

Blog Analysis

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For this assignment, I looked at Lulupeach's blog on her study abroad experience in Dunedin, New Zealand. Throughout her blog, Lulupeach discussed her emotions as well noticed the differences in values. She has a reflective and transformative experience in New Zealand.

In her first post, she mentioned homesickness and how certain smells reminded her of home. Smells of pretzels, melted cheese, and old books reminded her of Philadelphia and gave her feelings of homesickness (Lulupeach, August 2, 2017). However, she also discovered new things that she loved in New Zealand: pineapple lumps, Ravensbourne track, and ginger slice. She discussed feelings of missing her home in Philadelphia and gratitude towards her new home in New Zealand.

In one post, she described how she felt she had not psychologically accepted that she lived in New Zealand because her day-to-day experiences felt normal and comfortable (Lulupeach, October 6, 2017). She also questioned if she is as strong and independent as she thought. She feared her ease into her new surroundings was due to hiding her homesickness that would get in the way of truly experiencing New Zealand. She also described how her experiences in New Zealand might take a while to set in, and she will only come to a full realization of everything once she returned to the United States. She had a profound reflection on her current feelings and speculation of what her future feelings may be.

In one of her posts, she described how she is more cautious and conscientious with her stuff because it would be expensive to replace in New Zealand (Lulupeach, September 7, 2017). She continued to describe how consumerism in the United States has devalued relationships and belongings and being isolated. In another post, she explained how she shopped at thrift stores more in New Zealand because the items were unique and personable (Lulupeach, November 3,

2017). Another thing she mentioned is minimalism in New Zealand and their goal of sustainability. She contrasted these values with mass consumerism and the vast amounts of waste produced from it. She also mentioned the values concerning food are vastly different. In one post, she described how New Zealander's respect the preparation, origins, and activities surrounding the consumption of food, but the United States has a grab-and-go culture about food (Lulupeach, September 16, 2017). She compared the different ideas towards food between the United States and New Zealand. She heavily favored the way New Zealanders treated food and aimed to carry those values with her once she returned to the United States.

Throughout her blog posts, she described how she has changed from her experiences in New Zealand. One transformational experience she described is about mental health. She explained how when studying in the United States, she sat through hours of classes and was focused on assignments and getting good grades which promoted anxiety; however, in New Zealand, there was a greater focus on the material with shorter classes and promotion of discussion (Lulupeach, August 24, 2017). According to her, the way New Zealand went about school allowed her to relax more and eliminated the mental health strain of school (Lulupeach, August 24, 2017).

Another transformational experience she discussed is her thoughts on consumerism and fast fashion. In one of her earlier posts, she described an apathy towards American consumerism but found the solution to the problem in thrifting (Lulupeach, September 7, 2017; Lulupeach, November 3, 2017). She mentioned how she found it rewarding hunting for special items that no one else would own instead of purchasing what was popular in massive clothing stores (Lulupeach, November 3, 2017). Thrift shopping and New Zealand minimalism inspired her to live a simpler life that she hoped to bring with her back to the United States.

In her last post before leaving New Zealand she reflected on what she was like before the trip and after the trip. She described herself before the trip as anxious, depressed, overworked, and eating poorly, and described herself after the trip as less anxious, not depressed, eating good food, and relaxed (Lulupeach, November 15, 2017). In an early post, she described how she missed her mom frequently, but now she was content traveling, being alone, and rarely missed her friends and family at home (Lulupeach, September 7, 2017; Lulupeach, November 15, 2017). She also mentioned how she feels more comfortable, enlightened, and had a better outlook on life after visiting New Zealand (Lulupeach, November 15, 2017). In her final post upon returning home from New Zealand, she mentioned how hard it was for her to settle back in, and she expressed fear of reverting to herself before her study abroad experience (Lulupeach, December 4, 2017). She also mentioned how her experiences in New Zealand made her appreciate and look at Philadelphia in different ways (Lulupeach, December 4, 2017). Her experiences gave her a new perspective on life and allowed her to look at her hometown differently.

I choose to discuss this blog because it is a place I want to visit. I would love to travel to New Zealand one day. Ever since watching *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings* with my boyfriend, I knew I had to visit New Zealand. I also choose this blog because reading through it was easy and relatable. Reading through, I wondered if I would have similar experiences with her if I ever visit New Zealand.

I have no experience with studying abroad. I have considered it but was never aware of what classes I could take. Also, even though I know they offer scholarships for studying abroad, I do not think it would be financially feasible. Additionally, we are currently living in a pandemic. I cannot see myself flying to another country and studying abroad. I would not feel safe away from friends and family in another country because of the pandemic.

References

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