The Ivy Effect

By

Dan Gastin

Dan Gastin Communication

116 Founders Hall

Ithaca, New York 14853

845-475-5804

dg635@cornell.edu

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| 1 | EXT. DAN’S HOUSE, LAGRANGEVILLE, NEW YORK-DAY |  | 1 |
|  | An English Tudor home. |  |  |
|  | We see leaves on the ground and TEBOW, the family | dog, on |  |
|  | the front steps. |  |  |
|  | We hear a dial tone from somewhere we can’t see. |  |  |
| 2 | INT. DINING ROOM, LAGRANGEVILLE, NEW YORK-DAY |  | 2 |

We see DAN’s study area comprised of an Apple laptop, two pens, three highlighters, a notebook, and crumpled up pieces of white loose-leaf paper on the wood floor.

DAN.(V.O)

Hey mom, guess what?

What?

ANN.(V.O)

DAN.(V.O)

I got into Cornell.

ANN.(V.O)

No way? That is awesome, Danny.

You worked hard for this and you deserved this. Now go call your father.

1. INT. STAIRWAY, LAGRANGEVILLE, NEW YORK-DAY 3

POV AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS:

We see DAN rush up the stairs because he is running late to his health class at Dutchess Community College.

1. INT. DAN’S ROOM, LAGRANGEVILLE, NEW YORK-DAY 4

We hear another dial tone. DAN is calling his father, RALPH to tell him the news. No response (typical). DAN does leave a voicemail.

DAN.(V.O)

Hey Dad, give me a call back when you get a chance. Talk to you soon, alrighty, bye.

1. INT. STAIRWAY, LAGRANGEVILLE, NEW YORK-DAY 5

POV AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS:

DAN is running down the stairs and hops over the dog gate to leave his house on time.

1. EXT. DRIVEWAY, LAGRANGEVILLE, NEW YORK-DAY 6

POV INSIDE THE KITCHEN:

We see DAN rush out of the kitchen, into the garage, and into his Jeep Wrangler. We see him drive up his driveway and onto the road.

As DAN gets on the road, we cut:

**TITLE: The Ivy Effect**

1. EXT. OUR LADY OF LOURDES HIGH SCHOOL, POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW

YORK-DAY 7

We are close. We see an all-white statue of Mary, the mother of Jesus on a black platform with a crown of flowers on her head. We see the front entrance of Our Lady of Lourdes. The building is made out of bricks, and has a white cross on the upper right corner and an analog clock in the left corner.

DAN.(V.O)

After my car accident senior year, I noticed a change in how I was in school, specifically how I prepared for exams and how I took notes in class. I did everything with tunnel vision, and I didn’t let anything get in my way when I was on my journey.

1. EXT. MAHOPAC HIGH SCHOOL, MAHOPAC, NEW YORK-EVENING 8

We see four football players walking out to midfield for the coin toss. Behind them we see the rest of the team and coaches.

DAN.(V.O)

This tunnel vision not only impacted me inside the classroom. but it also had an effect on me on the playing field. I was so meticulous on how I performed in practice and in games, that I would literally spend hours after practice fixing my mistakes on my

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DAN.(V.O) (cont’d)

steps or running routes to make sure I got them down.

1. EXT.SCHOELLKOPH FIELD, ITHACA NEW YORK- EVENING 9

We see COACH CULLEN standing on the sideline of a football field with his hands on his hips. COACH CULLEN seems to be looking through the soul at one of his players, or, probably an official due to a ridiculous call.

DAN.(V.O)

After my team lost in the regional championship game, I still had the love, desire, and passion to keep playing the game. To keep playing, I was reminded by my dad of sprint football. Sprint football is just like regular football team we have on campus, but the only difference is the 175 pound weight limit.

Other than that, it’s a varsity sport. I did some research, found Coach Cullen’s email, and reached out to him.

1. INT. DAN’S ROOM, LAGRANGEVILLE, NEW YORK-DAY 10

We see DAN’S work desk in his room, and we see his laptop open.

DAN.(V.O)

It took coach Cullen about a day to respond. I wish my emails weren’t all wiped out this summer, or else I would read you the word-for-word of what he said in the email. He said something a long the lines of me getting my grades up and applying there in March of 2015.

1. EXT. HUDSON HALL, POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK, -DAY 11

We see a towering white building with sever hundred windows overlooking the campus.

DAN.(V.O)

I had no clue what I wanted to study coming out of high school. To be honest, my idea of a career path jumped around from wanting to be a physical therapist, a lawyer, or a teacher. But, looking up the

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DAN.(V.O) (cont’d)

communication department at Cornell attracted me, and I figured it was a perfect match between that and football.

1. EXT. BOWNE HALL, POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK, -DAY 12

We see a flight of concrete stairs divided into two by a steel banister leading up to Bowne Hall. There are plants and bushes on each side.

DAN.(V.O)

My tunnel vision only increased when I got to Dutchess because of the increased pressure I put on myself to be perfect. I think the whole "Ivy League" reputation went to my head and hyped my situation up more than it should have been. To be honest, it still does. During my time there, I was taking general education classes to get a feel for what I liked and what I didn’t.

This didn’t help. I was so wrapped up in getting As in all of my classes, and I never really appreciated my learning experience. This still applies to me today.

1. INT. RITZ LIBRARY,POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK- EVENING 13

We are close. We see a crowded computer lab full of students sitting down doing work.

DAN.(V.O)

I spent so many hours in this library you would have thought I lived in it. One of the great perks about this library was that not a lot of people used it, and I felt like I found my niche on campus.

This study spot helped me to, somewhat, relax when it came time to do my work.

1. INT. DINING ROOM, LAGRANGEVILLE, NEW YORK-DAY 14

We are close. We see Dan’s laptop opened up to the Common App website.

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DAN.(V.O)

It was the big day. COACH CULLEN told me to submit my application ten days before the due date, so I did it. I felt as if the world just fell off of my shoulders. I felt relieved that I sent in my application, but now the waiting game started.

1. EXT. ADAM’S FAIRACRE FARMS, POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK-DAY 15

We see a white building with green overhangs and flowers around the entrance. A large sign above the entrance reads "Adam’s Fairacre Farms."

DAN.(V.O)

"You think I’ll get into Cornell?" I asked my mom that question at least 25 times a day for two months. The first time I asked her that was when we were going food shopping one weekend at Adam’s. The suspense was killing me to find out if I was worthy to get into one of the top schools in the country.

1. INT. NORTHSTAR SPORTS, POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK-EVENING 16

We see the inside of NorthStar Sports. We see Zoe’s Marketplace, athletes inside the racks, on the treadmill, and on the enormous blue floor.

DAN.(V.O)

Instead of me waiting until May to switch my training over to football specific, I decided to let JORDAN know that I was pursuing football again after taking a year off.

Jordan is one of the trainers at Northstar, and I’ve known him close to ten years. Jordan was excited to help me during this process, because he played football at Fordham and was a four-year starter.

1. INT. DINING ROOM, LAGRANGEVILLE, NEW YORK-DAY 17

We are close. We see DAN’S study area comprised of an apple laptop, two pens, three highlighters, a notebook, and crumpled up pieces of white loose-leaf paper on the wood floor.

DAN.(V.O)

It was May 5th, and I saw an email from Cornell appear on my laptop screen. My heart began to beat a mile an hour, and I hesitated to open it. I did. "Holy shit" I said. I could not believe my eyes so I closed my email and opened it up again. This wasn’t a dream, I really got in. I had to call my mother to tell her.

DAN.(V.O)

Hey mom, guess what?

ANN.(V.O)

What?

DAN.(V.O)

I got into Cornell.

ANN.(V.O)

No way? That is awesome, Danny.

You worked hard for this and you deserved this. Now go call your father.

1. EXT. SHADOW’S ON THE HUDSON, POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK-EVENING 18

We see an outside extended balcony that has table and chairs on it. We can see the Hudson River and the Mid-Hudson bridge in the background.

DAN.(V.O)

I can remember that day as if it were yesterday. I felt so accomplished, and so did my family. I was living my dream to learn and play at Cornell. I knew that summer was going to me my best one yet. My parents took me out that night to celebrate at Shadow’s.

1. EXT. PARKING LOT OF THE NIKON THEATRE AT JONES BEACH, WANTAGH, NEW YORK- DAY 19

We are close. We see Dan, ROB, STEVE, and JERRY all interlocking to pose for a picture. We can see Dan’s other friends in the background posing for pictures as well.

DAN.

My friends decided to go see Rascal Flats on June 29th. I don’t really have an opinion on Rascal Flats, other than I love their song "Life is A Highway," because it was in the movie *Cars.* I broke the news to my friends there, because I felt it was the most appropriate time. They all went nuts. They said we should take some shots to celebrate, but I don’t drink so that went out the window. Cornell was the topic of discussion for the rest of the night. We all couldn’t stop talking about how awesome it was to be going to an Ivy League school, and on top of that, to play football there too. It was an awesome night to say the least.

1. EXT. WEST CAMPUS, ITHACA, NEW YORK-DAY 20

We are close, we see DAN, ANN, and RALPH posing for a picture. In the background we see the Lyon War Memorial and cars parked on the slop. Everyone is smiling.

DAN.(V.O)

The day finally arrived, I was at Cornell. I couldn’t believe all my hard work got me here. My family was super happy for me, and I could tell that they proud more than ever. But, I knew this day was going to be a sad one, because my mom cried about 86 times on the drive up to campus. I’m her rock in the house. I’m closer with her than I am with anyone. And for me to leave her for several months was a devastating blow to say the least. It was time to say goodbye, and there were the waterworks. Both my dad and my mom cried more than I have ever seen them cry. But, their tears were out of love and not sadness.

1. EXT. WEST CAMPUS, ITHACA, NEW YORK-DAY 21

We see DAN and his brother, NICK posing for a picture on the slope with Lyon Hall in the background surrounded by cars parked for move-in day.

DAN.(V.O)

My brother waited until the end to say goodbye to me. He was crying too. I was shocked because I didn’t know he could cry. Although we did argue a lot, which is the typical brother relationship, I realized that he was truly upset, which was an emotion he never showed to me before.

1. EXT.SCHOELLKOPH FIELD, ITHACA NEW YORK-DAY 22

We see a football field in the center, and to the left are the towering seats that make up the crescent.

DAN.(V.O)

It was the end of preseason and earned myself the starting inside linebacker position. I still had that tunnel vision and stayed after practice sometimes to work on my steps, I believe this impressed the coaches and saw that I was committed to myself and the team. Classes didn’t start yet, so I wasn’t too concerned about balancing football and the books, yet.

1. EXT. OUTSIDE OF BAILEY HALL, ITHACA, NEW YORK-DAY 23

We see a large music hall with six enormous concrete pillars. Below them are three divided staircases leading up to the glass doors.

DAN.(V.O)

Well, here is where I began to figure out that I was in way over my head, and that I had to choose between football and schoolwork. My anxiety was through the roof, and I was giving myself migraines. While I was sitting on a massive wooden beam outside Bailey Hall waiting for my oceanography class to start, I talked myself out of

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DAN.(V.O) (cont’d)

quitting and realized that there were hundreds of student-athletes on campus, so why couldn’t I do both?

1. INT. DAN’S DORM ROOM, ITHACA, NEW YORK-EVENING 24

We are close. We see a cluttered desk, with a laptop, a notebook, two fans, a picture of DAN and NICK, and a pen.

DAN.(V.O)

It was about halfway through football season, and it was also prelim season. I had already taken my communication and technology prelim last week, and the grades were supposed to be released that night. I refreshed my Blackboard page at 8:30PM and the red square appeared at the top of the page. I My heart began to race. I clicked on the square and my grade appeared. I received a 76. I was shocked, because I put so much time and energy into studying for this class, and I thought I would’ve done better. I did some reflecting, and this occurred in a few of my other classes, but with assignments. This is where I began to isolate myself and solely focus on school.

1. EXT. MANN LIBRARY, ITHACA NEW YORK-DAY 25

We see the front entrance of Mann Library. There are seven long strips running from the top to about more than 3/4 of a way down containing windows.

DAN.(V.O)

Have you ever spent the night in Mann Library? No? Well, I have. I was studying for three of my prelims I had that were all in the same week. I arrived around 4 o’clock in the afternoon and didn’t leave until the next morning. And yes, I skipped practice because I felt studying was more important that day. I fell asleep while laying down in one of memory foam chairs on the second floor. It was an experience for sure.

1. INT. DAN’S DORM ROOM, ITHACA, NEW YORK-EVENING 26

We see a messy bed that a mother would yell at her son for not making. We also see the blinds shut and the room is dimly lit.

DAN.(V.O)

It was already halfway through October and guess who didn’t make a single friend? This guy. I was sleeping way too often, and I didn’t really have anything to look forward to when I woke up in the morning and I didn’t see any purpose in life. I call my mom everyday, and she could gradually notice something changing. She knew I was so wrapped up in schoolwork, but didn’t know that there was a deeper meaning behind me feeling "blue," which was the term she used often. I stopped working out for a while, which is completely out of character for me and this did not bother me one bit. I also lost the love for the game I enjoyed playing ever since I was in third grade. My mom began to worry.

1. EXT. DAN’S HOUSE, LAGRANGEVILLE, NEW YORK-DAY 27

We see an English Tudor home with several cars parked in the driveway. The leaves are of a fall foliage.

DAN.(V.O)

We were playing Navy in Annapolis, Maryland that week, and I felt like I was going to self-destruct. You know that feeling when you’re trapped underneath a blanket and begin to grasp for oxygen? Yeah, well, try feeling like that all the time. I couldn’t take it anymore, I had to go home. Before leaving, I told coach Cullen my situation and he was completely understanding and approved my leave. I needed that break, it helped me escape reality for a few days.

1. EXT. HARRISON HIGH SCHOOL, HARRISON, NEW YORK-EVENING 28

We see DAN (20, red quarter zip-up, water bottle in hand), and NICK (17, football uniform on, helmet in hand), leaning against a black fence posing for a picture.

DAN.

While I was home, I told my brother how I was feeling so isolated and alone up at school, and that I didn’t like my life anymore. To give you some context, my brother and I are on the opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to interests. My brother told me to let loose a little, go out, have a few drinks, and meet some girls.

These are things that I don’t prioritize at this point my life.

NICK.

I told him to go out, party, and let loose, because he’s in college.

1. INT. ANN’S CAR, EN ROUTE TO THE POUGHKEEPSIE GALLERIA, POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK-DAY 29

We are close, we see Ann driving her car. She is wearing a blue shirt with jeans.

DAN.(V.O)

I wanted to talk to my mom about what she thought about my situation before heading back up to Cornell. I asked her, mom, what do you think is wrong with me?

ANN.(V.O)

Danny, I think you’re too hard on yourself and you try to be perfect. No one is expecting you to be perfect. You should be enjoying this time of your life, you have the rest of your life to stress.

Once you leave Cornell, that’s when you’ll experience stress.

1. EXT.SCHOELLKOPH FIELD HOUSE, ITHACA NEW YORK- DAY 30

We see the front entrance of the Schoellkoph field house. There is a double door leading into the building.

DAN.(V.O)

Well, I thought long and hard, and with the help of my parents, I decided to walk away from the team. This was immensely difficult, but I believed that it would alleviate some of my problems. I walked into coach’s office unexpectedly, which was the norm because he’s the type of guy that wants his players to come in and chat when they need to. I sat down and told coach that I was changing and I felt that I was depressed. I told him that my drive to play was non-existent out of nowhere and I think it was just the best decision. I remember him saying, "Danny, you should have the world by the balls at this age." This made me laugh for a little while. Coach was very understanding about my situation and he said there’s always a spot for kid with your talent on this team. He left the door open for me whenever I wanted to return, which made me feel good. To be honest, I thought he was going to be pissed at me and that this was going to be the most awkward conversation ever. It was the exact opposite. Coach was so understanding and genuine, and that made this a lot easier for me.

Coach referred me to go see a counselor at Gannett. Within a half hour I had an appointment.

1. EXT. GANNETT HEALTH BUILDING, ITHACA, NEW YORK-DAY 31

We see a large building made up of grey bricks. There are numerous trees surrounding the entrance.

DAN.(V.O)

I never thought in a million years that I would need counseling, but I guess there was a first time for everything. I was embarrassed to tell anyone, even my parents. The

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DAN.(V.O) (cont’d)

session was about an hour, and I got a lot out of it. But, that was not the last time I would be in that building.

1. INT. GANNETT HEALTH BUILDING, ITHACA, NEW YORK-DAY 32

We are up close to woman, ANNE (51, blazer, glasses), she is sitting down in a lounge area.

DAN.

Being at Cornell, do you see more cases of depression due to academic stress? Also, based on your expertise, what does a person battling depression experience on a daily basis?

ANN.

Actually, I do. I remember a few years ago we had a string of suicides that were stress-related. I believe that the added stigma of an Ivy League school adds more fuel to the fire if you will. When a person is going through depression, they feel completely helpless and feel as if they are suffocated on an island. This is a hard sickness to get rid.

1. EXT. MOUNT BEACON, BEACON, NEW YORK-DAY 33

We see five men, FRANCO (24, shorts, tank top, buzzcut), CONNOR (19, sunglasses, t-shirt, holding dog leashes), JORDAN (29, hat, t-shirt, dog leash in hand),HENRIK (20, sweatshirt saturated with sweat, hat), Dan (20, Bill Belichick style hoodie, backwards hat) holding barbells on their back while on top of a mountain. They are accompanied by three dogs.

DAN.

These bars were 57 pounds (weight was in kilos). I like to use this picture because it represents my journey and the outcome of the journey. Mount Beacon has the highest ascent in the country, and if you add those bars, it’s a struggle to say the least. My journey was a struggle but I used the things and the people I love to

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DAN. (cont’d)

help me along the way and end up coming out on top. These guys right here are a part of how I anchor my life. I’ve known them through NorthStar for almost ten years, and they have always been there for me no matter what. Without them, and my family of course, I don’t know if I would have made it.

1. INT. FOUNDERS HALL KITCHEN, ITHACA, NEW YORK-DAY 34

We are close. We see DAN in a time-lapsed video of him cooking. The counter is filled with various cooking essentials, such as olive oil, beef tallow, eggs, ground bison, Brazil nuts, and a white bowl.

DAN.

I love to cook. Cooking actually relieves a lot of stress for me for some reason. I cooked a lot with my grandmother growing up over the holidays, such as Thanksgiving and Christmas, so I think that’s where it all stems from. I also like to cook because it allows me to escape reality and just create whatever I want for an hour by myself.

1. EXT. METLIFE STADIUM, EAST RUTHERFORD, NEW JERSEY -EVENING 35

We see players of the New England Patriots on offense and players of the New York Jets on defense. In the background we see the New York Jets’ bench, the sideline scoreboard, and a section of fans.

DAN.(V.O)

Even though I no longer play football, I still live vicariously though watching the Patriots.

Watching my favorite team every Sunday helps me get away from reality for a few hours, which relieves my stress. I sometimes imagine myself on the field and try to feel what the players are going through in that moment.

1. INT. NBC STUDIOS, NEW YORK, NEW YORK- DAY 36

We are relatively close. We see WESTON NORTHROP, YARA ALMEIDA, JEREMY CANDELAS, MIA JOVANOVA, ANIKA EXUM, SRISHTI JALAN, CONNOR LAPRESI, JESSE DIX, IMANI SANDERS, TOBE ATTAH, GRACE LYMAN, KATE SNOW, SCOTT SCHILLER, and DAN GASTIN.

DAN.(V.O)

My depression was not planned, and for sure it was not the smoothest path by any means. But, today I can tell you that I have beaten The Ivy Effect. I can tell you that I am surrounded by an entourage of people in the communication department who are there for me and I can always count of them, whether it be a teacher, a friend, or even a coach.