Fall 2015

Composition 1101

Prof. Scanlan

Essay 2: Describing and Comparing Photographs

To describe is to create a verbal picture. A person, a place, a thing—even an idea or a state of mind—can be made vividly concrete through description. More specifically for our class, this essay asks us to take two photographs and then describe and compare them. We compare things all the time: music, college courses, ideas, and fashion. We often do so in order to establish ways of knowing. Describing and comparing go together and they are two of the most important ways of understanding the world around us.

Writing a description/comparison essay for our class requires three tasks that we have talked about in class:

1. Gathering: Gather as many details about the image/pro-filmic event as possible. Rely upon not only what the eyes see, but also on the context, and the emotions that the photos generate.

2. Terms: Dominant Impression, Reality Effect, Studium, Punctum, Frame, Pro-filmic Event, Rule of Thirds, Documentary Photo, Art Photo: Use these terms (and others if needed) as a way to help you and your reader comprehend the photos.

3. Organization: How you move through the description is vital to writing a clear and effective essay. For example, will you move through each photo from top to bottom (Subject-by-Subject Organization)? Or, will you discuss the idea of color in both photos within one paragraph (Point-by-Point Organization)? Above all, you must organize it according to some strategy, and this will become your method.

More Specifically, in Essay 2, you are to write a 800-word essay (approx. three full pages) in which you describe and compare two photos that you have taken recently. You must take the photos, and I must approve your choices. Second, you must post the pictures to our OpenLab website—which means that you have to become a member of the site—see me if you have questions. Third, you must incorporate at least two quotations from either chapter four (“Urban Art and Design”) or from Susan Sontag’s “On Photography” or from John Berger’s “Understanding a Photograph.” And, fourth, you must include a works cited page for this essay.

Grading Rubric:

1. Title, introduction, thesis, method (25 points)

2. Concrete Descriptions (25 points)

3. Organization and sentence/paragraph structure (25points)

4. Photography terms, conclusion, and works cited (25 points)

Due Dates:

**Oct 12: Columbus Day: No Class**

Oct 15: Journal 5 Due; in-class Quiz 2 over three readings

Oct 19: Review for Midterm Exam and Discuss Photos

Oct 21: Midterm Exam

Oct 26: Discuss student photos

Oct 28: First Draft due: peer review

Nov 2: Due: Essay 2: Electronic Submission.