

Environmental psychology article analysis

[Environment](#), [Ecology](#)



Environmental psychology is a moderately new subfield of psychology.

Understanding how individuals interact, perceive, and respond to the built and natural environment is the goal of environmental psychology (Veitch & Arkkelin, 1995). Overcrowding, climate, and pollution are some environmental factors that may definitely have a huge influence on human behavior.

Natural disasters not only significantly affect an individual's life but also a family's life.

Furthermore, understanding this substantial effect and ways to care for and heal the trauma of a natural disaster is an important goal for environmental psychologists (Veitch & Arkkelin, 1995). In August 2005, hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana (NOAA, 2007). The overwhelming aftermath left Louisiana in complete destruction, leaving thousands displaced and almost 2,000 lives lost (NOAA, 2007). In addition, children were lost as well as numerous children left without families.

The psychological trauma brought on by this event is a subject that psychologists attempt to understand. Through the article "Traumatization through Separation: Loss of Family and Home as Childhood Catastrophes" by Ute Benz (2004) this understanding can begin to be met. Throughout this journey, the article will be analyzed for its significance to the trauma suffered in hurricane Katrina, how the people of Louisiana especially young children cope, and how this type of tragedy influences a person's life.

Article Summary. Anna Freud created a home for displaced children in 1940. These children were alienated from their families as a result of the German bombardment of London (Benz, 2004). These children were alienated not

only from their families but also their environment. Through Anna Freud's research during and after this time, she could better comprehend the needs and development of children, particularly during stressful times (2004). Separation from the home and family is one of the most distressing events that can occur in a child's life.

Benz (2004) explores the degree of distress and the amount of influence separation has on different age groups as well as asserting the significance of how caregivers respond and react to these children. The short and long-term effects are also investigated. Benz does this through the works of Anna Freud and Hans Keilson (2004). The article takes on a psychoanalytic approach and emphasizes the importance of separation and trauma in a child's life along with how a child will function.

Hurricane Katrina and Environmental Psychology. As stated above, the effects of hurricane Katrina were devastating. The trauma that the children of Louisiana suffered because of this huge disaster and family separation was extensive. The long-term effects can be theorized only at this point, as this event just occurred in August 2005. Although known that there are certain points in a child's life in which separation is more distressing; aggression and guilt can occur including ambivalent feelings of love and hate as the cause of this (Benz, 2004).

Environmental psychology can hold a momentous place in tying together the effects of an environmental cataclysm such as a hurricane to psychological influence and human behavior. It does not matter what researchers or scientists try to do, natural disasters will never be prevented; however,

understanding what treatment plan is better for survivors of any disaster or the best course of action concerning how to respond to this type of situation is essential. Not only does one have to deal with losing friends and family members but also one has to deal with losing his or her home and becoming displaced.

All of these situations can be very devastating and can have a major effect on people, especially a child. Conclusion The correlation between a natural disaster and the effects it has on one is brought together through environmental psychology. The perception of the interaction or the environment and event as well as the behavioral and psychological response to the environment lead environmental psychologists through their desire and research for understanding an individual's behavior in regard to his or her surroundings.

The work completed by Hans Keilson and Anna Freud contributed to the understanding of how the environment and the traumatic event of a child who has been separated from his or her family can have considerable psychological effects. The goal of environmental psychologists is to assist in the treatment and care as well as understanding displaced families, children, and an individual.