



October, 2012 The More Things Change ... (revisited)

Ken Rockwell has been a professional photographic blogger and pundit for several years now, and has legions of loyal readers. On October 1, the following quote appeared online:

"Holy cow, I just realized Nikon's big deception: the D600, D800, D800E and D4 are all the same cameras designed and produced in parallel at the same time and all have the same insides, producing the same images with the same processing power, same LCDs, same green-shift problems and identical AF controls. They differ only in exterior packaging and when Nikon chose to announce them to make them appear different. It's just like 1980 again!

Back when Nikon ruled the pro 35mm world, all their 35mm cameras took the same pictures. The only differences were how tough and how fast they were. Consumer cameras like the EM were plasticity and worked OK, while the F3 was tough and fast, with the FE in the middle. All took the same film and same lenses, had the same meters, the same automatic modes, all focused the same, and all took exactly the same pictures.

[...] Today, Nikon's 2012 FX trio of D600, D800 and D4 obviously were all designed and manufactured at the same time with the same innards, and merely announced in descending cost order at different times to try to hide the simple fact that they're the same camera inside."*

As Mr. Rockwell suggests, you can judge neither a camera nor a book by its cover. While you might waste \$20 on a book you end up disliking, you could easily blow that much with a bad camera choice.

* <http://www.petapixel.com/2012/10/01/ken-rockwell-on-nikons-big-deception-with-the-d600-d800-and-d4/>

As a consumer, you are constantly bombarded by marketers trying to impress you enough to buy the brand they are touting and to pay more for it than some other brand. After enough exposures to the brand name, the average consumer forms either a positive or negative image of the quality and value of that brand. If an influential person relates a personal experience with the brand, whatever favorable or unfavorable opinion is reinforced.

Assuming a favorable brand recognition, a manufacturer will introduce a product desirable to many and affordable by few. At the same time, the manufacturer is "shaking out the bugs" in design, manufacturing, finish, etc., in order to produce more of the product at a lower cost. This second iteration of the product is affordable by many more people who only desired it before. (The original few who originally desired and bought have lost some desire because the product is more mainstream.) After enjoying sales success and brand enhancement, the manufacturer then makes iteration #3 at an even lower cost and sells to a new, even larger consumer base.

As an example, consider a beautifully designed, printed and hand autographed necktie made from the finest oriental silk. Not everyone can afford this \$150 cravat, but a few thousand sell. When sales begin to ebb, the same tie made of wool enters the market at \$56. Perhaps after another year of sales, a nylon version is sold through mass marketers at \$9.99 or less. Chances are that the person owning the tie is more concerned about how he or she will look wearing it than the fabric.

Someone takes photos of a person wearing the tie as part of a suit. Three almost identical pictures are taken - the only difference being the fabric of



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the tie. All the photos look exactly the same, but the emotions of the wearer seem to change with the fabric.

Why should cameras be any different? The Nikons, for example, share many more similarities than differences. Just like the ties, however, the 3 cameras are designed and embodied for different types of customers. Which would you prefer, a 3 pound camera or an 8 pound camera? Should you pay more for a camera with a chassis made of brass or polycarbonate? Do you need a camera with a shutter rated for 1,000,000 cycles, or one rated for 500,000? Will paying the extra dollars for the nameplate of the camera get you better photos? Please don't think only Nikon works this way.



All camera makers have operated this way for decades and surely will continue into the future.

Holiday Greetings

For the first time, we have posted a very low resolution image of each Holiday Greeting card we are offering for the upcoming season. These are found at <http://madisonphoto.com/holiday-card-templates.html>. Because the selections are so extensive this year, we made the samples as low resolution as possible to facilitate fast page opening and download time. If you have questions, please e-mail staff@madisonphoto.com or staff@photosummit.com. If you prefer to speak to a real, live person, call Joy, Rob, Ashley or Rachelle in Madison at 973.966.2900 or Bret, Larry or Lynne in Summit at 908.273.7427. Custom folding cards are also available, but not shown online.

Ghost Hunting

Put the "trick" back in Trick or Treating this year. Set up your camera on a table top tripod on a window sill or a standard tripod outdoors in a spot aimed at the spot outside your door where little hobgoblins stand with their sacks. Make sure the flash is turned off! Use a wireless remote control to take a photo of the children while they are illuminated in your open doorway. Don't tell them the picture was taken. The next day, make a 4x6 print of each child or group. Reserve them for future use.

Next year, in addition to taking photos again, tape the 2012 photos to your door frame or storm door and offer a "treat" to anyone who identifies someone in costume in a photo. You'll have fun and the witches, etc. will associate your house or apartment as a fun place to go!

Don't Leaf It Alone

It's NOT the economy: it's the lighting. The beauty of autumn leaves and other foliage is dependent upon the light it receives. The photographer frequently can improve the color via one or more of these techniques ...

Use one of 2 photographic filters- a polarizer or an Enhancing filter. A polarizing filter eliminates stray light from getting into the camera as it blocks out light waves that are not perpendicular to the sensor (or film). This gives deeper color saturation without changing color balance. An Enhancing filter basically deepens red items in your pictures (and some orange shades) without affecting other colors, such as blues and greens. These effects are almost impossible to duplicate in software later on, so do it while shooting.

Add light as needed. The easiest way to achieve this is with someone's help. A reflector



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of some type is needed - without folds or seams. A "pop-up" type reflector is the most convenient and typically easiest to use. The reflector puts the light



where it's wanted or needed. When shadows fall in the wrong place they can muddy up an otherwise attractive area in the photo and the portability of these reflectors make them simple to carry. If the user's arms are long enough to hold the reflector at the right angle while holding the camera steadily the second person isn't needed.

Most cameras have a built in flash. Using direct flash won't improve your photos, but using it with a reflector of some type can make a major improvement.

If convenient, wet the most important area of the shot. The layer of water will deepen the tones and add more impact. Ideally, a great time to shoot the foliage is right after a hard rain - while the sky is still dark from the storm and the sun is re-appearing.

Classy

Seats are still available for our BIPS classes through November. Sign up while there's still time. A schedule is attached.



A Political Opinion

Please vote on Election Day!

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We'll be back next month with more ...

Madison PhotoPlus

40 Main Street Madison NJ 07940
voice 973-966-2900 fax 973-377-1458
staff@madisonphoto.com
www.madisonphoto.com

*Ashley, Jerry, Joy, Rachelle,
Rob & Vincent*



the Photo Summit

383 Springfield Ave. Summit NJ 07901
voice 908-273-7427 fax 908-277-0218
staff@photosummit.com
www.photosummit.com

Bret, Julie, Larry & Lynne