

Ms. Mauer

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### My Dead Dad's Mission

### My Dead Dad's Porno Tapes

*My Dead Dad's Porno Tapes* is, outwardly, a very catching, almost baitlike title. But behind that title is a touching story of love, loss, and, mainly, the tale of two parents striving to stop a horrible cycle of abuse. The film follows Charlie, the filmmaker, as he goes through his father Greg's possessions after Greg has died from cancer. Charlie, through interviews, archival footage, and item analysis, pieces together the chain of dysfunction that has ran throughout his family for generations, and Greg's valiant efforts to stop that chain.

Family is used as both a theme and a throughline of this film, since the film delves into the psyche of several different subjects who are all connected by family. This familial element is addressed through interviews, stories, and archival footage, and the film does a great job. An example of the theme of family is the care Charlie's parents (mainly Greg, Charlie's father,) go to to prevent the abuse of their children. Dale, Greg's mother, was horrible to him. Domineering, combative, and generally abusive. Dale's father was abusive to her as well, at one point stabbing her in the arm with a kitchen knife. Who knows how far abuse can carry in a family, but Greg and his wife, because they cared so dearly for theirs, tried their hardest to be kind and inclusive to their children. They never hit or abused them. The most developed subject in this film would have to be Greg, who is presented in dual roles. Greg is the father to Charlie, who described Greg as "a dick sometimes," but ultimately grew to love Greg entirely, even more after Greg had passed. Greg was also presented as a victim, being Dale's son, who abused her children, Greg included, due to the traumatic abuse she herself experienced. Greg's noble effort to stop the pain he endured from passing to his kids is the main uplifting story of the film,

and shows that Greg managed to come out a good person, despite having to endure a horrible situation as a child.

The technical elements of this film are astoundingly well done. The main two methods of film used are stop-motion animation using Greg's old stuff, and archival family footage. The family footage is effectively paired with the current topics being discussed through narration, and the animation evokes emotion in an effective way. The character is going through his dad's old belongings, and you are, quite literally, seeing the story told by them, with shapes being made out of Greg's old stuff that accompany the story. The music of the film is placed very well, with swells at emotional moments and revelations, such as the final moments of the film, when it really tugs at the heartstrings. Organ and bass guitar are paired together throughout the film, which is very metaphorically resonant. Organ is an older instrument, and bass is a more modern one. In a way, the music continues the main plot of a modern man looking into the past for answers.

I'd recommend this film to both teens and adults. This film carries the heavy weight of generations past with it, making it especially effective for teenagers today. It might make you think differently about your parent, and more thoroughly value them, since Charlie's slipped through his fingertips. For others, this film has especially good technical aspects and a creative method of storytelling, with some unexpected tugs on the heartstrings thrown in. "My Dead Dad's Porno Tapes," is more than its title, and is a surprisingly emotional journey that everyone should take.