Visual Rhetoric Essay Script

Introduction:

Right now I’m standing in front of Bell Rock memorial park, and just behind me is the centerpiece, called The Soldiers and Sailors Monument. Located on 143 Main Street in Malden, this monument was dedicated to the veterans that risked their lives during the Civil War. This specific memorial is one of the most remarkable Malden pieces in the Commonwealth “both in terms of the fine quality of the sculpture and the grandeur of the surrounding landscaping”1. This statue was specifically placed on top of an “outercropping”2 known as Bell Rock because it is centered in Malden.

Before this monument was erected on June 17, 1910, by Bela Pratt and Frederick Law Olmsted, it was once a location of a colonial bell tower used to call the community “to worship at the adjacent First Parish Church”3. It was in 1904 when the city of Malden decided to plan out a recreational park and civil war memorial. They collected Bell Rock and the land that surrounded it, from this they brought Fredrick Law to design the landscape and also had a sculptor, Bela Lyon to design the monumental statue.

The statue grouping features a soldier, sailor, and color-bearer. Just at the base of the statue, you see a plaque that shows the numbers of men from Malden who served in different branches. There were exactly “832 who served, 64 of them died in the war”4. The monument overall acts as a symbol of freedom and is placed to commemorate those that have fought

Interview

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2 Ibid
3 Ibid
After learning about the monument, I wanted to know what other people that came here thought about this monument and decided to interview them and ask them some questions, here is what they said.

(Before we filmed the people we were going to interview, I made sure to speak to them off-camera and see if it was okay if they were filmed)

Omar: So let us interview some people and see what they have to say about this monument. There is someone right there.

Uhh.. excuse me, sir, is it possible if we can interview you. This video is about this monument and what it has to offer. I wanted to know what you thought about it

Man #1: Yeah of course

Omar: Okay, so this monument here is the civil war memorial statue. Did you know that?

Man #1: I honestly did not know that.

Omar: You did not know that?

Man #1: No

Omar: Ok, just a question, are you from Malden, Massachusetts?

Man #1: Yes, I live in Malden

Omar: Do you see people come here often

Man #1: Yes I see a lot of people walk around

Omar: specifically do you see people come to this monument, and glorify it.

Man #1: Whenever I walk or drive by I don't see people look at the actual sight, I just see them walk around.

Omar: So you think that the majority of the people that come to Bell Rock Memorial Park usually go to the park and just walk around rather than Memorials Statue

Omar: I have a question, imagine the mayor of Malden decides to move the statue, would it personally affect your day-to-day life?
Man #1: Pearson it would not affect me because I don't go here for the actual sight, I just think it's a nice spot to chill at.

After listening to what he had to say, it surprised me that a Malden resident did not know much about this monument. Almost makes itself useless and has no meaning because he rarely sees anyone admire the masterpiece, revealing how it fails to be a monument.

After interviewing that person, I wanted to get another person's understanding because I believe one perspective should not determine the worth of a monument.

(Interview another person)

Omar: Hey guys, I see a person looking at this monument. I want to see what he has to say about it. Excuse me, sir I see you looking at this monument, I wanted to know what brought you here and why are you viewing this monument

Man#2: I'm just here to look and learn more about this monument

Omar: Did you know that the people in front of this building risked their lives during the civil war and that's why they are memorizing this monument. Did you know about that?

Man#2: Yes, I did some good research about the Civil War.

Omar: Oh really, so when you researched the Civil War did you try to look for monuments that talk about it when you came here?

Man#2: I do this to increase my experience when it comes to the Civil war. In fact, I volunteered at the museum regarding American history.

Omar: Oh really, This special monument the mayor built in the eighteen hundreds and centuries is in Malden and there is a reason for this so that people can come here. Quick question, are you a Malden resident?

Man#2: No, I actually live in Revere.

Omar: Really, you came from Revere to Malden to take a look at this monument

Man#2: Yes, I drove there.
Omar: Do you think monuments actually have importance to it?. Do you think that they do something that actually makes people learn about their history?

Man#2: I feel like monuments have true meaning to those people that appreciate and fought for this country. For instants monuments like this, all I think about is freedom, all I think of is every man is free in this country

Omar: Do you think people should understand the importance of freedom and that they should appreciate that these people fought for us and gave us this freedom.

Man#2: Exactly that what goes on my head every day

Omar: I wanted to ask you a question, By the way, you are not the only person I interviewed I'm talking about how this monument fails and excels. If this monument was removed would this affect you personally?

Man#2: This would cause a deep tear into my soul because I have families and relatives that truly fought in the civil war.

Omar: Are you serious, Wow.

Man #2 Yes, so I feel like the freedom that they fought for relates to me and my day-to-day life. That's why I love this country.

Omar: Is this your first time coming here or do you usually come here often?

Man #2: I usually come here after work just to reflect and reaffirm the values I have

Conclusion:

After listening to what he had to say, it was clear to me that there is an obvious difference in opinion between the Civil war memorial. Although I only interviewed two people. It gave me a sense of what people think about this monument. Before I visited this place, I assumed there would a decent amount of people observing the monument, however, I was wrong. I barely saw anyone at the actual memorial, rather, there were families and their children having fun at the park. what was even surprising was that their kids sitting on the monument, but were playing music, and were littering the area. I take that as disrespect since this is a place to almost pay respects to the fallen and the people that don’t respect that should not be there in the first place.
Thinking back to my second interviewee, he made me realize that only the people and families that were affected by the civil war know a lot more about the soldiers and sailors monument.

The point of a public monument is for anyone to come and commemorate the history behind the statue. Even though I did not see that many people doing that, I still think this monument is very important to Malden's history, and stop holds many values that some people can appreciate.