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Waiting For The Train VS. Waiting For the Bus

Statements are false until proven true through a photograph, Photographs never lie, Susan Sontag says, “Photographs furnish evidence. Something we hear about, but doubt, seems proven when we’re shown a photograph of it” (531). In this essay I plan to compare two photographs, both shot at the same time, showing the amount of people in photograph one “Abandoned Train Station”, versus photograph two “Evening Bus Stop”. While other people may state that the subway is crowded anytime and the bus stop is empty anytime, I think that at a certain time subways get empty and bus stops get crowded. I’ll prove my point by comparing two photographs that were taken during the evening time. I’ll discuss the studium, the punctum, the rule of third, and the dominant impressions of both photographs.

In photograph one titled, “Abandoned Train Station” was captured in a Sutphin BLVD F train station during the evening time. The main feature of this photo would be the pillars which are placed parallel to each other horizontally, and vertically all being the same size. Also the 4 train tracks being seen at the bottom of the platform are parallel to each other, located next to the pillars which are positions staying up, rather than laying down on the floor like the train tracks. 90% of the shot is colored brown. The shot also captured a light shining down at the other end of the platform. The photo is covered in dark colors, but the other side of the platform is covered in bright colors. Studium exhibits numerous number of pillars placed on the train tracks which are brown colored. The background of this photograph views a couple blue colored pillars that are at the other side of the platform, because the light reveals the other side of the platform, also the shot views 4 different positioned train tracks with zero trains on top of the train tracks to match the number of people at the train station, also the yellow colored striped placed on the walls, on top of the posters, on the other side of the platform which stretches till the end of the platform. The punctum of this photo is the mysterious figure shown at the other end of the platform leaning against one of the pillars. The rule of thirds is an element used to make the subject not positioned in the center of the photo, therefore the brown colored pillars are the subjects, because the pillars are not positioned in the center. The dominant impression of the photo generates loneliness because seeing empty trains, and empty people, makes me feel empty inside. Also the photo generates fear, because the empty people, and the numerous number of pillars reminds me of a chamber where people get locked up alone, where there’s no chance of escape.

In photograph two titled, “Evening Bus Stop” was captured 100 feet away from the Sutphin BLVD F train station during the evening time, and 100 feet away from the bus stop sign. The main feature of this photo is the numerous people waiting patiently for the q40 bus wearing moderate to heavy under garments. The line from the people waiting in line, formed a 180 degree angle. This photograph views numerous people, but the “Abandoned Train Station” photograph views no people. Also a couple of buildings can be seen in the shot with two of them clearly seeing a name. In addition, a bus stop can be seen in the shot that looks very small due to the position I captured it. Also at the left side of the photo views a road with “only bus” written on it, also this photo captures a car, and a bus. Studium exhibits a large amount of people patiently waiting in front of the bus stop during the evening. The background of this photo views a couple buildings with 2 building that visibly shows names placed on them. The first building is named “Pharmacy Farmacia”, the second building is named “Barber Shop”. In addition to the couple buildings, another shot views the road with a name written “Only Bus” highlighted in white, with a yellow line placed in the middle of the road going straight. Also the photo views a car and a bus on the road, but the photograph of “Abandoned Train Station” views no presence of a car or a bus. The shot at the left side of the photo views a green light, trees, and a cropped out building. The dominant impression generated in this photograph is stressful, because I hate waiting for a bus with these amount of people. The punctum viewed in this photograph is the bus stop located all the way in front of the first person waiting in line for the bus, because the bus stop is that rare detail indicating how long the line for the bus is, which makes the photo more interesting.

Photographs will always prove something happened, they can never be proven wrong. Susan Sontag states that, “A photograph passes for incontrovertible proof that a given thing happened” (531). If someone states a false statement, prove they are wrong through photographic evidence. Photographs are the best way to prove a statement wrong, because they’re the best inventions that replicate visual reality. Susan Sontag says, “photograph seems to have a more innocent, and therefore more accurate, relation to visible reality than do other mimetic objects” (531). Photographs proved my point that subway station do get empty at a certain time, and bus stops get packed at a certain time.

(950 words)

Works Cited

Sontag, Susan. “On Photography.” Essays of the 1960s & 70s (2013): 531-539. Print.