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Essay 2

English D/C 427 (Prof. Scanlan)

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Wishful Road Trip

I have chosen two pictures that I took while on a road trip with my father, the road trip was from New York to Pennsylvania, and it was only my Dad and me. While, I am going to first study the photograph and describe the studium, framing, rule of thirds, decisive moment and its pro-filmic event to the taking of the picture. I believe that describing why I took the photograph and why it holds a sentimental value or sentimental connection to me; which is known as a punctum, and the dominant impression that the photograph has is better.

In the first Photograph named “Wishful Road,” I took a picture of the road as we went to Pennsylvania the photograph, however takes place at the border of New Jersey close to Knowlton, before I took the photograph (pro-filmic event) we were on a curved road that was following the bends caused by the mountains. There were no cars passing us and, so I thought it was the best time to take a photograph which made this my decisive moment, just before I took the photograph there were a lot of cars passing by, and I didn’t want to take a picture with cars in the photo. While framing the picture, I did not want to include the corners of the car I was in; which is a Gray Chevy Equinox from 2006. I thought that if the corners of the front part of the car would be seen then the photograph would not look professional and, so I made the framing closer to the front. Also because of the framing I used the rule of thirds and decided to make the curved part of the road an important piece by making it almost centered to the intersections created by the invisible lines created, I also tried to make the visible division between the mountainous range the main point of the photo. The photo is mostly green, but just like Henri Cartier-Bresson, in Teju Cole’s article called “Perfect and Unrehearsed,” it was the decisive moment that caused the photograph to be shot, and as Cole stated in the article “Comes in part the ability to see and capture a scene’s native repetitions of shapes and gesture.” Just as he said I noted that the division between the mountains was like the curve on the road and that all the trees were the same.

The second picture, named “Falling Rocks created by Dreams,” it is in between the mountains looking out of the passenger’s side window and looking upwards the mountains. The pro-filmic event that happened here was that there was a small rock-slide and there were firemen trying to clear the road from the rocks, which made taking a picture very difficult. The framing of the photograph is very altered because of the workers in the way, I had to be careful not to get them in the picture, and not to get the corners of the window as well. Susan Sontag said, “A photograph is not just the result of an encounter between and event and a photographer,” and I too got to experience this first hand, while it may seem that there are rocks and a strange angled picture, I say that there is beauty in the way the rocks each look and are creating an event as they are falling. When using the rule of thirds, I mostly focused on the contrast between the rocks and the single tree that was in the middle of all the chaos created by the fallen and broken rocks. The decisive moment that made me take the photograph was when I saw that there were people fixing the road due to the major rock-slid; this aided me in making my decision in taking the photos.

The third picture, named “Wishes Location,” which was taken in Pennsylvania out the passenger’s side window; where I happen to be sitting. The framing was a bit more open this time because we were on the side part of the road where the road is on the side of the mountain and oversees the land. Like John Berger said, “A photograph is effective when the chosen moment which it records has quantum of truth which is generally applicable, which is as revealing about what is absent from the photograph as about what is present in it.” There is a small-town present in the background, and I really liked the town, so I decided to take a photograph; which allowed me to use the rule of thirds and make the small barn house a part that is well noticed. It also gave the information needed to show that I am on the road, due to the fence that helps cars keep in place in times of danger. Before we got to Pennsylvania there were lots of towns we passed by, what made this my decisive moment to take the photo was that I liked the way everything looked, and it was beautiful in its own way. I loved how every house had a long distance from each other and there was lots of space that seemed to be free to run and enjoy the area, it reminded me of going to my grandparent’s houses; they live up in the mountains line a valley and they own most of the mountain.

I chose to take photographs of my road trip, because on our way to Pennsylvania my dad told me that he had always wished that one day he and I would go on a road trip, and do some father and son singing or adventuring in the mountains. However, what made a bigger sentimental connection was that in the past my family used to travel all of Mexico when we lived there. When seeing the scenery, it resurfaced many nostalgic memories, and kept me that I could travel once again travel without any restrictions. The punctum occurred when my father told me that he had always wanted to have a trip like that, and the dominant impression is likely to change per person and image. For the image of the curved highway, the dominant impression would be on the road to Pennsylvania, while, for me, it would have a connection to my punctum and be a come-true for my father. The image with the rocks it can be seen as abstract mix of colors, while for me it is a representation of being the one tree that took the adventurous route and managed to grow, which is what I plan to do soon. And the finally, the photograph with the small house can be seen as a scenery photograph; For me, though, it is a memory of what my life used to be like, and the places I visited. As we drove to Pennsylvania, my father told me that he had a dream where he and I went on a road trip and we were along to songs on the radio. He dreamt that it was going to be something that we would only get to do a few times, and he hoped for the best. He hoped it would be at least two, preferably more until he had finally spent enough time with his first son.

These photos are dear to me now that the trip has finished, because for the first time in a long time my father shared with me one of his wishes that he had for a while, ever since I was born. Knowing that my dad dreamt of having a road trip with me was very touching because he had not told me of it until we were on the road, and it came to his mind. I suppose it was the was merely the scenery conjured up the dream to come into his mind and the fact that my dad wanted to share his thoughts with me. I really enjoyed the trip and I hope to one day not only go to Pennsylvania but go all around America and the world as well, to have time to get to know my dad because work and school has always gotten in the way of it all.

**Work Cited**

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