

Date 1 / 2 PV Log: (circle one) Poem / Movie / Picture / Lyric

Title Tank Man

Author / Director / Stuart Franklin Magnum

Context (Where Found / Viewed / Read?)

I have seen this picture a few times in Mr. Andrew's Global Studies class freshman year, but I looked it up online and found it on a Life Magazine webpage.

Content / CD / Summary / Precis (Say? "Plot? Setting/Situation? Key lines/phrases scenes, etc? )

This picture of the "Tank Man" depicts a lone man standing in the middle of the street in the way of six tanks that were trying to get to Tiananmen Square in 1989. The driver of the first tank is stopped just a few feet away from this courageous man, and the other tanks are lined up behind the first one. There is also a bus in another lane in the road.

Content / CM / Meaning? / Theme(s)?

A strike in Tiananmen Square in 1989 for political reform was initiated by a few thousand students; however, it eventually grew to over a million protestors, and, by that time, military had to take action. The Communist Party would not let anything or anyone get in the way of their corrupt power and control, despite the fact that they made how they governed at least appear to be beneficial for the citizens of China. Of course, the government and military thought that they would have no problem taming the riot, as they planned on using force to instill fear and terror into the minds of the protestors. Nevertheless, one courageous and superiorly brave man, now known as the Tank Man, passively defied the government's unrighteous pursuits. Fortunately, the tank driver refused to crush the man, proving that there was hope for the Chinese people.

Form (Diction? Construction Terms? Symbolism?)

This photo was actually taken from a balcony of a hotel overlooking the street where the tanks were going through, and the picture itself is a little bit scratchy, suggesting that it was probably taken by an older camera. The Tank Man symbolizes defiance and a hope for change in the government and the rights of the people of China.

Commentary (What do you want to say? Why like? Questions? Synthesis / Allusions-Connections / Relevance to personal experience, to literature, 20Q's? etc.)? "Poetic" Traits?

I sincerely admire the bravery and valor of the Tank Man, especially because he appeared to be so meek and humble and to lead such a simplistic lifestyle. What amazes me even more was that he was willing and prepared to have his body crushed and completely squashed by the tanks, which would be one of the most horrifically painful ways to die. Out of all of the people protesting in the Tiananmen Square riots, this man's resort to extremities made him a noticeable figure in the protests, and, although his identity was never uncovered, he can be compared to some of the major figures in world history who have led struggles for righteousness, such as Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, and Mahatma Gandhi. This proves the fact that truly anyone, influential or modest and unknown, can make a difference. I find this man's genuine courage and strength poetic because he risked his life for the betterment of the lives of his fellow people, exhibiting a superior degree of selflessness that is rarely found in humans. He sincerely was a gem among stones. Although much blood was shed in Tiananmen Square after the Tank Man moved out of the way, he at least ignited hope for better and fairer lives for the Chinese.

over (do not mix logs; e.g., no poem log in front, and movie log on back)