

The Evolution of an “Outsider”

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EVOKE

About the Ethnographer

My Life as a Student

Of course, like most, my life as student began in pre-school. Prior to pre-school my parents did much work with me such as counting, learning the ABC's, memorizing my phone number and address as well as finally making me realize to call out town by the right name "Minier" instead of "Ournier" because it was still everybody's, not just mine, it was just the name! Pre-school and kindergarten memories include mostly hand puppets and ABC's. Second grade started the real stuff with actual homework and weekly spelling tests. In the first few years I enjoyed school and felt cool when I had homework assigned because that was a sign of growing up, and is not that just what every little kid cannot wait to do? By sixth grade I experienced a few not so favorite teachers and the work began to be not-so-cool anymore. I always got good grades throughout grade school, although until the 4th grade we did not even earn letters. From then on I was nothing less than what my parents, and I, expected but a straight A student. Of course the years I was upon now were those when we stop enjoying school and start to hate it, and rather than not wait to grow up wish to go back to kindergarten with milk breaks and nap time. Although I have never been that student that is enthusiastic about school, and who really is anyway, it ahs always been important to me. Doing well is a top priority because I have always understood that to do well in the future I must do wel now, and to do well requires hard work. I had known for years that the University of Illinois was the one and only school I really wanted to attend, so I had to do well enough in high school to ensure my dreams. Many people, including my mom, assume that because I receive good grades that I am very mark and that school is something that comes easily for me. This is a major misconception, because in reality I have always had to work very hard for my good grades. Of course I know I never even really knew what hard work was in high school, now that I am in college. Although the first semester was quite a shock and I do tend to be very good at procrastinating, I still take pride in my work and feel that school is a top priority. I have big plans for my future and understand that being a good student now is essential to be able to reach my goals for the future.

My Life as a Writer

March 2nd, 2006

As a young child my parents would read to me to being developing my literary skills. Be kindergarten I was reading books on my own. Well, not quote on my own, but I was now reading to mom and dad, and while these books should not be thought of as novels, but more as of the Berenstein Bears Collection. In first grade I remember writing a poem and remembering how to spell Arkansas from a basketball game the family had been watching the night before. My teacher was impressed and I was so proud. Of course my writing since then has evolved, but to think about how it actually has happened and what steps were taken is deeper than an initial thought would credit it for. in high school my advanced composition course taught me some basic skills of what not to do in a paper

and I feel I developed immensely as a writer in that class. The "show , don't tell" theory was drilled into my head in that class and I believe by the time I left I had accomplished that concept. Ever since high school I would rather write a paper than take an exam, but as you said in class I have found myself finishing a paper and instead of going back and perfecting and revising it, just feeling relieved that I had finished and being content with whatever was originally put together.

I definitely am a small town girl. I suppose I like the city quite a lot in comparison to most people in my area. Therefore, they may consider me as liking the city too much for where I live. Enjoying any city life requires a couple hours of driving at minimum. If I had my way I would spend more time in a city, such as Chicago, than I have been able to. Although I have a great appreciation for where I come from and how I grew up, now that I have come to college I realize more than ever that is is not the life for me anymore and I do not refer to end up in my hometown. Despite that fact there are many aspects about my roots I love and will never forget. The friendly people and the down to earth nature are characteristics I have always loved. Much of the person I am today and the way I was raised can be accredited to the small community I call home. Being friendly, modest, down to earth, honest, and respectful are all traits that are most important to me. Most often when I tell people here that my dad is a farmer I tag on that it does not mean that I am necessarily a hick. Many times people say they cannot believe it because of how I dress, act, and look. That just goes to show people do have a general idea about what farmers and their families are like. In the midwest farming is as common, respectable, and rewarding of a career as a businessman is in Chicago. I believe people in my area can be classified into middle class. Even the wealthiest people around live modestly and tend to be frugal with their money. This is not to say people do not build nice homes, buy expensive cars, and own nice possessions, but there is no extravagance in most people's lifestyles. The small town farm community is simply a modest lifestyle and many people choose to live there because of that. Even when some people can afford, people are not going to find teenagers driving around and BMW's and Mercedes simply because that is not how we live. My mom and my grandma are my heroes, much because of their hard work, another detail greatly valued to me, my family, and in my community. They have taught me that hard work pays off. My grandma worked hard not only in the job all of her life, but also as a mother, wife, and friend. She is overall a wonderful person with a warm and nurturing heart. My mom grew up with no a lot of opportunities but worked hard to accomplish many things in her life and is now an IT Manager at CATERPILLAR. She has worked hard their many years and dedicated much loyal time, and by doing so has climbed the ranks and earned herself an extremely respectable position. In my family I have also been taught to appreciate the small things in life, rather than the finer things. I have also been taught that when luxuries do come along to appreciate them even more, and know that they only come from hard work. My favorite man in my life is my ten year old labrador-retriever named Jake. I am an animal lover and always enjoyed going to visit my grandma's house to go to the barn and pet all the animals. My dad is a farmer, but he only farms crops. He does not raise any animals. My dad and my brother are also both wonderful men. My brother is 22 years old and works for my dad within the family business. My dad has also worked very hard in his life. My parents have set a great

example that has inspired me to work hard to achieve great things in life, just like they have.

I am a small town girl who has grown to like the city a little too much. I am from a farm based community in Central Illinois called Minier. It is near Bloomington/Normal which is where ISU is located, so normally when people ask me where I'm from I just say Bloomington because no one knows Minier! My dad is a farmer who also owns a small business. My mom has worked at CATERPILLAR in Morton for almost 30 years now and I would consider my family middle class. Most people think that farming cannot create a very rewarding income, although the wealthiest people I know in my area are farmers. Many people in my area also believe my mom makes more money than my dad, but in reality they are pretty equal. So far I am loving U of I and although I am not certain of what it is I want to study I do have quite a few good options up in there. It just seems crazy that the time to decide what I'm going to do for the rest of my life finally is here, and that's such a big decision. I guess only time will tell what will happen.

EXPLORE

Question

What questions is your inquiry contingent upon?

Files:

[archive.analysis.doc](#) (Tue 03/14/2006 13:20)

[position.paper.doc](#) (Fri 02/10/2006 14:40)

Plan

How will you go about answering your inquiry?

List of Possible Field Sites

IMPE

Gamers on my dorm floor

Vending Machines in Illini Union

Illini Pride Committee (Poster manufacturing/distribution)

Fraternity house weekly chapter

Japan House

Fast food restaurant on campus

Front desk at Lundgren (all boys dorm)

The quiet floor of the UGL

Tanning Salon

Files:

[proposal.rhet105.doc](#) (Sat 02/04/2006 14:27)

I plan to study the so called "gamers". There is a group of guys on my floor in my dorm who are constantly playing video games everyday of the week and this is definitely a subculture to me because I have never really experienced the video game world, and what I do know doesn't involve near the technology I witness them using today.

OBSERVE

What observations, or findings are you encountering in your research?

Files:

[fieldnote.3.11.doc](#) (Tue 04/11/2006 22:28)

[fieldnote5.doc](#) (Tue 04/11/2006 20:32)

[Fieldnote4.doc](#) (Tue 04/11/2006 20:31)

[fieldnote3.doc](#) (Tue 04/11/2006 16:49)

[fieldnote2.doc](#) (Tue 04/11/2006 16:48)

[fieldnote1.doc](#) (Tue 04/11/2006 16:48)

[artifact.analysis](#) (Fri 02/10/2006 14:41)

REFLECT

Link

Connect with other resources and materials.

Final Self-reflective Essay

Files:

[The Evolution of an\[1\].doc](#) (Thu 05/11/2006 14:15)

[annotatedbib\[1\].url.doc](#) (Tue 04/11/2006 15:37)

[rhet105bib1.doc](#) (Wed 02/15/2006 14:55)

Self-reflective

I feel like I am often writing the same things and taking the same notes every time I go visit my field site. I find many things very interesting, and find the game interesting, yet I still have no desire to start playing. I have been amazed of many different things. I realize after observing things how much of an outsider I really was. I had no idea of some of the capabilities, and because there are so many possible things to do, I therefore understand why these guys are more involved.

OTHER

A space for other notes, findings, comments, etc.

Final Long Essay

Files:

[Halo 2.doc](#) (Thu 05/11/2006 14:16)

analysis of fieldwork essay

Files:

[Me.doc](#) (Tue 03/28/2006 12:58)

“Halo 2 offers a variety of games to play for X-Box Live. Within some of these games are different types of games you can play. Then there’s just regular Team Slayer which is just how many people you can kill. First team to get 50 kills (wins).”

“[Halo 2] was just such a groundbreaking game when it came out. It added so much more to first person shooter games, like there’s destructible environment. They added vehicle combat. There are just so many elements to the game that they added, and the graphics

are just unreal. When I bought my X-Box I bought it when Halo, the first one, Halo: Combat Evolved was out. I bought it in the anticipation of Halo 2, but when I bought the X-Box I bought it with Halo because at the time that game was also addictive, fiercely addictive.”

“The highest (ranking) you can get up to is 50 and I’m at 29. It’s so addicting is because there’s always people better than you and there’s always room to improve. You’re always evolving when you play too.”

“I don’t really know much about a lot of video games really.”

“I fit the stereotype (of gamers) on some levels by playing for hours and not doing homework and staying up late.

“This is probably the most competitive game I’ve ever seen in my entire life. It’s just so competitive, I don’t know why. But we fit the stereotype, yes, we’re guys, we game for hours, many hours.”

“[Halo 2] is everywhere. It’s kind of becoming more of a mainstream thing.”

“You need a broadband connection and you can connect (to play) online. Not only can you play, but you can also talk to them while you play because of the headset.

[Technology] increased communication. X-box Live has brought in millions of more fans.” — [REDACTED]

A space for other notes, findings, comments, etc

Files:

[rhet.language analysis.doc](#) (Tue 02/28/2006 13:33)

[rhet.interview transcript.doc](#) (Tue 02/28/2006 13:33)