

# War photographer essay sample

[Literature](#), [Poetry](#)



“ War Photographer” by Carol Ann Duffy is a poem that uses features such as word choice, imagery and tone to make us feel pity for the main character. The poem is about the emotional struggles that the war photographer faces daily in his job. The author has written the poem to make us question the morality of taking photographs of people suffering in war zones.

“ War Photographer” makes us feel pity by using effective word choice. “ Hands...tremble” The word tremble suggests that the photographer has been so traumatised by what he has witnessed at war that he is unable to control his own body. We pity him here as we understand how overwhelmed he must be by the horrific images of war. Later on in the poem, we feel pity again towards the end of the poem because of word choice. “...eyeballs prick with tears...” The word prick makes us think of a small, short-lasting pain that will soon be forgotten. Although the readers are generally upset by seeing images of war sufferers, the emotions only last momentarily as the reader is detached from the experience and is unable to fully relate to the true terrors of war. This causes us to feel pity as the photographer has become mentally scarred undergoing this entire trauma to capture these photographs when the public back home are left unaffected by them in the long term.

Imagery is an effective technique used in the by the poet in “ War Photographer”. As well as feeling pity towards the photographer, we also feel pity towards the victims of war. “...running children in a nightmare heat” The word nightmare suggest that the victims of war are having to live out their worst tribulation. Also, the fact that children are mentioned makes us feel compassionate as children are associated with innocence. The children had

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no involvement in the starting of the war yet they must live out the inferno of war. Another example of imagery being used to create a sense of pity towards the photographer is, “ Spools of suffering...” The word “ spools” makes us think of a never ending marathon of never ending pain. The suffering relates to that of the photographer as well as the suffering of the victims of war.

Tone is a very important factor in the process of making us feel pity for the photographer. “ From aeroplane he stares impassively at where he earns a living and they do not care” There is an evident angry tone in this part of the poem. We feel pity towards him as after everything he has been through doing his job, no-one back home truly cares or is effected in the long term by the photographs whereas the photographer is stuck with these memories for the rest of their life. There is a clear sad tone in the poem when the photographer is taking photos of a woman’s husband. “ remembers the cries of this man’s wife, how he sought approval without words” We feel pity for the woman as we really have no-idea what she is going through but we know she must be feeling awful, whilst the photographer is standing there taking photographs of her dying husband. The photographer is seeking acceptance from the war victims so that he himself can justify what he is doing.

To conclude, “ War Photographer” by Carol Ann Duffy is a thought provoking poem which makes us question the morality of taking photographs at war. The poet uses many literary techniques such as word choice, imagery, and tone to make us feel pity towards the photographer and the victims of war. I found the poem interesting and captivating. The poem made me question

my own views on whether or not I think that it is right to take photographs at war.