

Analysis and response assignment of joan didion's on going home



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Joan Didion's *On Going Home* It is human nature not to remain 'static'; rather they will always keep on 'moving' both physically as well mentally as they cross the different stages of life. That is, from the time, they were born till their death, men/women as part of education, career, marriage, etc, etc will keep on evolving and moving to different phases and places. After moving to a later stage of life, as part of nostalgic feelings certain individuals will want to connect with their early life or childhood. This wish to connect with their early life could take them to the places, where they lived as a child. Although, this past life will give them fond and nostalgic memories, it could affect their present life, including the lives of their currently related ones. This tough feeling and dilemma could occur to any individual, and it happened to Joan Didion as well. Joan Didion's wish to connect with her childhood life including her parents and other relatives in California negatively impacts her present life in Los Angeles, which includes her husband and daughter. So, this paper focusing on Joan Didion's work *On Going Home* will analyze her dilemma of wishing to hold on to her past life although her present life is calling her. The paper will also provide a personal perspective of how Didion's dilemma somewhat 'mirrors' the dilemma of mine.

Didion begins the story by stating that her "home" is not the "house in Los Angeles where my husband and I and the baby live, but the place where my family is, in Central Valley of California" (Didion 125). So, from her nuclear family life in Los Angeles, Didion visits her extended family in Central Valley, California to celebrate the first birthday of her daughter and importantly to connect with her childhood life and recollect the nostalgic memories.

However, at the outset itself, Didion's husband does not want to stay in <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-and-response-assignment-of-joan-didions-on-going-home/>

California and wants to return immediately to their home in Los Angeles. He does not like it in there because, first Didion's family does not wholeheartedly accept him and do not treat him as an important individual, mainly referring him as Joans husband. Importantly, he feels that as Didion stays there for a long time, she changes her way of living adopting her families' lifestyle, instead of following his way of living. These grievances of her husband complicates her mind because, she does not want to stop her visits to her family home, but at the same time does not want to offend and oppose her husband. Her wish to travel on a neutral path, balancing both her lives in California and Los Angeles also does not work out because she is not able to give equal attention to his family on one hand and her husband as well as her daughter on the other hand. Thus, she understands that it is not always possible for her to merge her past life and present life, and so has to move on by jettisoning her past life and seize the present day, and accept the present life she chose to have with her husband and daughter.

When this work of Didion is viewed from a personal perspective, it has a lot of connections to my life. I was born and brought up in South Korea and really enjoyed my childhood there with family members always around me. However as part of the movement of life, education took me to United States. I keep on having nostalgic memories about my past life and childhood in South Korea and wish to return there as soon as possible, or at least visit often, however my present life or calling of completing the all important education, creates dilemma and tough feeling like Didion.

Although, I wish to return quickly to my past, like Didion I need to seize the present day and give importance to the present life to complete my education successfully.

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Works Cited

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