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Reflection Two: New York Times Photo Essay

I've always believed being African American was powerful. It was more than a color or race, it was something special that needed to be and always should be embraced. The visual essay I chose was "*For Black Debutantes in Detroit*". Most people say a picture is worth a thousand words but every picture in this visual story is worth more than a thousand words. This story shows sisterhood, manhood, and black beauty.

Each picture captures a detail and the captions and words behind the pictures are just as powerful as the picture. Whether it was natural or off-guard they all show details that speak to the story. A debutante or a ball is something that isn't quite seen often in the black community. Most debutantes or balls consist of rich or privileged Caucasians, when you search on Google the first thing you will see are Caucasians. Black debutantes aren't seen or normalized but in this story, they are seen. Not only did I get a visual of a debutante from a black point of view. I also got the history behind and as to why the young girls and boys participated.

In various pictures throughout the column, you see a community, a family, and them being united as one, something that isn't seen so often in the black community. All of these pictures speak volumes. You see and get to understand the beauty, essence, and dedication that they had. It was more than just a ball to them. Effort and hard work were put in to make this special, and so this can be an everlasting memory. All of the pictures captured my attention but a few stood out to me the most.

The first one is when the dad and son are dressed up in their tux and he's helping the boy straighten his tie. This picture stood out to me and spoke volumes to me because that's not something you see often in the black community. Most teenagers don't have present dad or father figures and I don't have one, and that's why I believe the picture stood out to me the most because it's good to see someone from my race have that support, love, and guidance. Something a lot of teenagers don't get or lack. The second picture that spoke volume to me was all the girls dressed up in their gowns and tiaras, holding their flowers. To most, it might seem like a simple picture with girls dressed up and smiling but to me, it represents something different. It represents sisterhood, womanhood, classiness, and unity. It shows the beauty and essence of being black. It shows that white women aren't the only ones who can look or feel like princesses or feel beautiful. The girls built an everlasting bond by participating in the debutante.

The last picture that spoke volume to me was the picture with all of the young men dancing and practicing choreography. In the picture, you see multiple smiles and laughs. Those indicate that they were having a good time. All the young men were coming together as one and participating in something that they enjoyed. Building a brotherhood and making memories, while also learning.

This visual essay is powerful and educational for someone who might not be black or have knowledge of black history and debutantes, this visual essay is very educational and powerful. Multiple pictures spoke different volumes to me but overall the photographs and story showed me that we as black women and men can do anything we put our minds to or have a passion to do, it wasn't just a ball it was an event that created everlasting memories and loving friendships. It shows and represents a lot of things that the black community doesn't see while

also educating others. All the pictures speak of the essence and show that African Americans can be powerful and united.