

Dearest Miss Gilpin,

First may I introduce myself as it has been quite a while since we met. I am Debbie Johnson, the young lady that accompanied Eve Ball to the historians' conference held at the D.H. Lawrence ranch this past winter. I spent the winter in Ruidoso working close under Eve Ball doing an independent study project of the Mescalero Apache Indians. What an invaluable aid that fascinating woman is. We had a most prosperous and exciting time together.

And now to move on to the purpose of my writing you. I have just recently become extremely interested in photography. I've come to realize through my extensive travels that the only way to really capture and preserve what one sees and learns is through photographs. The world is so big and encompasses such a variety of land, people and culture. This spectacular

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reality I want to catch on film and then share it with the thousands of human beings unable to travel and see it for themselves. I hope to bring - through photographs - the fascinating aspects of the remote areas of the world to the average man's doorstep so as to enrich and enlarge his perspective and understanding of life on earth.

An endless amount of excellent projects are dancing through my mind at all times and my enthusiasm seems to increase by the day. I want to plunge into what one might call visual anthropology using photography as a research method.

As for experience, I have had very little. In the past I thought I would go into writing historical documentaries of some sort BUT my recent assisting the making of a photographic documentary of the Mescalero Apache Indians has indefinitely changed my mind. My problem is that I am impatient and do not wish to dabble in university courses learning about the camera, etc. I thrive on personal advice,

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individual attention and intimate contact with my peers. Thus, working with Eve Ball was a tremendous success.

Therefore, I would now like to propose a situation to you. Do you have any need for a dedicated apprentice? a hard-working handyman around the gallery? an enthusiastic assistant for an upcoming project? Now I realize that this is an unlikely proposal but I must admit that after finishing your book The Enduring Navajo I couldn't resist writing you. And may I add that I'm speaking on a short term basis - just enough time to absorb a bit of your incredible knowledge and to acquire the techniques necessary to pursue my goals.

Miss Hilpin, if and only if you are at all interested, I would love to come to Santa Fe and speak with you personally. I will be going to visit Mrs. Ball on the 21st of this month

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and could make a trip to Santa Fe
on the 22 - 23 - or 24 if convenient
with you and if you have the
desire to discuss my idea. It
would be nice if you could
notify me between now and then
of your schedule and most im-
portant your feelings on this
whole ideal. If you think
it's highly impossible I would
certainly appreciate any advice
you have to offer of other pos-
sible situations for me.

Thank you Miss Gilpin so
much for your time and help.
I'll look forward to your reply.

Much love,
Debbie Johnson