REFRAMING REALITY: A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF BLACK WOMEN IN LAKE CHARLES, LA.

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UD Climate Hub



Expanding inclusive hazard disaster planning for communities of color



## Objectives

Showcase trends within demographic profile from dissertation data

Highlight implications for disaster recovery of the sample

## **Research questions**

How do poor Black women recover from disasters in the context of structural and cultural violence?

What are the strategies these women are employing to survive after a disaster?

How do these women understand and define their resilience and vulnerability?

## Questions for today

What can demographic data tell us about the recovery process?

How can structural and cultural violence be identified within everyday experiences?

## **Theoretical orientation**

#### **Disaster Science**

• Recovery

#### **Critical Race Theory**

• Intersectional Black Feminist Theory

#### Peace and Conflict Studies

- Structural Violence theory
- Cultural violence theory



### Qualitative study

Radical ethnographic elements

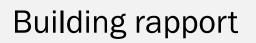


## Mixed methods approach

Semi-structured interviews Field observations Archival analysis





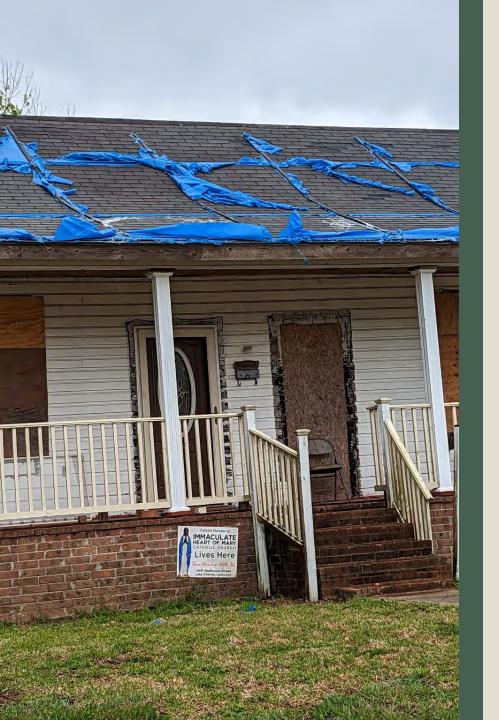


Volunteered with local organization

## Hurricane Laura

- Hurricane Laura entered the coast of Louisiana on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020
  - Hurricane category 4
  - Sustained wind speed of 150 mph
- Hurricane Delta hit the coast of Louisiana on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020
  - Hurricane category 1
  - Sustained wind speed of 100 mph
- COVID-19 pandemic





## Living situation

"Every ceiling every room in my house got cracks. The ceiling, I mean the roof, I had to get a new roof because one of the trees in my backyard was on the back of the house so we had three big trees, and then I had an orange tree in my back, and a shed in my back so all that was down. So they came in and they removed all the trees, and they even ground the stumps up and got all out so there's no trees in my yard now. And so, we had to replace the shed. And I mean we, we in middle of the lawsuit right now with the insurance company, which is ridiculous because I'm just like you spent all this money outside for the house and you know our house got structural damage with the foundation and everything. So, you got to fix that foundation before we can do any work in the house. So, we went in a lawsuit with that which is crazy to me. You spent \$22,000 taking some trees down in the yard."

- Zaila; age 60

## Health conditions

" For hurricane Laura I ended up at hives all over me, and it's because well, my son- his wife had a miscarriage... and then you know it was just like I said a lot. My husband wasn't helping me with anything with these insurance companies. They were, it was, they were giving me a run around and he was so busy; and I understood because his mother had just died... but it was horrible for me because I was, I felt like I was alone. And I had hives all over me because just the nerves from just trying to deal with it all. I mean it was just like all over, I woke up and I was just itching. It was from just nerves, just from because it was a lot. I mean my house, I had a big hole in a roof, you know, in my kitchen; and the adjuster that came, he was such a little, he was all butthole. God forgive me. He really was."

-Alayah; age 63

## Employment

"A lot of people are depending off of me; and they don't know what I go through. They just think it's easy because you know, you can run here and there. But you know, it's not easy dealing with people. And you know, it's just a lot behind it because they want their way; and then you're there to do a service. As to where at the workplace, it wasn't that demanding like I did my job and the next shift come in whatever wasn't done wasn't done; the next shift picked up on it, yeah. But that cleaning houses is tedious yeah, yeah. It's just me doing all the hard work and running to the grocery stores. And you know, a lot of people are depending off of me, and it's just life isn't fair you know. And I just feel like I'm doing God's work and everything because the people that I'm doing it for need my help, but then you know it's just it's not a paycheck."

-Destiny; age 53

### Lessons learned

## 01

Poor Black women's recovery is exacerbated by structural conditions they face as result of the storm 02

The fundamental conditions within their livesthat continue to be affected 3 years after the stormhint at the presence of both structural and cultural violence 03

Understanding that the recovery process for Black women is tied to violence begs for a reframing of our understanding of this process as a whole

# THANK YOU!