Anderson/ENGL 102

Homework for Tuesday, February 11

1. Please reread *Brutal Imagination*. Notice again the images we spoke about in class and how Eady (the author) uses stereotypical nuances to create his story. In the first section, we see how the imagined black man is formed in Susan Smith’s mind to be the person she can place blame upon. In that sense, Smith and the man become one. In sections 3 and 4, we see Susan Smith’s lie unravel until she finally confesses. In the end Smith and her imagined kidnapper are separated from one another. Be sure to write notes on your copy and write down any questions you have.
2. In writing *Brutal Imagination*, Cornelius Eady depended on numerous sources. Since this case gained national attention, there were many newspapers and magazines telling the story.

Please read the news articles handed out in class. Compare these to the whole text of *Brutal Imagination.* Now create a three column journal (see below) that chooses a key aspect in the news article, a related aspect in one of the poems, and your thoughts about this choice of a source. Please do at least eight entries.

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| SOURCE | POEM | MY THOUGHTS |
| 10/27/1994 “Prayers Lifted..” (Robert Davis) “Smith spent Wednesday helping an artist craft a drawing of the man who kidnapped her boys.”  | “My Face” “You recall me now/To the police artist./It wasn’t’ really my face/That stared back that day,/But it was that look” (Eady 10). | As readers, we know that Susan Smith was lying about her boys being kidnapped. However, she still sat with the police artist who drew a composite of the imagined black man. In this poem, Eady is pointing out that “it wasn’t really my face” because there was no real man. Susan Smith depended on all the stereotypes to give her description. |
| 10/30/1994 :Officials Express Fears” (Barbara Vobejda) “While police have been inundated with tips, none has proven to be helpful so far. A convenience store robbery in Salisbury, NC, by a man matching the description of the kidnapper proved to be unrelated…” | “Sightings” “A few nights ago/A man swears he saw me pump gas/At a convenience store/Like a punchline you get the next day” (Eady 8-9) | The police set up a tip line because they were focused in trying to find the two little boys. The description of the kidnapper was so common that many people reported they saw him. In the poem “Sightings”, Eady tries to show that there was no real evidence of the man’s existence. While people “swear they saw me,” when questioned, their “sighting” fell apart. All they may have seen is some black man who wore a knit cap. Eady uses this opportunity to point out how easily people believed the stereotype.  |
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