all to see and people would rummage through your personal things. And that was hard.

L. Were you at your daddy's that day when I came down with my sister to help him?

Richard: Yes. Mary. Yes.

L. I thought the hardest thing to do that day, and I felt so bad when I got your mother's things out of the drawer and they were wet and he had not moved them for five years. It killed me. He was sitting on the swing and I know he was thinking, .You know, I barely know these people and they've got my wife's things." That was sad. I know he must have felt like you said Anne felt.

Mary: Yeah Unhum

L. But they had to be taken out because the drawers were swollen. I don't know what he did. I hope ya'll washed some of those crocheted things and got them back in.

Mary: Some of the quilts and things like that we stretched out to let them dry that could be washed. Some of the things we was able to keep, but some we would have to just get rid of it when he didn't know it cause it was hard.

L. I felt sorry for him.

Richard: When our daughter first saw all that, she was just cried and everything was gone and I would tell her, "You know, we haven't lost everything. We still have each other", which is the main thing and I think the most important thing is your family and the attitude that people have toward the tragedy or the situation that us and the thousands of other people were in. I said, "Look on the news. Here's some children that can't find their mamas and daddies. Here's a man that can't find his wife. You know we have each other." And so we looked to the positive side. Something is going to happen. The sun is going to rise again.

L. That seems like a good way to look at it. Did she feel like she had deep roots here even though ya'll didn't live here much of her life?

Mary: No, I don't think so. It was just the little material things, you know, the things that she had had all her little life. You know, she had collected and but she was really glad when we left.

L. She was?

Mary: Yes. A start over. She just didn't want to be here. It was really kinda' hard for me because I had such high hopes of things being different. We wanted to, you know, me and Sarah would be together again. I was just hoping things would be better, but I look back like you said. I look back now and I think, "Well maybe I needed to move on." But it is still hard when I think of that. It is hard. It is hard for me when I say it could happen again.

L. Are ya'll near the coast now?

Mary: We are on higher ground. From what we have been told there has never been any water up there. Not in a flood zone so that's one thing we looked for; not to be in a flood zone because of the high insurance and they have all these things they find reasons not to pay.

L. I know. We are not in a flood zone because of the height here. We debated about not getting insurance at all. We couldn't get water, but we could get wind.

Richard: It is really more water than wind. It is when the water and wind come in together. They would say it is water.

L. I don't blame you for going on. But you have adjusted fine now? Is it still real hard?

Mary: Yes. I feel like I am pulled between because I really want to be here, but I am not. But you know I have been away a lot but I am able to make myself adjust. I guess there will always be that part of you that wants to be with your family. At least I am not too far away so that I can't come back. I want to be close to my sister. We have moved around so much that we see life different. That's what I tell people and I was telling him, if you are a seafood worker then this is where you want to be; where the work is, you know. Even though I was raised in it and there is times I get to missing water, and things like that, that is not what I, what I; I wouldn't want to spend my life doing that. It is a hard life.

L. I know it is.

Mary. It is hard.

L. You don't see yourself as a seafood person any more at all? You seemed so comfortable with the ministry that day.

Mary: That is pretty much our life.

Richard. That's our life. Yeah.

L. Because you feel like you are helping other people?

Mary: Especially when we meet families that are down and out and need somebody to listen to them and somebody to care about them to just, you know, encourage them. It feels so good to do that. When you see them, when you see them feeling encouraged and there is hope things is going to be better. And somebody cares about us enough to ...

L. Did that help ya'll get through the storm and hard times; to focus on other people rather than yourselves?

Richard. Oh yeah..

L. Did you have people to listen to you, too? You probably needed to talk, too.

Mary: Yes. There were times; now him, he probably handled it maybe a little better than me. But being a woman when you pull just, I lost all of my pictures. You know, years ago it was all these little Polaroid pictures.

Richard: Little school pictures they had.

Mary: A lot of that. I lost a lot. But you know I may could ask Sarah. [She] might have some when they was little, but there was some that they didn't have That kinda thing; when I would be pulling it out. I still have some now that I will not throw away. I took them home and put them in a shed to let them dry. Now every now and then I will go out there and I will pull them apart and I just want to cry. I will pull them apart and look and I will see a little face or something like that. I imagine a lot of people do that.

Richard: To us our photographs were one of the most valuable things we had. Somebody said .Well what about that baby Grand piano? It is not even a year old.” The photographs were more valuable than that; than even my library. This is our life. This was the memories of our children and ministry; things that happened in life. But we used that situation, Katrina, to help other people. When people needed help I could tell them, “Hey, I have been right there with you. I know what it is like.”

L. You could tell them you know how it feels. Did you find there were more people in need in Louisiana than here?

Richard: No. I guess it was equal, the people in need. Then right after Katrina, then Rita hit so that was another devastation.

Mary: That was as bad as Katrina.

Richard: Over there, yeah.

L. Do you have family there, Richard?

Richard. Yes, I do.

L. Who had damage from both storms?

Richard. No. My family was farther north, higher ground where they were ok.

L. Is there anything else that you want to add?

Mary: Don't take life for granted. Don't take your family for granted. I think that is what we do a lot of. When things are going easy, you know, we think we are ok. We never know when something of that nature or anything else is going to change your whole life. So appreciate what you have and it is not material things. It is family.

Richard: Right.

Mary: Staying together through it, kind words to each other, just letting each other know you are there. That means a lot.

L. Yeah.

Mary: We love people. Anne loves Louisiana. She loves it over there. She likes Louisiana life. They are fun people. But what I find different is they are not, ah, they are not as family-oriented as Alabama people are. I don't know how to explain it, but there is a difference there because when we, you know, our family; we hug, we love. You know we want them there. We want all our grandkids there. With them, they are a little bit, you know, different; maybe a little more privacy. Anne loves it, but she loves Alabama, too, not the Mobile side; she loves Eastern shore 'cause we lived there a few years, too, so

she likes it over there. She'll say, "If we ever go back to Alabama, mama, we gotta' go to the Eastern shore."

L. Where over there did you live?

Mary: We lived in the Fairhope area for a while, but we spend most of our time near Pecan.

L. Mr. Jones told me one time that a long time ago when the Norwegian ship wrecked, some went to Eastern shore and others came over here.

Mary: I met some Jones's over there.

L. Did you know if you were related?

Mary: No, didn't have no idea. But she likes the Eastern shore. Eastern shore people is different, too. It is like Cross Roads people is different form Mobile. I would tell different ones, I would say, me being raised there, it is almost embarrassing to say, but you can tell when Cross Roads people is in Mobile. I said, "They are wearing white rubber boots" [seafood workers wear white rubber boots].

L. I love those boots. Sarah corrected me one time when I said they were from Cross Roads.

Mary: No. There is a difference from bay and the river and the bayou people.

L. What's the biggest difference?

Mary: I have been gone so long, to me they are the same, but it is just almost the same. I really don't know unless it is the families, you know; like the other families in the bayou area. I don't know the difference, but they all say there is a difference. Of course, when we were growing up there was a little bit of rivalry. Because we moved around I see difference; like when we are over there I say, "Eastern shore people are different people."

L. Some times I think I would like to live there. But it has changed.

Mary: Fairhope is so pretty. But a lot of snow birds live in Fairhope now. Now it is growing so much. Have you been over there and seen all those malls? It is like it is all blending. It is gonna' be almost bigger that the town of Mobile. They are taking up all that farm land.

L. It is sad to me. One thing that interested me about your family was the family working together like farmers' families use to.

Mary: It is hard.

Richard. Same thing about that in Louisiana is we are losing the cane fields. Houses are built there. They have closed down sugar mills that have been there all my life and longer than that. Because when old people talk, they say they have been there 100 years.

L. Is sugar imported, too, now?

Richard: Some of it is. One day it may be all imported.

L. I hate that.

Richard. Me, too.

Mary. Now where we are at, our address is, but we are in a little town. It is a fishing village where all the shrimpers are around.

L. So you are still around where the shrimpers are.

Mary: Yes. When I get a little bit lonesome I will get in my car and I will drive down looking at all the shrimp boats.

Richard: I was born and raised near the water there. I have been on the water all my life; me and her, too, so we are not far from the water.

L. So was your family in the fishing industry too?

Richard: Yeah...uh huh...

L. Are they still doing it?

Richard: Ah. No. I was raised by my grandpa and he fished.

L. Oh he did? Did ya'll build boats too?

Richard: Papa was the only one who couldn't build. That's what he said. He said, "I couldn't even build a square box."

L. But you can.

Mary: You have just not built a boat.

Richard. No, I haven't built a boat. I have built houses from the ground up; built accordions.

L. I think your dad is so neat with his carvings.

R. Yeah. They look Norwegian to me.

Mary: That does look like that, don't it?

Richard: He has some Norwegian blood.

L. That ship that sunk on the bay generations ago was from Norway. Some of the brothers went to the Eastern shore; others to the western shore of Mobile Bay.

Mary: I never knew about all that.

L. I have it written down some where. You will have to get him to tell you. There were four brothers, I believe.

Mary: some of my history; seems like I remember a little bit. We were talking about Anne earlier. When we first moved back to Alabama, her older sister would tease her and say, ".Anne you are going to meet one of them shrimpers over there and probably end up marrying one of them shrimpers or datin' one of them shrimpers." And these are her words, "I will never date no shrimper. I don't want nothin' to do with no shrimper. I don't want nothin' to do with no seafood people," is what she would say. And so we moved to Louisiana and we have been there and she met this little boy and he is a shrimper. (laughter) And he has his own boat and he has been shrimping since he was 14. He is 17 and he takes this big boat out by his self for a week at a time and shimps. So I remind her of that. I will say, "You met a shrimper way over here in Louisiana!" (Laughter)

L. Never say never.

Mary: Not knowing. She really has not been around my family a lot, just when we would come to be around, to be around the seafood. Now she is really around it. She goes crawfishing now so she goes crawfishing, traps and..

Richard: Crawfish are in shallower water than shrimp. There traps are like a bunch of cypress tress. They call it the swamp but it is cypress trees and it is tied to one of the branches and the traps, some of it sticks out of the water, because when the crawfish gets in there he has to come up for air. They put a flag on it. Certain colors is your trap.

L. So it is not a trap you make?

Richard: Yeah

L. So you make a trap to put over the cypress tree?

Richard. NO. Next to it so when it comes up for air it falls in the trap? Just part of it is out of the water. He is in it. He climbs up for air and falls in it.

L. That's funny. She is dating a shrimper.

Mary: and crawfishing and all that. I think she had went one time and his parents were out there also crawfishing. So they were watching them across the swamp and they told us they didn't think she would do it because she didn't look like the type that would do that. They said, "but here she was taking the dead fish out." The old rotten one, they have to take out, then they have to put. They said, "She was just taking that out and baitin them traps, throwin' them back over."

L. Did you tell your daddy about that?

Mary: No

L. He would probably get a kick out of that. I was wondering if she has a boyfriend and that's why she didn't want to come.

Mary: Yeah. That's why. That's one of the reasons.

L. Is she in school or is she home schooling?

Mary: She is home schooling. That was kinda' a hard thing for me because I really didn't want her to home school, but after the storm we was just here and there. It was just hard on her and the way we have moved in ministry, it has made it hard on her so

L. But she has made a lot of friends anyway? How do you meet people when you home school?

Mary: Oh yeah. Well, because we are in ministry, at the church; she meets like that. Now she is working at the little zoo part time she has got some young girls there she is friends with.

L. Do you teach her?

Mary: Pretty much herself and her sister-in-law helps her when she gets stumped on something because her sister-in-law; they are close.

L. I forgot you have a son who lives in Louisiana.

Mary: Our other one lives in Baldwin County. She is a school teacher.

L. It takes a lot of discipline to home school. I don't think I could have done it with my children.

Mary: I couldn't have. Not with many, but with one it is ok.

Richard. Our faith in God and faith in each other helped us come through it.

L. Determination and faith

Mary: Every now and then I get a little blue and I think , “I am starting over again.” It is not easy, but when you look around and you see what you don’t have. I need this. I need that.

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