Photographer’s Narrative:

Many times at Gobabeb I found myself more concerned about the job we were asked to do than the scheduled academics of our study abroad. I was still learning more than I had ever anticipated, but the reality of the Research Centre depending on us gradually became more apparent with each day. We were asked to do something that not a lot of people have the privilege of doing, and only 4 days to do it. We had the opportunity to leave our footprint on a UNESCO World Heritage Site just 2 months after they were officially acknowledged. Although the Centre has been established for much longer, the recent new beginning for the organization made me feel as if we were one of just a few people stepping in untouched sand on a dune of the Namib Sand Sea. We may have only done so much as to leave a single footprint on something much larger than ourselves, but my hope is that we will forever be a small step in the making of the history of Gobabeb Research Centre.

Peers’ Reactions:

When I look at the picture, it first makes me think of the emptiness of the desert. It goes on for what seems like forever, but you can’t see any life. The footprint adds in a different texture. It adds a sense of there is actual life hidden inside of it. This photo’s story is told from a personal perspective.

---

I believe this picture symbolizes something personal to the person behind the lens. A single footprint in the sand describes a journey of some sort. It conveys a struggle, but strength to overcome the struggle. The footprint seems to represent a person fighting to overcome obstacles in their journey. The hill seems to represent the struggle and could either be physical or emotional. Personally, I feel like the lone footprint in a void desert represents loneliness.
Photographer’s Narrative:
I took this picture in the middle of the jackals fighting over food. However, when I look at it without regard to what was happening during that moment, it does not portray how the jackals aren’t getting along. For a split second, they appear to be looking out for each other. One is keeping an eye on things towards one direction, while the other watches the opposite way. There is a peace about this photo that lies in the reliability they have in each other. Even though they must compete against each other for food, they have a sense of trust with one another in the broader spectrum where they fight to survive against the other species.

Peers’ Reactions:
I like that the two jackals are looking out for each other. When I think of the desert, I generally think of survival of the fittest. These two have opted to help each other, whether they are hunting or being hunted. The jackals are either alarmed and coming together, or just waiting for the other to make the first move towards some prey. It’s hard to tell. This is a tough picture, other than the focus on the jackals; I do not know what is going on.

I think this picture symbolizes a cultural and ethical perspective. People generalize a majority of animals in the African wild to be aggressive and frightening and the word jackal does not necessarily produce a positive connotation. This photo steps outside people’s assumptions of how jackals are and shows a softer side. I can’t exactly tell what the two are doing, but it looks like they are playing and interacting like two housedogs. I think pictures like this are good to challenge people’s perceptions of stereotypical ideas.
Photographer’s Narrative:
After we crossed the red line I began to see what I had originally pictured before arriving in Namibia. However, anticipating the sight of people walking everywhere with loose, worn out clothing and their belongings balancing on their head still caused me to fix my eyes on something that I did not think I would ever see in person. This picture of two ladies taking care of their duties in the family caused me to take a step back with a sense of respect. Both seem to carrying more than their own weight in what we might consider to be harsh conditions. Despite my perspective, they don’t appear to be worn down or distressed. The life they have become accustomed to is now an everyday routine.

Peers’ Reactions:
The story this picture is telling is from a cultural perspective. This is stereotypical Africa. Two women, baby in hand, carrying something on their head. Northern Namibia has been what I initially thought Africa would be like. This is only a small perspective, but it sums up a majority of how I would describe Namibia, north of the red line. This picture makes me appreciative to experience a small piece of African culture.

---
I am going to guess that these women are not just leisurely walking along the road, carrying all this stuff. The lady on the right appears to be carrying laundry, as much as she can by any means possible. While the lady of the left appears to be carrying a baby bundled up. These ladies appear to be headed home during midday. The picture just looks like a hot, unpleasant day. I get a sense of struggle in this picture. To me, it just screams hard life. However, these women appear neither sad nor overly happy. They are just going about their daily life as always. They may not know any other way.