Simone Haylett

2/14/16

ENG 1710

Prof. Leston

Tech-Lit Narrative

Growing up my life was full of words, tradition, rules and stressing the importance of my understanding of these things. When I was born my mother was young and single, she raised me with the help of my grandmother who basically taught me everything I knew as a child. I always loved writing, drawing and playing games on the computer but had a tough introduction to reading. Throughout the years I have grown to love language and literature so much I have decided that it should pursue it in my career. I couldn’t imagine not speaking, writing or typing my thoughts to share with others. It is something that I believe is my purpose in life and even considering anything else is completely out of the question. This essay will follow my journey through my challenges and difficulties to my overall respect for orality, literacy and technology.

 As a child, my grandmother stressed the importance of being polite, respectful and being seen and not heard. She was very religious making sure to teach me how to say my prayers every morning when I woke up and every night before I went to sleep. In school, what I can remember about reading and writing is the importance of drawing and being able to write our names and the alphabet in class and read it back to ourselves and the teachers. At home, I would play some educational games on my leapfrog but my favorite thing to do was watching cartoons on television. I would watch TV every day after school in the afternoon and even more on the weekends. My issues with reading became a reality to me when I was held back a year in elementary school because I was not at the same reading level as the other children in my class. Upon hearing that I was going to have to repeat a grade because of my reading my mother and grandmother became adamant in making sure I was practicing my reading and penmanship at home. My grandmother would make me read scriptures from the bible every day and brought books to teach me how to write in script and use the correct spacing between my words. The following year I remember taking a reading test online and having to read aloud the words in a book to the teacher testing me. I had to prove that after a repeating the grade that I was now reading at a proficient level. As the years went on, I focused much more on reading, writing and academics. I realized that reading would only be enjoyable if I focused on my interests and the things I liked to learn about then chose stories and books based on that. In reading things that interested me I found that I could jump into a story just like I would with a tv show and experience things from a characters point of view, see what they see, feel their emotions and experience what the character experienced as if it actually happened to me. In my head, I would question why the characters reacted to things the way they did and what I might do in those same situations, it was like having a second life outside my normal one. I grew hungry for books that would allow me to step out of myself for a moment imagine everything differently, I was eager to get to the next page find out what was going to happen next. When I finished a book or story I would feel accomplished but sad as if going through some type of withdrawal, it was because of this that I sometimes read more than one book at a time so I would never lack adventure in my life. In reading things that didn’t interest me at all I realized that I would have to change my attitude towards those them. I would always look for something interesting in a text anything to keep my focus even if my sole motivation for finishing it was just to get it over with. I knew that I never wanted to experience being left behind again because I wasn’t trying hard enough or I chose not to do something just because I didn’t like it. I became aware that my education would be in my own hands and it was just about the only thing I would be able to control in my life.

In addition to those issues I was a very quiet and emotional child, I wore my heart on my sleeve and I thought it was more important to be liked and accepted then speaking my mind. I learned going through elementary school to junior high and finally reaching high school that my voice was an important tool in life if I wanted to be heard and acknowledged, especially considering people’s impressions of me based on my stature. In my first high school, I remember having to take a public speaking class and thinking it would be a great challenge and my worst enemy. By this time, I had become much more vocal in voicing my opinion but still felt uneasy reading in front of my class. I remember having to read aloud a detailed essay that I had written in class and reading it so fast that my audience was not able to hear the emotion had in my writing. I also remember many other instances of stumbling with words when having to speak in public on a topic. It was because of my mistakes that I had gotten stronger in this field as well as in my writing. When asked if I favored writing over speech I would have to say that it would depend on my feelings at the moment. I might write a detailed and well thought out masterpiece and by the time I had to read it decide to only mention a few key points and fill the rest of the speech based on what I know and feel so that it would sound more genuine and relatable as I spoke. I would also say that my writing and speaking style comes from the music I listen to, I am very versatile in the genres I like but mostly I love hearing music with a purpose or emotion behind it. The purpose doesn’t have to be something serious or life changing it can be as simple as a beat that makes you feel like dancing, drinking and having a great time not worrying about the issues in life. In emotion I feel like there will always be a song to express exactly how I feel at the moment or even if need to hear something to force me to feel anything at all. When it comes to my speech and writing, I feel it should have two main functions if nothing else, a purpose and an emotion.

In deciding to become a writer I have to say I have developed a love-hate relationship with technology, it can be the most amazing and frustrating thing in the world. From my childhood, I can remember worrying about simple technology such as the being able to tell time with an analog clock or using a typewriter then it seemed like I woke up one day and computers, laptops and phones were an essential thing in my life. It was as if these things were now telling me how to think, talk and express myself in all aspects of my life. One of the creations of technology that I also maintain a love-hate relationship with is my social media accounts such as Facebook and Instagram. I use my social media accounts to express my thoughts on feelings on subjects and share moments in my life with friends and family. The thing that I hate about my social media account is when certain posts come up about topics that I feel are negative, inappropriate or should stay private. I feel as if people are giving too much of themselves away on social media for the world to see, people should not be able to tell everything about a person based on their Facebook or Instagram page. I feel that it diminishes the purpose of human contact, what is the use of getting to know someone up close and personal if you can find out everything down to where they live with the click of a button. People have influenced my attitude toward the use of this type of technology in teaching me to stay a mystery. I learned not to give too much information away because not everyone online is a friendly person and can use your information and things they assume about you based on it against you. Also anyone really interested in knowing you won’t have a problem doing it on a personal non-social media related way. However, I do believe that social media along with other unconventional modes of communication will be an important thing in the future because of the audience it can reach. But I must keep in mind the consequences of online communication and social media, as I mentioned before not everyone online is a friendly person and information can be used against us also anything written or typed is up for interpretation by anyone. In other words a person may take something completely wrong based on the level of knowledge and relationship if any to the writer, this can often be the opposite of the intend meaning.

Abstract

In looking at my life, I can say that although I have had a difficult introduction to reading, writing and finding my voice in my early years I have grown and continue to grow to love literature, music, poetry. Digital technologies have changed the world before my eyes almost overnight and I have to admit it is hard to survive without it nowadays. This piece follows my journey to just trying to understand it all and deciding to pursue writing in my career.