

Declan Peterson

Final Reflection and Portfolio

Words: 1248

It has been an interesting semester for sure. In the two years I was working after highschool, I learned a lot about myself. For about a year I loved working, the year after I dreaded my worklife, and lack of social life. I yearned for a change, and for something more. I started school, excited to learn, excited that I had finally pulled it off(after a few failed attempts to register) and I felt I had finally turned to the next page of my life. My reading habits have often leaned towards those of someone who only reads for information on science and news. This class made me realize once again that I do enjoy reading about other people's lives, even if it is just about being a human. In my writing, it was easy to follow a similar style. I had a lot of experiences to draw from, and while I had reflected many times on them in my head, writing things definitely lets you see your life and your thoughts in a different light. It is easy for me to write out a general idea, because for many assignments, the idea and order of things is usually something that has already been floating around my head. I usually need to spend some time cleaning the delivery up though, since my writing style can sometimes be a bit ambiguous. Reading other people's works has definitely helped with this, however sometimes reading too much of one person results in my writing sounding like theirs. Throughout the semester I realized that the small assignments really helped me do the bigger assignments. This wasn't necessarily because I used a lot of the writing from the smaller ones when I wrote the projects. The mere act of writing the smaller assignments got me thinking about the same things that I would be writing about at length. Even if I didn't end up using the material I came up with, it still helped because I wouldn't waste time writing that in the final project. This also helped me

manage my work and time and made my longer pieces much more coherent than they would have been otherwise. This strategy will definitely be something I utilize in future writing projects, and perhaps a similar approach can be applied to my other non- writing intensive classes.

“Income inequality is a much more complex issue than most people realize and implementing solutions could be equally as complex and affect many people. While the fact still stands that the bottom 50% of Americans represent as much wealth as the top 1%, this top one percent are not the only people who would be affected by many solutions, such as increased taxes. It is for this reason that there is a lot of resistance to legislation that taxes or creates policy that would affect the cash flow of wealthier Americans.” The annotated bibliography assignment was a bit of a deviation from what I felt was the true vibe of the course. When I first saw that we would be doing annotated bibliographies, I wasn’t enthusiastic. I remembered doing these in highschool, and the pain that was citing sources. I was also taking public speaking, a course about speaking, but the professor required us to do an almost obscene amount of research and preparation, in a style that was very similar to annotated bibliographies. I dreaded doing the work in that course, but that was mostly because I didn’t pick the topics and we had to really slant our research so it supported a claim we made. I came to realize that learning intensively about a single topic can often yield complex and nuanced conclusions that cannot be summarized in a specific claim. By the time I was halfway through the annotated bibliography for this class though, I was actually enjoying the research. I also enjoyed that I could make my conclusion as nuanced as I wanted, because it needed to be that way; income inequality was a multi-faceted issue with no definite solutions. This quote is one of many in that assignment that really

highlighted the complexity of the issue. I had to explain it in a formal and scholarly manner and I did.

The U1 writing assignment was an excellent example of me somewhat rediscovering myself as a writer. I enjoyed writing about my personal experiences as well as my experiences with other people in the world. “When I began in the kitchen I had no experience. The lady who hired me had decades of experience as a chef in many places. She worked where I was as a vacation from the pressure of fine dining. She seemed to enjoy teaching me and the other kitchen staff and I quickly learned a lot. Many of my early tasks seemed mundane and tedious, but it was in those 4 or 5 months that I developed skills that would serve me forever.”. Throughout the course of writing this I realized some things about the people I wrote about that I didn’t realize for a while, and even when I reflected in my head on experiences with them. This was truly the crux of what writing does for me. Of course there is academic writing, but this didn’t feel like that, and that was the point of this genre.

For the U3 assignment we had to pick a unique and new genre and write about our findings from the annotated bibliography. I really enjoyed this because it gave purpose to the annotated bibliographies. There are many classes where you learn things but don’t learn their actual purpose or get to use them for anything, this was a refreshing change from that. While I meant to record audio for this assignment and actually make a podcast, in the end there were too many problems that arose and I had to just submit the script. “income inequality was not always

so severe. From the 1930s to the 1970s there were many unionized jobs, and salaries for higher position jobs, such as CEO and comparable positions, were not as high as they are today. As many of these jobs were replaced by automation, and many unions shrank, salaries for higher jobs and CEOs also grew exponentially contributing to an increase in the income gap. This has become so severe that now, in the United States, people in the top 1% of the income bracket make and control the same amount of wealth as the bottom 50% of Americans”. In this quote I am essentially creating a simplification of the issue of income inequality that anybody would be able to understand. The idea with the podcast was that this would be something you might listen to on NPR or some other popular radio station, and so it would have to be easy enough for the average person with no prior knowledge to understand. I also included more detailed information because the hope was, if this was aired, it would be listened to by average people as well as people in government positions. This genre was supposed to be appropriate for a wide range of people with varying levels of knowledge and levels of investment in the topic.

U1 writing assignment:

<https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/pennereng1101fa2023d442tuth215pm/2023/10/19/declan-peter-son-u1-writing-assignment/>

U2 writing assignment:

<https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/pennereng1101fa2023d442tuth215pm/2023/11/09/declan-peter-son-u2-reflective-annotated-bibliography/>

U3 writing assignment:

<https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/pennereng1101fa2023d442tuth215pm/2023/12/08/declan-peter-son-u3-writing-assignment/>