Natural Disasters –
A Moving Look Through The Photographer’s Lens

Alyssa Carbone
Learning Community 09 English 101 and Art 111, Professors Patricia Licklider and Frank Gimpaya

Research Question
What makes a natural disaster photograph powerful?

Compositional Elements
That Make Photography Powerful

- Good composition
- Good exposure
- Evoke feelings
- Telling a story
- Identifying a subject
- Pattern
- Symmetry
- Point of interest
- Texture

By having these elements, a photograph can present a story that the viewer can understand and ultimately relate to in a certain way.

Photograph by Todd Maisel-New York Daily News

Natural disaster photographs, like the one above taken at Breezy Point, Queens during Hurricane Sandy, are powerful because they evoke strong feelings in the viewer. These feelings capture and bring in the viewer’s full attention.

References

http://www.sandphotos.org/Commentary/WhatMakesAPhotoGood.htm

http://www.photography.com/articles/taking-photos/five-elements-of-a-great-photograph/

http://www.cs.colorado.edu/~palen/Papers/iscram08/onlinePhotoSharingISCRAM08.pdf

Psychological Reasoning

- Try to find out facts
- Assess damage
- Seek out accurate, relevant and reliable information
- To find out about help response

- These are many of the psychological reasons as to why individuals take photographs of natural disasters.

When ordinary people hear about a natural disaster, they become attracted to finding out the outcome. We, as humans, have a natural desire to find out what is going on around us. People are willing to go out into the storm in order to capture memorable and shocking photographs.

- The returnee
- The exploiter
- The anxious
- The helper
- The curious
- The supporter
- The memorializer

These are the names of the seven different types of people who take photographs after the disaster.