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Essay #2

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Describing and Comparing Photographs

“Photography deserves to be considered as fine art,” this was said in the essay *Understanding a Photo* by John Berger (pg.#291). Photography is the art or practice of taking and processing photographs. “A Day in Bay Ridge,” and “Views of the Verrazano Bridge,” are both my photos I’ve taken in my neighborhood of Bay Ridge, and in this essay i will describe and compare them both using terms learned in class. Both photos have the same studium, the Verrazano Bridge, when people see my pictures thats the first thing they'll see, it catches their attention. Both photos have their own characteristics which makes each of them unique. While some people just think photography is just a picture, I will show how a description and a comparision can show a bigger meaning in a photo.

The first photo I took was “Views of the Verrazano Bridge,” this landscape photo intrigued me a lot, not just because its the Verrazano Bridge but also because of the man in the photo. The man wearing the tan top hat is staring and gazing at the beauty of the Verrazano Bridge in a cloudy afternoon. When I went to take this photo, I only had the idea of taking a picture of just the Verrazano Bridge, but then I thought I could add some creativity into the photo by having my friend look at the bridge. Also the hat was a extra touch because its color seems to pop when looking at the photo. When someone looks at this photo they can see the pro-filmic event in the man looking at the bridge, his action staring at the bridge people can assume that this man is appreciating not only the view but the history of this bridge. According to Sontag, “Photographs actively promote nostalgia.” (pg. #531) Susan Sontag is trying to say, photos can show and remind someone of happiness in the past. Someone can assume the way the man is looking at the bridge, that he's happy and the bridge can be some type of importance to this man.

The second photo I took, “A Day in Bay Ridge,” is just a simple shot of my neighborhood that was taken on 91st and 3rd ave. In this photo it shows a bunch of cars parked and driving on the street, also trees and stores, but the most important image in this picture that should be a eye attention grabber is the Verrazano Bridge in the background. I took this photo because in Bay Ridge when someone is walking around the 90s in streets you always see the Verrazano Bridge, its always visible when outside. Even though 3/4 of the photo is just of the my neighborhood, the other 1/4 of the photo which is of the Verrazano bridge is the studium because normally when walking outside people don't have a view of a bridge, so the bridge can cause interest cause its unusual. According to Sontag, “Photographs give people an imaginary possession of a past that is unreal.” (pg. #531) Susan Sontag is stating that, people take photographs to remember a moment of the past. Before I took this photo I had a amazing day hanging out with friends and every time I look at this photo it reminds me of that day. Every photo that someone takes reminds them of that event, if its happy, sad, funny, etc.

Both of my photos have one idea, and that idea is the Verrazano Bridge. Both, “A Day in Bay Ridge,” and “Views from the Verrazano Bridge,” has a lot going on, with the man in the hat starring at the bridge and the street of Bay Ridge, but the main focus in both pictures is the Verrazano Bridge. Thats the special thing about pictures, theirs a lot of stuff going on it in but theres always that one thing that catches someones attention. Not only do they have the studium that is in common, but also the kind of photo it is is the same. Both these pictures are landscape photos, both capture the presence of nature with the trees, water, and buildings.

Every photo has a deeper meaning to it, if examined you can infer a lot of different things. For example, “Views from the Verrazano Bridge,” a person can infer that by the way the mans looking at the bridge he has a strong connection to it and/or he enjoys looking at the beauty of the bridge. “A Day in Bay Ridge,” is an example of a photo that means a lot to me because of the day I had on the day that photo was taken, every time I look at that photo I can remember the awesome day I had. Photos can do that to everybody, if a person took the photo, or seeing it for the first time. Every photo has a story, people just need to look harder to find it.

Work Cited

* Sontag, Susan. “On Photography.” Essays of the 1960s & 70s (2013): Pg.#531-539.
* Berger, John. “Understanding a Photograph.” Classic Essays on Photography. 13th Edition. Alan Trachtenberg. 80 Edition. New Haven: Leete’s Island Books, 1980. 291-294