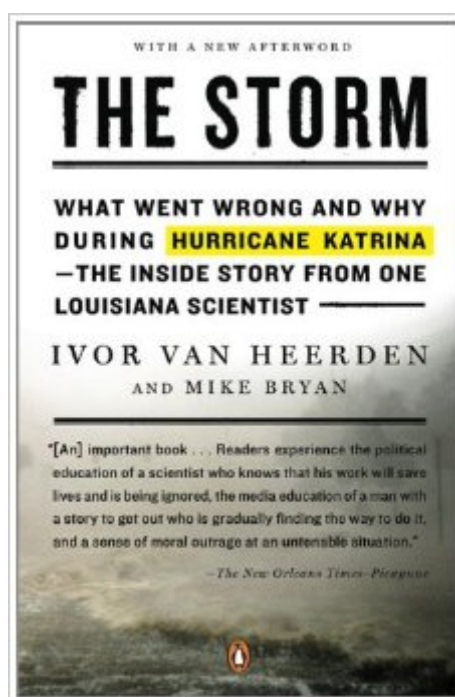


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# The Storm: What Went Wrong And Why During Hurricane Katrina--the Inside Story From One Louisiana Scientist



## Synopsis

The ultimate inside story of the Katrina tragedy?from the cofounder of the LSU Hurricane Center  
After warning for years about the looming threat of catastrophic flooding in New Orleans, Ivor van Heerden was one of the highest-profile media experts during the Katrina disaster. Over the following eighteen months, he was even more prominent as he challenged the official version of those events and campaigned for an engineering plan that would protect all of southeastern Louisiana, once and for all. In *The Storm*, van Heerden lays out in full detail the stunning incompetence among the bureaucrats, the politicians, and the Army Corps of Engineers that culminated in the catastrophe that crippled, perhaps forever, a great American city.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Van Heerden is a civil engineer and LSU professor, actively involved in New Orleans disaster planning, and a resident of the New Orleans area. He (and others) had warned about possible deadly consequences prior to Katrina, and probably dwells too much in "The Storm" on those computer models and discussions. Nonetheless, he clearly makes his point that human errors made Katrina much more serious than it could have been. An early interesting point was that per the Stafford Act of 10/00, once the President declares a national emergency, the federal government is in charge - thus, there should not have been any question about leadership. Another important point is that FEMA staffers refused to consider emergency Army assistance in erecting tent facilities for the displaced and provision of eg. health services - possibly a major benefit. Van Heerden states that 350 miles of levees protect New Orleans. Those along the Mississippi rise 25 feet above sea level,

are 300 feet thick at the base and 100 feet thick at the top - not a source of problems. The rest, however, range from 5 to 18.5 feet above sea level, and involved canals and Lake Ponchartrain. Levee failures totaled 1,050 yards, in total. Fortunately the La. Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries prepositioned 6 large and 12 smaller boats at the Jackson Barracks of the local National Guard. This enabled them to quickly begin responding after the levee breaks. The Coast Guard's help was also invaluable - rescuing an estimated 6,000 individuals. Meanwhile, other units of government were hampered by lack of prepositioning, having to communicate by courier, poor initiative, and turf wars with each other. Airmen at a nearby Air Force base played basketball while residents across the street waited in a Jr.

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