Rosie Brodsky

Prof. Sarah Menke-Fish

Photo Essay Analysis

Visual Literacy

I decided to do my photo essay on the sky because nature is so amazing in its raw form. The sky can be seen in almost every color and can have clouds or precipitation. When I was younger, I would be able to tell what the weather was like just by looking at the sky outside. I was one of those kids who could sit and cloud watch for hours, even if the sky was completely clear, regardless of the season. In my compiled and edited essay I have included a photo of the sky in each color that I had both with and without clouds. I even took them from different perspectives, even above from a plane. I tried to get pictures of the sky at different times of the day, from many different locations.

In my general collection of photos there are ones from the Fourth of July with fireworks against a black sky, the sun setting in a perfect circle on a beach in Florida, and the sky in the city of Chicago during the summer from Soldier Field. One of the things I would have liked to have included but wasn’t able to was a picture of the sky during a hail or snowstorm simply because neither of those occurred when I was able to take pictures. Almost all of my pictures were taken in Chicago over Thanksgiving break because the weather was very temperamental, but made the sky beautiful at the same time.

The area in which I live also has many forest preserves which make for dramatic foregrounds against the setting sun. Another benefit of my area is that I’m right by Lake Michigan, which reflects the light in many different ways. There are many beaches on which I can lay and take pictures. The most amazing thing about my photo essay is that all the pictures were taken within about a one-week time period, yet they all look dramatically different.

 The sky is something which many people might not think of as “diverse”, but this photo essay proves otherwise. The photos that I have included provide examples of different colors, shapes, textures, and temperatures. The sky can be almost any color in the rainbow, which can't be said for many other things in nature. It is ever-changing, yet always beautiful. The diversity in this essay is important because it is a reminder to think about and appreciate the small things in life. While I walk to and from class each day, I look up at the sky and think about why it is the color it is, or why it has the shapes it does, and so on. The sky is very easy to get creative with, which is what I attempted to do within this essay.

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Single Photo Analysis

Visual Literacy

The picture of the clouds from above on an airplane is the photo I have chosen to analyze. It is an example of a composition with approximate symmetry. The top and the bottom halves are different, but the photo is practically divided in half between the cloud shelf and the clear sky. The colors in this photo are very very light, but cohesive. The texture on the bottom is very bumpy and thick, while the top is smooth and thin, as shown by the sun that is barely showing through at the top. There is a light blue line dividing the clouds from the rest of the sky. The horizontal line that is formed represents stability, calmness, and breadth. The clouds as well have a calming effect as well. The colors in this piece are cooler and more relaxed as well. This picture gives of a feeling of peacefulness from almost every aspect.

The most interesting part about this photo to me is the way that the clouds appear to curve where the clouds meet the blue line and the blue line meets the rest of the sky. This was natural; I did not edit that. The white and gray layers on top are also somewhat curved. This creates an interesting, somewhat unbalanced pattern. This is fun to look at and figure out where it repeats and such.

There is no focal point in this picture, which is a common trend in many of my pictures. With such a broad topic that is sometimes (like in this case) plain, it makes sense to not have a focal point, because that way the viewer is able to appreciate the piece as a whole. This photo is ambiguous in a sense, because it does not have a message. The point of it is simply that it is not an image we see very often, yet we know what it is. It is pleasant and amusing to look at, as art should be.