From Then ‘til Now

Last semester was a rather unique one for me. As I reflect on what happened and where I am now, I find myself feeling a multitude of emotions. Anger, frustration, hope, understanding, resilience, among others. Throughout last semester, I have grown as a writer, reader, student, and citizen, and I attribute much of this growth to the course materials, and whichever class discussions I was able to participate in. In this reflective paper, I will explore how the coursework has affected me. I will discuss how different media has made me think about how I approach texts now compared to the beginning of the semester, how my learning has evolved, and how my personal life has influenced my growth as a student. Finally, I will reflect on how the coursework has influenced my actions as a citizen. Through this reflective paper, I hope to provide insight into my growth and development over the course of the semester and the winter break.

As a writer, I underwent significant changes last semester. One of the most influential works that contributed to my growth as a writer was Marshall McLuhan's "The Medium is the Massage." This work opened my eyes to the impact of media on my life and how it affects my communication, perception, and interaction with the world. After reading McLuhan's work, I became more conscious of the media I consume and how it impacted my writing style and approach. I realized the media I consume subtly influenced how I wrote and thought about communication. Now, I make a conscious effort to analyze the media I consume and how it affects my writing style.

As a reader, Winner's "Do Artifacts Have Politics" had a profound impact on me. Before reading this work, I had never really considered how the design and development of technology could have political and social implications. Winner's argument that technology can either liberate or constrain society challenged me to think more critically about the technologies that surround us and how they shape our lives. After reading "Do Artifacts Have Politics," I became more aware of the importance of considering the broader implications of technology. I began to approach texts with a more critical eye, paying closer attention to the design and use of technology in various fields. For instance, after reading about the design of low bridges going out to Jones Beach and how they were built to keep low-income minorities out by Robert Moses, I now consider the social and political implications of technology and how it might impact different communities.

As a student, I faced a significant challenge this past semester due to an injury that caused me to miss more than half of the semester. The injury made it difficult for me to keep up with the coursework, and I struggled to get the work done, to the point where I had to take incompletes in all of my classes. It was incredibly frustrating because not only was last semester my first as a Professional and Technical Writing major, but I was also really enjoying being back in the classroom, and learning about things that actually interested me. However, this experience taught me the importance of stability and consistency in my life. I realized that having a routine and structure in my daily life is crucial for my success as a student. I have since made a conscious effort to develop a schedule and prioritize my time to ensure that I could be on point with my schoolwork moving forward.

Finally, as a citizen, the reading of Wallace-Wells' "Uninhabitable Earth" made me more aware of the global challenges we face and the importance of taking action to address climate change. This work was particularly impactful in shaping my actions as a citizen, and I am more conscious of the environmental impact of my actions. I have made changes in my daily life, such as reducing my carbon footprint by walking, biking, and taking public transportation instead of driving, as well as supporting local businesses that prioritize sustainability, such as my local restaurants that use sustainable containers and utensils.

In conclusion, this reflective paper has allowed me to reflect on the changes I have undergone over the course of last semester. Through the exploration of the coursework and my personal experiences, I have identified significant growth in my writing style and approach, my reading habits, my learning, and my actions as a citizen. I am grateful for the opportunity to engage with these materials and discussions, and I look forward to continuing to grow and develop as a writer, reader, student, and citizen.