



In the Wake of Hurricane Katrina: New Paradigms and Social Visions (A Special Issue of American Quarterly)

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Assessing the damage left by Hurricane Katrina in social, cultural, and physical terms, the essays in this volume suggest that the nation's long and historic engagement with the Gulf Coast has entered a new era.

While many of the essays analyze Katrina in terms of the relatively recent past, others explore how reaction to the hurricane's aftermath is rooted in the region's history. Uniquely combining humanities and social sciences research, the contributors reevaluate the political, social, and economic dynamics that existed before this "natural" disaster and the subsequent responses and actions, or lack thereof.

Investigations of public policies, organizations, social movements, and neoliberalism range from a traditional policy case study of the often-neglected Alabama and Mississippi experience to an analysis of urban social movements in New Orleans to a broad critique of local policy that has global implications. Innovative young scholars provide essays on music, literature, tourism, and gender. Interviews with key community leaders and historic poets round out the volume.

The many social, political, racial, economic, and personal disasters that followed Katrina produced intellectual dilemmas. How could this happen in the wealthiest nation in the world? How could the U.S. government so callously abandon its citizens when they so desperately needed federal aid? Why was the most powerful military in the world unable or unwilling to act? Readers will find in this collection compelling answers to these, and other, complicated questions.

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