



Gabriel Adam Martinez, Final Portfolio

# Final Reflection

This semester of Creative Writing was nothing short of fantastic. During this course, I was not only given free rein to design and use emotions in my writings, but I learned how to do it more coherently and with a better grip on my audience. While I believe myself to be a rather good writer, I lacked a creative mind and wasn't too sure how exactly to apply my emotions, feelings, and personal experiences to my stories; this course taught me how to do just that, and while I still have a long way to go on my journey of creative writing, this course undoubtedly kickstarted my drive and passion to do better in the field.

The first assignment I submitted to this class was titled, 'Meet my Sword'. The ability to tell an amazing story about a gift from my father to my peers truly made me feel included and wanted in an academic environment, and it helped me see that my own experiences could be used to further myself both emotionally and academically. Prior to this course, most writing I have done has been on external topics and events, such as research or book essays. One of the main differences between this course and other writing courses I have taken is how much this course focuses on our own experiences to write with, rather than outside materials. Another fantastic piece of work I was very proud to write about was my great bowling experience with 2 U.S. Senators, as it was a very pivotal moment in my life and really shaped how I view many things in life.

A very important point and topic in this course was the issue of peer review. Generally speaking, I haven't always been the best at receiving negative peer reviews, but this course changed that. The outlines provided and the inclusion of things my peers DID like helped me to see that their critiques were meant to help me, not to degrade my work. After all, the end goal for all of us in the class has been to become better creative writers, and the more minds on a topic, the better! Not only this, but this course also taught me how and when to and when to not accept and use critiques. For example, a peer once recommended that I describe and elaborate more on my disdain for a certain character in a story I wrote (A US Senator), and I did, as it would better help my audience understand my rationale. However, on another occasion, a peer asked me to describe a certain object more in-depth, but I thought I had described it perfectly, and it needed no more descriptions, so I decided to not act on that recommendation. With help from this course, it helped me learn when to not accept criticism, which is vastly harder than accepting it sometimes.

Fortunately, I believe that these creative writing skills will come in handy far after I am done with this course and my education. This is because emotions and feelings are universal to every aspect of life, not just writing. However, this course taught me how to better express these feelings through the English language and through writing. For example, I want to go into healthcare, and it's sometimes very important to use emotions and feelings when it comes to communication. I believe this course has better taught me how to navigate through my feelings to choose the right and perfect thing to say! Thanks for an amazing semester!

# Memoir

Politicians are a select group of people who I have a particular disdain for, and for good reason. It seldom matters their political party, age, or background, I simply cannot seem to even trust them. They lie, deceive, and ultimately, lead our nation to ruin and divide. This being the case, it would be odd for me to further say that I bowled with a high-profile politician before! Indeed, on the night of November 24th, 2019, I bowled with not 1, but two politicians!

I've always had a disposition toward politicians, and when I saw my community offering the opportunity for young professionals to attend a fundraiser for Senator Leroy Comrie and Senator Chuck Schumer, my interest was surprisingly peaked. I had always disliked politicians, but in front of me stood the opportunity to finally meet one and see if my dislike was justified. Normally, to attend such a fundraiser, one would have to pay inordinate amounts of money to receive admission, however, there was a hefty discount for "young professionals". This being the case, I thought it only wise to go, as I had nothing to lose.

The fundraiser itself was held at a Bowling Alley in Queens, and I had decided to bring along a friend of mine, as I wasn't sure what to expect from the fundraiser. My friend Ryan and I planned our outfits weeks in advance, how we would get there, how we would style our hair, and how we would alter our language there. After all, we would be in the presence of a high-profile federal politician, and no matter what I thought of them, I thought it best to blend in, rather than stick out. We both wore light blue button-up shirts and tan oxfords, and khaki pants. We looked like very pretentious rich kids. It is important to remember that at the time, Ryan and I were both only 16 years of age, and we did not look particularly mature, however, our height was on our side!

We arrived at the venue so early that they were still setting up tables. The moment we stepped into the vestibule, our hearts began to race, why were we so scared? Of course, fear was not to stop us! After all, we paid 20 bucks for this. We stepped in and gave our names, and we were escorted to our table. Ryan and I were some of the first people there. In fact, we were so early, that they allowed us to have a warm-up bowling round. The lack of people was indicative of the fact that the entire bowling alley had been rented out. Slowly, more people in their suits and ties began arriving, and soon enough, the venue was packed with very professional and rich-looking individuals. Ryan and I looked hugely out of place, due to our young appearance and laid-back cocktail party attire, of course, this is the opposite of what we wanted. The fundraiser began at 5 pm if I recall correctly, and it wasn't until almost 8:30 that both politicians showed up.

The moment they showed up, there was an uproar of applause and praise. It is praising them too if I had spent thousands of dollars supporting them. We soon began to regret going to the fundraiser due to the looks we were getting and how well we were doing at bowling compared to the older patrons. At around 9 pm, the chief of staff of Senator Chuck Schumer came over to us

and began initiating talk. He asked us what we do in the 'office', to which we replied to we were college students studying political science. That of course, was a lie, as we were still High School students in Junior year. We saw afar Chuck Schumer and Senator Leroy Comrie clearly making rounds trying to speak to everyone, and as we were at the far end of the bowling lanes. They got to us at around 10 pm if I had to guess, and senator Leroy Comrie offered to bowl for a bit with us, something he did not do with the other donors. He and I sat down together for about 10 minutes while we were configuring the screen, and we had a short discussion on term length, his work in the Senate, and his history as a lawyer. The entire conversation seemed eerily fluid yet calculated. He seemed like a highly intelligent and manipulative man, who had an eerie charisma.

While we didn't play a full match, we spoke and played briefly with each other, and at the end, Chuck Schumer's Chief of Staff, Michael Lynch, offered to call us a cab home. We politely declined, as my father was picking us up, and left with a couple of photos of us, and ultimately, it was rather nice, mostly because I was able to bowl with my friend with unlimited food for only 20 bucks. If only those politicians weren't there to ruin it!

## Short Story

Gabriel does not seem to appreciate the idea of rest. He thinks that everyone can knock out everything in one go. Unfortunately, after school and work, I tend to be a bit tired. So a bit of rest before hitting the gym is helpful. Instead of that, Gabriel prefers to just knock it out in one go. I get that he can do that, but not everybody can follow suit. He likes to enjoy having his free time in one big chunk rather than splitting it up. The current compromise that Gabriel created suits him better. He has more endurance, and the compromise only gives him more time to rest, as opposed to giving me less. He is always in such a rush to get from school to the gym, and from there to work. He never rests until EVERYTHING is done. Gabriel needs to understand that taking breaks and rest is beneficial, and splitting up your free time isn't such a bad thing.

Sometimes, Gabriel will even go to the gym at 6 AM, and from there to school. He is insane! Why does everything have to be done at once for him? The only reason this is an issue is that we like going to the gym together, because not only does it make it more enjoyable, but we tend to work out harder when we have each other to compete with. We also like having each other as reliable spotters in case something goes wrong. Gabriel needs to just understand that not everyone is like him and that there's nothing wrong with going to the gym later in the day.

Gabriel always acts so smugly and tough when he says that if he can do it, then anyone else can. This is simply untrue, and he knows it. Gabriel has his brain wired in a way where everything must be done before he can rest. Hopefully, Gabriel can soon realize that not everything has to be done in such a rush!

# Poetry

## **The Cinema**

The Cinema on the street

The taste of soda, how sweet

The crunch of hot popcorn adds the heat

The dim lights, how neat

The friends and family, nothing can compete

All other places become obsolete

For the cinema on the street

Makes me complete

Thank you for such an amazing and wonderful  
semester! All the best!

- Gabriel