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Essay 2

English 1101 (Prof. Scanlan)

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The Verrazano Narrows Bridge; Sunset and Nightfall

What does it feel like to view and experience the same location at different times of the day? In this essay, I will depict, compare, and contrast the imagery of the Verrazano Bridge at different times of the day as well as in different dates. “Night at the Verrazano” and “The Verrazano; Illustrated” were both photographs I had taken on different days during two of my occasional visits to Caesar’s Bay. While both photographs exhibit the Verrazano Bridge at different times of day and year, and even though they look inversed, they have more in common than what meets the eye. Although they both contain almost the same stadium, which is the Verrazano Bridge, both pictures affect me in different ways. “Night at the Verrazano” gives me a feeling of serenity as though I am witnessing the location in the photograph myself and “The Verrazano; Illustrated” gives me a sense of hope and the thought that verily with every hardship comes ease. In this scenario, my personal favorite is “The Verrazano; Illustrated.” My basis of comparison is that both images are of the Verrazano Bridge. Primarily, I will familiarize the reader to the profilmic events which led to the capture of both photographs, then I will compare the studiums and dominant impressions of both images, and finally I will analyze both photos to portray the beauty of the Verrazano during two different times of day.

Photographs are taken and used for many reasons. My photographs were used for the purposes of memorialization and furnishing evidence that such scenic views exist. Night at the Verrazano,” (Aziz, 2014) was taken on July 8th, 2014 using a Cannon SL1. It is a documentary photograph. I took this to remember the location where my oldest high school friend and I met to discuss places to visit for vacation during the summer break. Although, we didn’t come up with many locations, the Verrazano Bridge served as a significant location for the time being. The view of the Verrazano Bridge every night was no less than any vacation spot. I took this photograph to document views that can be seen every night. This picture reminds me of the calm environment of the bridge. “Photographs give people an imaginary possession of a past that is unreal.” (Sontag, Page 3). According to Sontag, people take photographs to remember moments of the past. I also took this photograph to memorialize the view of the bridge. In contrary to this photograph, “The Verrazano; Illustrated” (Aziz, 2014) was also a photograph taken by myself on April 27, 2014. I took this photograph because of the beauty of the sunset since it was a bit different as compared to normal sunsets at the bridge. According to Sontag, “Photographs furnish evidence. Something we hear about, but doubt, seems proven when we’re shown a photograph of it,” and “the camera record justifies. A photograph passes for incontrovertible proof that a given thing happened. The picture may distort; but there is always a presumption that something exists or did exist, which is like what’s in the picture.” (Sontag, Page 3) I took this picture to capture the views of the sky at that time. The sky looked extremely unrealistic, like a painting. I photographed the skyline, as well as the Verrazano to record evidence that this type of scenery can be seen with the naked eye and is not only bought at a painters’ art gallery. This picture leaves me awestruck in admiration of nature and deems to be evident of the event happening, being that I witnessed such a beautiful sunset in reality.

“Night at the Verrazano,” is a photograph of an asphalt walkway with a view of the Verrazano Bridge. The stadium of this photograph is part of a walkway, a railing, a smooth ocean which looks like a plain sheet of water, the Verrazano Bridge itself, and toward the right of the photograph there is a blinding light accompanied with many street lights. Trees are also visible in the distant, close to the bridge. It is dark within the picture, and the picture suggests the weather is not cold. It is a documentary photograph, with a catchy image within. The picture is partially well-lit, although in most of the picture the water is dark and isn’t visible. In contrary to that, although “Night at the Verrazano” may seem like a catchy image, “The Verrazano; Illustrated” is an artsy photograph. This photograph is taken at the same angle as the previous photo, however at a different time of the day. Unlike “Night at the Verrazano,” this photograph isn’t as well lit. A few pairs of headlights of cars are visible in the distant. This photograph is an inverse of the previous one. Unlike “Night at the Verrazano,” in this picture the water is clearly visible. A steel railing, clouds and rays of the sun are also visible. The sun illuminates the background of the photo, and makes the bridge look as if it’s a shadow. The mid-ground of the photo consists of water as well as a dark area of land. The foreground consists of a railing and walkway that is also dark. This photo has been selectively focused towards the light within the clouds. This type of focus draws the attention of the viewer towards the clouds. This picture is compliant with the rule of thirds, since the bridge is not centered in the picture. This picture seems like an art photograph due to its color but it is a documentary photograph.

The image in a photograph can be the same but what is felt after viewing each photo may vary from person to person. “Night at the Verrazano” makes me feel very calm when I look at the picture. This photo contains very warm colors which relax the eye. The photo is of a calm night in which everything is serene. This picture makes me feel as if I’m at the Verrazano Bridge. The view tends to calm down my emotions and helps me think straight. Since I am drawn towards water, it is natural this picture makes me feel calm. In contrary, “The Verrazano; Illustrated” gives me a feeling of hope. The focus of the picture is drawn to the sun drowning into the mist of the clouds in the distant. I go to the Verrazano to clear my head of all my worries. This picture affects me in a very positive way. It gives me the brisk feeling that the quest is to head for the best and leave the rest just like it’s shown in the picture. To me, the sun in the clouds symbolizes my goals, which seem as if they are impossible to reach. The sun makes me feel as if it’s the prize of my perseverance after crossing a long road to success. This picture makes me feel as if my life may be published in it. My life may be just like the quest within the picture; to reach the sun.

Some people might argue that it is worthwhile to live the moment rather than waste our time capturing a photograph of it. While both of these arguments are true, I believe it’s better to capture the photograph and preserve the moment for eternity. Just like Sontag says “The picture may distort; but there is always a presumption that something exists or did exist, which is like what’s in the picture.” (Sontag, Page 3) We may lose our memories, but a photograph will remain for as long as we willingly preserve it. I encourage my readers to go out and visit my location of interest which is The Verrazano Bridge, and experience the emotions I have felt or experience a better emotion, which is unexplored.

(1282 Words)

Works Cited

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