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Environmental Studies Internship: Brewster Grant

When thinking about my summer plans for 2010, I somehow wanted to combine my diverse interests and explore my intended courses of study with the spontaneous and mentally stimulating thrills of learning and creating. Dr. Jonathan Evans presented me with the perfect opportunity by suggesting I document the Archaeological Field School and Pre-College Program's research and work on King's Farm here on the Domain. Not only was I going to have the chance to learn video production skills, but also the art of storytelling through factual scientific data, maps, artifacts, and recorded history.

I spent the first week of the internship reading *Ely: An Autobiography* by Ely Green and walking around the King's Farm property by myself. Although *Ely* did not focus solely on the subject I was documenting, King's Farm and its most productive years, it provided me with an accurate mood and general attitude of life on the Cumberland Plateau at the time of King's Farm pivotal years. I will admit, when I took my first several trips to King's Farm I saw no story. To me the property was nothing but forest and a camp site used for modern day student recreation. As I stood at the site of the main house and looked around me it was unfathomable to me that there was any sort of human activity on the property; let alone a highly active and productive farm.

However, my first visit to King's Farm with Dr. Evans drowned my skepticism in a tsunami of excitement and creative anticipation. Dr. Evans began to point out the signs of disturbance to me as we toured the grounds. He brought old stagecoach road systems to my attention and the abundance of cove plants (plants that are only supposed to grow in the coves and not on the plateau) that mysteriously are able to grow only on the thirty acres of King's

Farm. This initial tour with Dr. Evans shed an entire new light on the property and the project. I began to romanticize stories of hard working farmers in my imagination and envision those farmers rolling about their property on these old roadways. That day was the first day the project came to life for me.

Over the second week of my internship I learned the history of the farm with help from Meagen McMillan, a summer intern in the Sewanee Environmental Institute. I learned that Christian Reufe, a Swedish immigrant, bought the thirty acres from a private owner in 1915, but resold the property in 1925 to his black property manager Rufus Mosley because of World War I. Mosley went on to farm the property and continue its hog raising operation until the Great Depression when Isaac King obtained the property and took the farm and hog operation to its full potential, supporting not only his family but also the surrounding community with crops grown on the farm. What interested me most about the story was how crops were able to grow on King's Farm, but nowhere else on the plateau. This was due in part to the pigs' waste which caused the soil to be rich in lime, but was also due to King himself altering the soil for more efficient crop production. Another interesting twist to the story was in order for King, who lived in a very poor community at a very poor time in American history, sold his hogs to the Sewanee butcher. The Sewanee butcher then sold the pigs to the university where the students consumed the meat, produced waste which was then fed back to the pigs on behalf of the university.

After I received all historical and scientific information to tell the story of King's Farm, I spent the third and fourth weeks of the internship deciding on the proper storyboard with Dr. Evans and Greg Pond. During this process, I realized how the storyboard of a video production is a crucial part in the overall outcome of the project. It is a tedious and sometimes confrontational step of the process, but allows for completely organized thoughts and storyline as

well as serves as a guideline for the media organization and production stage. Here is the final outcome of my storyboard:

**Frame #1: Introduction of King's Farm to the audience. The farm is located off Breakfield Road on the Domain of the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee.**

- A. Intro Pic Sequence
  - a. Univ. of the South/Sewanee Highway Sign – pic
  - b. Univ. of the South gate – pic
  - c. Breakfield Rd. sign – pic
  - d. King Farm sign – pic
- B. Scenery Mov Sequence
  - a. Lone road shot – mov
  - b. Wildflower shot – mov
  - c. Butterfly shot 1 – mov
  - d. Butterfly shot 2 – mov
- C. Jeep Mov Sequence
  - a. Pass rt. to lft. – mov
  - b. Approach puddle – mov
  - c. Uphill – mov
  - d. Lft. turn – mov
  - e. Rt. turn – mov
  - f. Gate pull in – mov
  - g. Gate park – mov
- D. Transition Mov Sequence
  - a. Lone KF road – mov
  - b. Nothing but trees – mov
  - c. Main house site 360 – mov

**Approx. time = 1 min.**

**Frame #2: The King's Farm property was the only privately owned property on the Domain until the 1950s when the University reclaimed the land. Once the University had ownership of the property the Domain manager in the 1950s, Cheston bulldozed the main house site and then proceeded to erase the entire farm by planting pines and other trees. Now King's Farm is unrecognizable from the rest of the Domain.**

- A. Pic of Property Lines – pic
- B. Pic of Cheston – pic
- C. Farm to Forest Mov Sequence
  - a. Pan rt. to lft. of pastor – mov

- b. Pan rt. to lft. of pine forest – mov

**Approx. time = 20 sec.**

**Frame #3: King’s Farm has been the only mass production agricultural site on the Cumberland Plateau. Thus, King’s Farm’s soil differs from the rest of the Cumberland Plateau. Because of the different soil, the property harbors plants that cannot be found anywhere else on the plateau. I talked with Dr. Evans to learn precisely what is different about King’s Farm’s ecology and to see what it reveals about King’s Farm’s past.**

- A. Interview Intro Mov Sequence
  - a. Dr. Evans instructing students 1 – mov
  - b. Dr. Evans instructing students 2 – mov
  - c. Dr. Evans instructing students 3 – mov
- B. Interview with Dr. Evans
  - a. Question – only farm to exist on plateau/Domain
  - b. Question – unique plant life
  - c. Question – what happens to soil to support unique plant life
  - d. Question – what that says, from an ecology standpoint, about King’s Farm
- C. Question Transition Mov Sequence
  - a. Dr. Evans in field – mov
  - b. Students in field – mov
  - c. Quick nature shot – mov
  - d. Quick nature shot – mov

**Approx. time = 2.5 min.**

**Frame #4: Due to the unique ecology of King’s Farm, the Sewanee Environmental Institute (SEI) decided to conduct an excavation of the site. Two programs in SEI, the Archaeology Field School and Pre-College program, had a combined effort on the project and were led by Archaeologist Dr. Sarah Sherwood of Dickinson College.**

- A. Archaeology Mov Sequence
  - a. Group shot of digging – mov
  - b. Close up of digging – mov
  - c. Close up of dig tools – mov
- B. Dr. Sherwood Instructing Mov Sequence
  - a. Dr. Sherwood instructing 1 – mov
  - b. Dr. Sherwood instructing 2 – mov

**Approx. time = 30 sec.**

**Frame #5: Dr. Sherwood explains the excavation process and what Archaeology can say about the past and King's Farm specifically.**

- A. Interview with Dr. Sherwood/Explanation Mov Sequence

**Approx. time = 2 min.**

**Frame #6: While the AFS and PCP were excavating with Dr. Sherwood they began to notice reoccurring mounds with exposed artifacts around King's Farm property. These mounds were naturally added into the excavation and the digging began. Once the programs dug to a certain level they had come within ONE centimeter of a house cellar wall. The excitement of the students skyrocketed and only intensified with each uncovering of an artifact. The students also noticed there was a difference in the artifacts found between the house site and the mounds strewn around the property.**

- A. Mound Pic Sequence
- B. Excavation Pic Sequence
- C. Cellar Wall Pic Sequence
- D. Artifacts Pic Sequence

**Approx. time = 45 sec.**

**Frame #7: The artifact found in the mounds that raised the most questions was a light bulb. I went to Meagen McMillan, an intern for SEI who has been doing ongoing historical research on King's Farm, in order to learn why the finding of a light bulb on the property was significant. She told me it was known that King's Farm never had electricity so the mounds had to be items brought from outside of the farm.**

- A. "The artifacts are not just objects in the dirt, but are attached to an owner, to a story, to history."
- B. Interview with Meagen
  - a. Question – How was the research conducted (sources)
  - b. Question – Why is finding a light bulb on the property significant
  - c. Question – Who owned the property and when
- C. Voice over Meagen's interview with historic images

**Approx. time = 1.5 min.**

**Frame #8: From Meagen's historical information, there were questions as to how the land was used by the owners. Looking at the modern ecology of the property, information can be extracted revealing land use of the past.**

- A. Transition into interview with slow fade (immediately discussing ecology)
- B. 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Dr. Evans

- a. Explain how modern ecology reveals past land use
- b. What questions do these facts raise/What can be told by these facts

**Approx. time = 1 min.**

**Frame #9: James Isaac King strenuously worked the land during the era of the Great Depression. Not only providing food for his family, but also the surrounding community. It is known that the soil was enriched, but how was the soil enriched in order to support such a large agricultural project and where did a poor plateau farmer acquire enough money to sustain the farm?**

- A. Dr. Evans asking questions to group of students – mov
  - a. Telling students property was owned by butchers
  - b. Why would a butcher have such strong interest in farm
  - c. Student answering question
- B. Interview with King family member
  - a. Question – what was the farm used for (hog farm)
  - b. Question – how would King organize farm activity (dump site, hogs eat dump, hogs dump, use hog dump to fertilize)
  - c. Question – who would King sell the hogs to
  - d. Question – life on the farm (a place of activity?)

**Approx. time = 2.5 min.**

**Frame #10: King's Farm was a hog farm. The University would haul all of its waste from the dining hall and dorms to King's Farm. The over 500 hogs on the property would sort through the trash which provided King with free hog feed. The hogs' waste was then used to fertilize land in order to support agriculture for the King family and surrounding community. King would then sell the hogs to the Sewanee butcher (located where modern day Sewanee Market is located) providing King with money to further advance his farm and family living standard. The butcher would then sell the pork to the University which would feed the students.**

- A. Ending Pic Sequence
  - a. Historic pic of University
  - b. Historic pic of King's Farm
  - c. Historic pic of Sewanee butcher
  - d. Modern pic of Sewanee Market
- B. Title End
  - a. Scenic shot 1 – mov
  - b. Scenic shot 2 – mov
  - c. Scenic shot 3 – mov
  - d. Scenic shot 4 – mov

**Approx. time = 1.5 min.**

The paragraphs in bold sequence the story being told throughout each frame and the listings below each story frame is an outline of how that frame or sequence in the story was portrayed. The finished product does not fit exactly to that storyboard as things change in the editing room, but it is a very close representation of how the documentary was organized creatively.

The final three weeks of the internship were spent gathering my raw footage in the field, shooting my interviews with Dr. Evans and Dr. Sara Sherwood, and editing all the raw footage in an Apple Software program called Final Cut Pro. I learned out to edit audio levels as well as transition between frames and image manipulation. At first the process was frustrating and overwhelming, but once I figured out the software and how to use it I can to enjoy the editing process thoroughly. In retrospect, this was the perfect “crash course” in video production and had a tremendous effect since I am now able to advance to Intermediate Video Production this fall.

Overall I had a positive experience during the internship. I learned a lot about what goes into producing a piece of media such as a documentary film and also about ecology and some history of the Domain. I was not totally happy with the final outcome of the project as I realized toward the end of the internship that the footage recorded was rather redundant and stale. The subject matter for which I documented did not provide as enticing of footage as I had hoped, but the experience did further my creative eye and feel for how a video should flow visually. Working with the professional video gear provided by Sewanee and the film department was an absolute treat and enhanced my yearning to pursue a career or further my hobby in visual/media arts.