

# Alec Soth's Archived Blog

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July 19, 2007

## Fathers & Sons

Filed under: artists & family — alecsothblog @ 12:49 am

A couple of years ago I saw Joel Meyerowitz's wonderful documentary film, *POP*, about his father with Alzheimer's disease. The cinematographer for the film was Meyerowitz's son Sasha. (I previously mentioned the film [here](#)).

Tonight I saw Mitch Epstein's wonderful documentary film, *DAD*, about his father's declining real estate business. The soundtrack credited Erik Friedlander, son of Lee Friedlander. This morning's New York Times had a nice profile of Erik.

What's next, Stephen Shore's wonderful documentary film, *FATHER*, with cinematography by Winston Eggleston and music by Pablo Frank?

## 21 Comments

1. I'd watch it.

*Comment by Shane Lavalette — July 19, 2007 @ 1:22 am*

2. Bernard Plossu has done some great series on his son Shane, an example is in one of your earlier posts. Then there is Avedon's series on his father Jacob. For an interesting twist here is Stephen Shames' series on low-income single fathers raising children:

[http://www.soros.org/initiatives/photography/focus\\_areas/mw/10#shames](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/photography/focus_areas/mw/10#shames)

I realize you were being facetious but sadly Pablo Frank has no longer been among us for at least a dozen years now. See page 182 of the Steidl/Tate catalogue.

*Comment by Stuart Alexander — July 19, 2007 @ 1:35 am*

3. In the cinematographer's realm there's "Tell Them Who You Are", a portrayal of Haskell Wexler (one flew over the cuckoo's nest, medium cool, two lane blacktop, matewan, etc.) by his son Mark. Not the happiest story, but an amazing film – a must see documentary.

*Comment by mark s — July 19, 2007 @ 1:48 am*

4. whoops, replace two lane blacktop with coming home...

*Comment by mark s — July 19, 2007 @ 1:53 am*

5. August Soth's moving Rockumentary about his father's ill-advised late career change as a C&W pedal steel player.

*Comment by guybatey — July 19, 2007 @ 3:43 am*

6. [...] It seems as though Alec Soth had the same Auggie Doggy/Doggy Daddy moment recently- His post from today Fathers & Sons highlights the father/son projects of Joel Meyerowitz's Pop and Mitch Epstein's Dad, a film included with his book Work. [...]

*Pingback by Son Set « Pigeon English — July 19, 2007 @ 4:02 am*

7. okay, so i can't seem to stay on topic lately, but i just watched DAD a few months ago, and i can't get those windshield wipers out of my head. of all of the great movies i've seen- solid actors, writing, dialog and cinematography...i can't shake those damn windshield wipers.

*Comment by ben — July 19, 2007 @ 4:11 am*

8. I don't think that I take blogs as seriously as the rest of the world. You are writing the first blog that I look at every day.

*Comment by Paul Light — July 19, 2007 @ 6:35 am*

9. next up ought to be MOM, palindromically speaking.

*Comment by Amy — July 19, 2007 @ 6:52 am*

10. Aficionados of media about fathers and sons will want to screen NOBODY'S BUSINESS, Alan Berliner: [http://www.alanberliner.com/flm\\_02.html](http://www.alanberliner.com/flm_02.html)

*Comment by Media Mike — July 19, 2007 @ 7:13 am*

11. Stuart, I was worried about the Pablo reference. I didn't know he'd die, but I guessed. I couldn't think of another photographer's kid. All the Westons seemed to have passed on.

Mark, I'd forgotten about the Wexler movie. I previously wrote about it here: <http://alecsoth.com/blog/2007/02/12/docu-diy/>

Ben, you are right, the windshield wipers were so good. For those of us who have to live with bad windshield wipers in the cold – it really hit home. But the killer was the way he linked them to his dad's bad heart.

*Comment by Alec Soth — July 19, 2007 @ 8:04 am*

12. Stephen DiRado who you interviewed several months ago has an on going series of his father with Alzheimers.  
<http://www.stephendirado.com/gene.htm>

*Comment by Billie — July 19, 2007 @ 8:42 am*

13. Check out Ed Kashi's "The Sandwich Generation." It's one of the most touching pieces I've seen in a long time. In it's 12 minutes, it made me laugh and cry.

Using video and stills, Kashi documents what happened when he moved his family from San Francisco to the East Coast to take care of his ailing father-in-law Herbie. Herbie is such a character! and the story is well developed but extremely personal.

<http://mediastorm.org/0009.htm>

*Comment by peteg — July 19, 2007 @ 9:41 am*

14. Don't miss Pedro Meyer's I PHOTOGRAPH TO REMEMBER.

*Comment by Alec Soth — July 19, 2007 @ 10:04 am*

15. Back in the 90s, the Corcoran gallery commissioned Jim Goldberg (along with Nan Goldin, Sally Mann, and a few others) to photograph people in hospice care for a travelling exhibition and book. Goldberg's father happened to be in hospice care at the time, so he chose to document his own father's last days. The book is called "Hospice: A Photographic Inquiry". You can see some of Jim's work on his magnum page.

[http://www.magnumphotos.com/Archive/c.aspx?VP=XSpecific\\_MAG.BookDetail\\_VPage&pid=2K7O3R151W48](http://www.magnumphotos.com/Archive/c.aspx?VP=XSpecific_MAG.BookDetail_VPage&pid=2K7O3R151W48)

*Comment by Annabel Clark — July 19, 2007 @ 10:33 am*

16. Check out "Undressing my Mother". It's an Irish short film by Ken Wardrop (2004). The cinematography is beautiful and it's a wonderful intimate portrait. It might be hard to find but it's worth the search. Enjoy!

*Comment by Kate Hutchinson — July 19, 2007 @ 10:43 am*

17. Alec,

Short memory, I even commented on that post.... it may have led me to see the Wexler doc. Always a lot of good leads here. Will have to see DAD. I love "Family Business" – just incredible, a book like a movie. Have seen the Meyerowitz film, as someone with a Dad who had Alzheimer's, it hit home. On that story, I would highly recommend "Away From Her" – the recent Sarah Polley directed film.

*Comment by mark s — July 19, 2007 @ 11:38 am*

18. Bill Eggleston's son, William not Winston, was actually making a feature film in Memphis a few years ago!

*Comment by William Greiner — July 19, 2007 @ 11:42 am*

19. The last part actually made me laugh out loud at a computer screen and embarrass me in front of other people. But, I would watch it as well.

*Comment by Shane Godfrey — July 19, 2007 @ 12:56 pm*

20. Hey, if you've got a surname worth flogging..... now any takers on Page?.....

*Comment by Mark Page — July 20, 2007 @ 3:35 pm*

21. Alec,

Your Magnum colleague, Patrick Zachmann, has also done a moving film about his father I believe. It wasn't selected for the Magnum film festival in Berlin, but ought to have been I'm told. Also Chris Steel-Perkins' film Video Diaries, features scenes between himself and his son at the beginning and end which are very relevant to the rest of the movie. This is a quite devastating film about Africa which questions the whole business of photojournalism.

*Comment by Gerry Badger — July 22, 2007 @ 5:06 am*