

Interviewer: It's April 12, 2013. This is \*\*\* and I'm here with \*\*\*. \*\*\*, just to get us started as a grand tour big question. How would you describe yourself as a writer?

Interviewee: Is this loud enough?

Interviewer: Oh yeah it's fine.

Interviewee: Okay. I plan to be a writer as my career, so I'd like to think I'm really good. I think I have a really strong voice. It's not just enough to have opinions, but be able to express that and have a writing style. I think I've definitely developed that over the years.

Interviewer: If you had to describe to somebody else what your style is or what your voice is like what kinds of things would you say?

Interviewee: Witty I think. I try to write with a witty edge. I try not to err on snarky but it might once in awhile depending on it. Definitely queer, concise.

Interviewer: What kinds of things do you write?

Interviewee: Outside of school?

Interviewer: Yeah or just what kinds of things would you bring like a witty?

Interviewee: Okay. Well, right now I have an internship at a celebrity gossip website, so I definitely get ta—sometimes when I'm writing silly things for like [celebrity] I can be like, "Oh that kid is so ridic" you know? I mean I don't say it. I say it in a more clever way, but I can put my style in there; which I like.

Interviewer: You're writing articles and it's online like online posts?

Interviewee: Yeah, that's one of the things I'm doing right now.

Interviewer: Okay interesting. What else do you do?

Interviewee: Okay do you want me to tell you everything?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Sure. I have my internship at the [...] gossip website. I also write for a fashion beauty website. I write QB recaps for a different website and then I write for the school newspaper [...].

Interviewer: Wow okay.

Interviewee: I really like to write.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. What's the function and the role of writing for you in your life? Do you feel like somehow personally you're connected to these different jobs that you do?

Interviewee: Yeah I definitely like putting my opinion out there, my ideas out there. I'd written this article for the newspaper about [celebrity], it was very opinionated piece, and it was just really cool to have so many people responding to it. Obviously, not everyone agreed with me, but so many people re-tweeted it or commented. It was just cool that I had started this debate and that people were hearing my idea. It was cool. I liked it.

Interviewer: Absolutely. Yeah that's awesome. I wonder about when you started school at U of M [University of Michigan] if you would have called yourself a writer back then or how you would have described yourself as a writer back then?

Interviewee: I think I've always been a good writer. It's been a natural talent. When I was a kid I used to make my own magazine, so it's not a new phenomenon. I'm definitely wittier now and have a stronger voice. I've definitely developed that. Gotten clever over the years; more clever. I don't know. Yeah just stronger I guess.

Interviewer: When you were a freshman in September you would have said I'm a writer and these things that I—?

Interviewee: Yeah. I definitely considered myself a strong writer. I think I have natural ability. I had really good teachers in high school. I've read a lot of my peers writing. A lot of my friends have asked me to edit their stuff, and I can tell that there's a lot of things that they were just not taught in high school that should have taught and I was. I was lucky and yeah I got that.

Interviewer: I wonder about too your classes, the writing you do for the university because you're also talking at this point about your online writing—

Interviewee: My everyday stuff.

Interviewer: - right your everyday stuff, but how would you describe yourself as a writer for school?

Interviewee: I still think I'm a good writer. I think I have a good sense of structure and organization and grammar for the most part. I'm not perfect or anything. I think, especially over the last semester, I haven't had any classes where I've been excited to write things, so I think my writing has suffered because of that. You know you don't write as well when you're not interested in the topic.

I always do well on my papers, get good grades. I'm not gonna lie in one of my classes I didn't read the book, and my teacher told me I wrote a really good paper. I don't know what that says to you, but I can pull it out if I need to.

Interviewer: I wonder about your goals for writing, you said you want to write after you finish school here, I wonder if you have other more specific professional goals or academic goals or personal goals about your writing?

Interviewee: You mean about what positions I want to take my writing or like just in general?

Interviewer: Yeah it could be. The things you want to do with it or it could be ways you want to improve your writing maybe or different directions you want to take it.

Interviewee: Okay. Well, things I want to do with it I want to write for a magazine, trying to get an internship right now with a magazine. It's going well. I guess personally just bringing in a strong voice. It's important to me to write about things that other people aren't writing about, bringing a unique take on things and I like how I've come so far and I want to continue on that path.

Interviewer: Do you have a plan for how you want to keep pushing yourself to grow?

Interviewee: Practice I think. I've been lucky to have all these opportunities to write the things that I want to write about, not just writing for school, and I think that's helped a lot just writing about totally different things has helped a lot.

Interviewer: I wonder then thinking about the different experiences that you've had across the university what'd you think it means to write well? You've already talked about bringing in boys.

Interviewee: In general?

Interviewer: Yeah. What would you say writing well looks like?

Interviewee: That's a broad question. I'm trying to think. I guess it's the same for all topics or types of writing, but it's hard to. I mean just writing really queerly having an organized structure your reader should never be confused about where an idea is coming from. Yeah concisely is really important.

I like to write with a strong but you don't always have to do that; especially, if you're writing academically. It doesn't have to be super opinionated, super whatever, but it should be organized. I don't know that's the only thing that can come to mind, but that's really important to me.

Interviewer: Are there other things that you'd say about the kinds of journal writing that you're doing that are more specific? What it means to write well for that type of writing versus an academic paper.

Interviewer: You ask me such hard questions.

Interviewer: Sorry [laughter].

Interviewee: What's the difference in writing well for those versus academically? I think you certainly academically you can put less of yourself in it because it's supposed to sound, you know when you are growing up in high school and everything they tell you never use the word "I" that's the huge no, no because you're never supposed to put yourself in the essay; which I disagree with, but that's how people like it, so that's the game of school.

When you're writing for gossip, I'm not saying I never put "I" in my news stories, but I wouldn't do that, but you can tell that it's me. It's just different. It's more fun. Sorry, that was not a good answer to your question.

Interviewer: No it's okay. There aren't really right or wrong answers.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: It's not like I'm trying to get you to say something special or specific.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: Did you take a first year writing course.

Interviewee: Yeah. I think everyone has to right?

Interviewer: I think they do.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: What did you take?

Interviewee: I took [English course] which is the more literature based class. Can we tell who I took with?

Interviewer: Sure. Yeah. What were your experiences like in that class?

Interviewee: I took it with [instructor]? Yeah, I'm pretty sure that's his name. When I started out I really loved the class. I thought it was really fun. We read JD Salinger who's awesome. As the course developed I was less intrigued by it.

It just seemed like the teacher, you can always when the teacher is looking for specific answers and I remember I'd gone to speak with him about one of my papers once, and he just had such an idea about what he wanted it to be and that was not my idea. I don't know. It wasn't. It did help me. I don't know. I guess if it did help me I can't say in

specific ways. I don't know remember learning this, this and this, but any practice writing is helpful I think.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: You can't say I know that I worked on this part of my writing or this part of my writing was changed in some way by the class?

Interviewee: The one time I had to use, he always wanted us to write our thesis with the structure of most people believe this, but when you look at this specific thing then you figure out this. That's what we had to do for our close readings and I used that once since then actually in my current class because it's a literature class and I had to do a close reading.

I guess it was helpful in that. I'm not sure I took away specific skills to use in my writing in general; although, I'm sure I'm not giving it enough credit. Sometimes you learn things so subtly that it's hard to pick up on it. I'm sure I'm not being fair.

Interviewer: Other than just that one time when you can remember pulling that thesis format into another paper you can't think of other times really where you did that?

Interviewee: Yeah there weren't times that I felt like I thought back "Oh" you know?

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. Did you take [Writing course] the transition to writing class?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: Okay. What's your concentration?

Interviewee: I'm Poli-Sci.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Yeah I'm Political Science.

Interviewer: Have you had an opportunity to do any writing in Political Science?

Interviewee: Yeah. You need a ton of writing in Poli-Sci. I remember in my first we wrote five papers. Every class I've had we've written a ton, but that was a whole different type of writing than literature, which I didn't realize. That I've definitely learned a different skill set. Definitely the first class taught me a lot.

Interviewer: What kinds of things would you say about that? How is that different than the other types of writing we've talked about?

Interviewee: Well, certainly when you're writing about literature, I mean ever since high school I've decided that I was never gonna fluff my papers ever again, but in literature there's a certain amount of sounding prettiness to it. In Poli-Sci you just cut it all out. You just have to it's just pure fact, this is what happens, what happened. It's none of that silliness, which was definitely, a new skill for me, which I appreciated.

Interviewer: How confident would you say that you feel in your writing for Political Science?

Interviewee: Yeah I feel pretty good now. Yeah I feel pretty good. I feel like I definitely—the first time I got my paper back in my first Poli-Sci class I was definitely surprised. I was like okay I thought this was a A paper. I think I got like D or anything, but yeah, ever since that I feel pretty good. It's kind of nice, I mean, it's kind of weird because they ask you to basically take yourself out of it, remove yourself, which I don't always like. I like writing with myself, but it's good. It's a good skill set to have. I like it.

Interviewer: What are the other strengths that you would say you have in that type of writing?

Interviewee: In Political Science type writing?

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Specifically? Yeah, I think I'm good at being persuasive. I've had to write a lot of papers with, you know argument based papers, and I think I, I mean I was good at that before, but I think it's definitely stronger now that I can write like that, write clearly. They're very big on being concise and just getting to the point and just very big on spelling out this is how it is, this what it means, ta da. Worked on that a lot.

Interviewer: Yeah, and argumentation is a big thing too right?

Interviewee: Yeah, yeah for sure. That class I took last semester all of my papers were persuasive papers, so it was good practice. I hadn't written persuasive papers since high school. It was nice. It was fun.

Interviewer: Would you say you have areas for growth still in your Political Science writing?

Interviewee: Yeah of course. Absolutely.

Interviewer: What would you say those might be?

Interviewee: Yeah sometimes I think I don't spell out the argument, as much as, I should because when I'm writing it's so obvious, but they want it just completely laid out; A, B,

C, D. Sometimes I forget to put a step in there or something. Yeah, I think I could definitely work on that.

They'll be like okay we see what you're trying to say. We see what your argument is, but you need to just say it. I don't know. I feel like when you write in literature classes you don't need to say it as much. I don't know. I can't explain it. It's more like you can kind of just like be like oh well, here it is.

Poli-Sci you have to say every single thing, even the tiny things that seem obvious you have to say, and sometimes it just seems so obvious to me that I'm like, "Why do I have to say that?" but they want you to, so yeah work on that.

Interviewer: It's being really explicit?

Interviewee: Yeah, that's perfect.

Interviewer: Instead of letting things kind of be.

Interviewee: Exactly, that's a great way—

Interviewer: Implied or something that the reader might infer.

Interviewee: That was a much clearer way of saying it. Let's go with that.

Interviewer: I think what you said makes sense. You just described what I said, so I was making sure I understand what you're saying [laughter]. You talked a little bit about some of your experiences outside of the classroom in terms of your writing. I wonder how your writing process has changed as a result of the types of writing that you're doing for magazines and online spaces?

Interviewee: You mean how that's affected my? I mean to be honest I feel like it hasn't affected it, my writing classes at all because most of my pieces that I write for outside like online I usually I just write it and then it's done. I'll re-read of course, but it sounds good the first time so it's not like I do a lot of drafts.

When I'm writing for papers I do a really detailed outline so that by the time I write it it's basically written for me, so I feel like it's pretty separate; pretty distinct processes.

Interviewer: What about your process for revision? Do you have a process for revision that you go through?

Interviewee: I mean this class that I'm taking. I'm taking my upper level writing right now. They've forced us to revise 'cuz to be honest in the past I didn't really. I would edit it, of course I would re-read it once or twice and edit how I'd see fit, but this is the first time that I've really revised.

Interviewer: What's that been like? What're you doing?

Interviewee: Oh what's that been like?

Interviewer: Yeah. What're you doing with your revision now in this particular case that you haven't done before?

Interviewee: I guess I think about my overall argument more and just seeing how each piece is gonna fit into the argument, not that that's ever been a significant issue for me. I could improve in all places I'm not like perfect or anything. It's definitely been good when I'm looking at the overall picture.

For the upper level writing class I'm taking right now you have to submit it twice. Yeah you have to, so you have to revise it. Yeah both of those. I had to write two papers for that. I just submitted the second so the first one I guess is the only one I've revised.

It was really good. They were really helpful. They recorded a 20 minute thing of them reading the paper and talking about it while they were reading it; which was really cool. No one ever did that for me before. At first I thought oh it was gonna be really stupid, but it was better than I thought it was.

It was actually really great. I could see where they were—they would point out some really great things or it'd be like, "Hey you can make this part of the argument stronger." It was kind of like someone holding your hand while you were revising, not that I need it, but it was nice.

I don't know all right if you want to tell me what I need to do that's fine 'cuz a lot of times teachers don't want to tell you. They're like we want you to figure it out on your own. It was kind of nice, but I'm like okay well, we're all at this stage that we all are good writers. Well we're not—okay that's not sure. We all have learned—okay that's not true.

Interviewer: You're talking about your classmates now. You don't want to say the same thing.

Interviewee: Yeah, I don't want to generalize.

Interviewer: [Laughter].

Interviewee: The point is nobody needs their hand held anymore. It just makes it that much nicer that they do it because it's like, "Okay well we know you don't need it, so we're gonna give it to you anyways." Okay.

Interviewer: It sounds like a nice way to take your writing to the next level.

Interviewee: Yeah it is nice because at this point so many teachers are just like okay you've taken the writing classes, you know how to write, we don't need to do that for you, but it's still nice and go back and have a thorough read of your writing. I appreciate it a lot.

Interviewer: Have you worked with other writers in any of your classes? Like your reading, you doing workshopping or peer review or? What has that been like?

Interviewee: It definitely has given me insight as to other people's writing, like I said before, I peer edited a lot of my friend's, as well as, my classmates things. When they edit mine sometimes they do point out some good things, some little things, I wouldn't say that anyone has pointed out some major structural or major idea that needs to be put in place.

It's not my favorite process because it's like we're all students so what do you know that I—we're all at the same. I don't feel like anyone is so superior that they would be really giving me any great ideas nor do I think I'm so superior that I should be giving anyone great ideas. I guess it's fine. I would never seek it out. I've never asked any friends to read my stuff.

Interviewer: Have you ever written papers or done projects in groups?

Interviewee: Yeah [laughter]. Yeah I actually—oh I just did one last semester. I forgot about that. I did one for my bio class 'cuz I'm a bio minor. Yeah actually I had an amazing group. It was probably one of the best group projects I've ever done 'cuz usually group projects are like whatever.

It actually worked really well. Everyone wrote one or two paragraphs, and then I edited the paper and wrote the intro and conclusion to fit what they had said. It actually went really smoothly. Got an A. It went well. It just did.

Interviewer: Can you say what about it was? What about the process allowed you to create a final product that was something you were proud of?

Interviewee: The project asked us to do a paper, as well as, a presentation. We all came together, picked a topic and we all did some research on the topic, saw what happened and then we decided okay well, what do we want our project to be about? We picked the different topics. Then we were like okay you write about this, you write about that, you write about that.

Then they all sent me their stuff and then I could add in transitions where I saw fit, move stuff around, sometimes someone had something that really fit into someone else's section, and then I could write the into and conclusion to fit it. I think it was good because it was good to have one person, whether it be me or someone else, to put it together instead of just throwing it together, which I know other groups have done. I think it was good to have one overall editor. It worked out.

Interviewer: Have you had other group project writing assignments that haven't gone so well?

Interviewee: The only other group project, group writing assignment, I've ever had was freshman year in a Women's Studies class. It went fine. What happened was me and the girl, well one of the girls just never showed up, so it was easier there was only two of us.

We sat there writing it together, which was weird to sit there writing with someone else. I think it worked out because it was an intro class and it was not—not that I didn't think Women's Studies is hard or whatever. I used to major in it. It wasn't some academically wonderful piece of writing, so that's why it worked. If I was writing it for upper level class I would've you know whaa-whaa, but it was fine.

Interviewer: You don't seek out other people to read your work before you turn it in or before you submit it?

Interviewee: In high school I used to ask my mother to read my stuff 'cuz she's also a very good writer and she does that a lot in her work. Now I feel pretty confident in myself and my writing process, so I don't ask other people for advice.

Interviewer: If I wanted you to give advice to other people about their writing what kinds of things would you say that they should think about when they begin to write a paper?

Interviewee: Well, first of all, I always tell my friends this, and when they listen to me they tell me that it is awesome and I help them a lot, everyone should write an outline. It is the most important thing. Everyone in the world, I feel really serious about this, because I know when people don't write the outline it does not work. A lot of people they'll just be like—they'll start writing.

When I'm writing an article for the celebrity gossip thing that's 200 words yeah that's fine you just start writing. When you're writing a six page paper no. You have the outline. Even if it's just intro, paragraph one is this, paragraph two is this it's very important. I just wish people would listen to me more 'cuz it's important.

I'm not trying to be a jerk, but when I help my friends do that sometimes they'll be in the middle of their paper and they'll be like, "Hey can you come help me?" Okay let's make that outline. I don't care if you're in the middle of a paper, and after that it goes so much better. I don't know why I feel very passionate about outlines. It just has changed my life for the better. The End.

Interviewer: You learned to do that in high school?

Interviewee: Yeah. I definitely take it much more serious in college. I definitely did it in high school, but now I write such detailed outlines. Sometimes I'm writing sentences in my outlines, so that when I'm writing the paper it's written for me. It's there. I don't even

have to think about it because I'm like, "Okay well it's" you know I've done all the work already.

Interviewer: Can you remember when at the university you started taking it really seriously that part of your process?

Interviewee: I feel like sometime last year maybe. I'm trying think even what classes I took last year. It's a really long time ago. I don't think there was a particular paper, but definitely by the end of last year it was in my repertoire. Freshman year, I feel like I, I mean I definitely still made outlines freshman year. They've definitely gotten more intense just slowly. I think just yeah as time progresses. Yeah.

Interviewer: Still on this with my last question. If there were other things are there other things you would say to a friend or to someone about writing?

Interviewee: Yeah. I would say whether you do it before or after you write the paper just cut out all the fluff because I've read people's papers and I'll be reading it and be okay listen this sentence does not say anything. I feel like a lot of people—I asked her—I had actually just read my friend's paper, who's my school rep friend's paper, which is why it was a little concerning, she's going to Language Arts, but I was like, "You write with so much fluff half of what you're saying doesn't even mean anything."

It's like I have ask did your teachers never point that out to you in high school? Did they never talk to you about that? She was like, "No. Never." That's really very concerning to hear that. That no one ever pointed that out. She's a junior now. I know everyone took the first level writing.

I know more in literature classes it's overlooked a lot of times. I feel like it is. I feel like when I wrote freshman year I definitely had some fluff in there that was overlooked and allowed, so it's not like I'm superior or anything.

When you re-read your paper even if you have to do it afterwards just cut it out, think what is the purpose of this sentence. That's what I would say. That's my second advice.

Interviewer: If you can't attribute a purpose to the sentence then that's what you're calling fluff?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: It's like extra?

Interviewee: It should be saying something. It shouldn't just be sounding smart or you shouldn't be using words just to sound like—'cuz there's so many words or phrases that people throw in there that just sound academic, but don't do anything. If you can't do it while you're writing, which I know sometimes it's hard when you're writing the paper, but afterwards you can do it. That's my suggestion.

Interviewer: Those are two very good pieces of advice.

Interviewee: Thank you. I don't know if I always follow the second one 'cuz it's much harder, but I try.

Interviewer: Is there other advice that you have or are those your two big ones?

Interviewee: Those are my two biggest; biggest pet peeves.

Interviewer: If I said to you 'reflective writing' just that phrase 'reflective writing' what does that mean to you?

Interviewee: I'm guessing you don't want me to use the word 'reflect' in my answer. Talking about your own experiences in some capacity; whatever you're reflecting on. It's more of a personal piece and it definitely shouldn't have any expectations for structure or this or that. I mean certainly if you're turning it in for an academic assignment you should have some organization, but there's no expectations for what the outcome of it is because it's just personal.

I mean I don't know exactly what you're saying by 'reflective' but that sounds like.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay so what if—

Interviewee: [Cross talk 30:36].

Interviewer: Do you ever use the reflective process in your writing?

Interviewee: I don't know what that means, so I don't think so.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewer: Probably not.

Interviewer: One of the reasons I'm asking too is that when you were saying, giving the advice about people should re-read their work for identify the fluff that could be reflective because you're thinking about your process as you go, and you're trying to reflect on whether or not the piece is working and how you can make it better.

Are there other things like that that you do in your writing process that you're aware of?

Interviewee: Other things like that that I do. I don't know. I feel like sometimes I self-edit as I go. I use to write the paper in my head before I wrote it. It's kind of weird, so I don't know if actually writing it was reflective in a way. I don't know. I don't know how else to answer.

Interviewer: Yeah that's fine. Have you had any experiences with new media writing? You've done some blog, website stuff, but also I'm wondering about PowerPoint presentations or creating videos or using sound in some way to communication meaning?

Interviewee: I mean yeah. I don't know certainly half the class I've taken you have to do a PowerPoint presentation at some point. I said that that paper I did for bio [Biology] last semester, the group one, we had to do a PowerPoint presentation to go with our paper. I don't know. I'm not really a tech person. PowerPoint's not my favorite; especially, when people read off the PowerPoint. I don't think anyone likes that.

I don't really consider making a PowerPoint writing I guess. You have like a bullet point.

Interviewer: Have you done any video work or any?

Interviewee: For my English class last year. I took an English class and at the end we did a video interview type thing where we interviewed students about our topic. Yeah that's the only video I made in college.

I made a video in high school, but that was really silly. Dressed up like Abraham Lincoln.

Interviewer: Nice.

Interviewee: Thank you.

Interviewer: With the hat and everything?

Interviewee: Yes, it was very serious business and very embarrassing.

Interviewer: Probably something you wouldn't want to have on display at your folk's home when you go back right?

Interviewee: I still have it on the camera. It's just there and I still laugh about it; just really silly. I don't think that all my writing that that's what you want to know.

Interviewer: What about the other video project for your English class? Are you aware of any ways that that connected or pushed you in a different direction for your writing?

Interviewee: I don't think so. I don't know. I haven't really connected it. I guess you could. I don't.

Interviewer: I guess then the biggest way that you're doing your media writing is through your online work. Right your online articles?

Interviewee: Yeah. Sure. Yeah.

Interviewer: How would you say that's impacted you as a writer?

Interviewee: Specifically using web like how that format?

Interviewer: Could be.

Interviewee: It's definitely given me much more freedom. You know when you're writing for print you have to be more careful about your writing, and when you're writing online it's more freedom, just say what you want to say, say it how you want to say it. It's awesome. I love it. It's my favorite.

Interviewer: Why is it give you more freedom?

Interviewee: I feel like the rules of the internet writing are more lax. Sometimes when I write an article for the [local Ann Arbor newspaper] they have very strict rules that you have to follow. Sometimes I'll write things and I think "oh this sounds so good" and they'll be like, "Okay that's not how we write here."

Even though I know it's not like I wrote it poorly that's not why they want to change it. They're just like, "Okay this is how we write here" which is frustrating because sometimes I think it can just be so much interesting when you're writing when you have that kind of freedom. I guess it just depends on what you want to read, what you're looking for different audiences.

Interviewer: Yeah that's what I was wondering too about audience if you're aware that changes either your process or motivation even?

Interviewee: Yeah for sure. I mean I think the big impact on how I write the tone of voice I use. I mean even just you know I've been applying to internships for the last four months. I don't know for a long time now.

Even when I write my cover letters 'cuz you change it for every place that you apply to, I'll use the same format, but I'll change a little wording here and there to change the tone because I know who the audience is. I don't think it changes me as a writer, but I think it changes how I maybe approach it just slightly, just a little bit.

Interviewer: I think early on you said that it was exciting to have something you had written go up, blow up on Twitter. I think that that's a really different thing than writing a course paper. Right?

Interviewee: Yeah for sure.

Interviewer: I wonder even when you get yourself ready to write an article like that if in your mind you're thinking about whether it will catch on or right, and if that changes?

Interviewee: Yeah. No. I mean definitely; especially, that one I told you about [celebrity]. I've actually before that I had written an article about [celebrity] that also really took off, so when I had this idea for the [celebrity] article and I was like well, I want to make it bigger than the other one. I was like I really would like. I know that one did good. I bet this one just because of the topic people will read it. I was like I want to make this really good.

I still had to be careful because since it was for the [local Ann Arbor newspaper] you can't say anything too radical, and you have to be very careful about your argument, very careful about what you say. I knew there'd be a lot of [celebrity] fans out there reading it, not that that would stop me from expressing my opinion, but it gives you different limitations then.

Interviewer: Do you use Twitter or any of the other social media?

Interviewee: Now I do. Yeah. My internship every article you write you're forced, forced not forced, but they ask you to share on six different social media sites, so now I have. Now I'm like social media queen. I don't know. I don't like it.

Interviewer: You don't like it?

Interviewee: I don't know I just feel like Facebook and Twitter are like—I don't know they're just so like self-involved. I don't know. Now I have to do it and I hate being self-promotional. I feel really weird about it being like, "Hey everyone read my article." It's weird, but it's kind a fun now. I like Twitter now that I can follow these celebrities that I like. That's fun. That's a good part.

Interviewer: It's all just very interesting to me. Do you think that having to, what you said like kind of self-promote on Twitter, do you think that in any way changes what you write to begin with? Do you have kind of an eye toward how you'll sell it later?

Interviewee: No I wouldn't say how I would sell later, but I would say that when I'm writing an article I definitely want to take a different approach than everyone else. 'Cuz you hafta, in articles you hafta site two, in my internship articles, you hafta site two sources to prove that you're not making stuff up, so before I even write an article I have read four or five articles on the exact same topic.

'Cuz everyone knows everything on the internet. Everyone trying the same things so it's just really important that I get a different take on it. It's worked really well actually. I've had a lot of success, which I won't brag about, but I feel good about.

Interviewer: I think you should brag about it. Tell me about your success.

Interviewee: Not now.

Interviewer: Why? That's the whole point of an interview you get to talk and say things.

Interviewee: Well, a few of my articles have been on the Google entertainment news piece like on the top red.

Interviewer: That's wonderful. That's so exciting.

Interviewee: Thank you. It was very exciting. I never say that.

Interviewer: That's really really cool. I'm sure that motivates you to keep up with it and keep pushing yourself too right?

Interviewee: Yeah definitely. Yeah it feels really good. Yeah and just knowing that I've taken this other angle to it definitely given me more motivation and not that I needed more confidence, but more confidence. It's good. I love it.

Interviewer: Yeah well, it's professional confidence; which is different I think.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: You can feel good about yourself but feeling like you're making your way in a profession that's a whole different thing.

Interviewee: Yeah for sure. I've been doing all these internship interviews for the summer and I've interviewed at some pretty cool places and just feeling like okay I'm in a place to compete. Most of the places that I write for now I wasn't writing for a year ago I just started doing this, and so knowing that after just a year I'm in a place to really to compete with other people my age, all right let's go, I'm ready. It was good.

Interviewer: It's a good foundation to build on.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: I would imagine you would have a competitive edge over many people.

Interviewee: Thank you.

Interviewer: You've been uploading some of your writing to the CTool site [learning management system] yeah?

Interviewee: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: How's that been going for you; that process?

Interviewee: Yeah it's fine. I always want to upload good stuff. I don't want a come off like a jerk. I don't know I mean I know—let's see I'm trying to think what I've uploaded.

I know I uploaded—you asked me to upload my view but—journal view; something from the first semester which is fine. I uploaded something last semester and this semester.

It was definitely hard the semester picking something that I was proud of because to be honest I feel very removed from school this semester. Even though I've gotten grades on my papers I don't feel like "Yeah" you know? Yeah I mean it was fine.

Interviewer: How did you choose the other pieces that you put up?

Interviewee: The first one I chose just thinking whatever I had from freshman year and just chose one that I thought was fine. Last semester I chose one from my Poli-Sci class I think. Was that the only class I was really writing independent papers for? I don't remember now. I really can't remember.

I liked that class and I thought the topics were interesting, that I did a good job. I think I uploaded my first paper actually. I probably did a much better job on my second one. I don't know why I uploaded that one now that I think about it. I think I just didn't want to forget to upload something.

This semester I've only written long papers for one class; for my upper level writing class. I'm going okay well it's upper level writing so that's probably a good one then they might want.

Interviewer: Generally you're picking pieces that you think are as representative as they can be of your skill? You're picking something that you would?

Interviewee: Yeah I guess. I certainly would never turn in my final course paper. I think last semester I could've submitted a better paper, but yeah I just really didn't want to forget this new one by the end of the semester so I thought I may as well just move one now. I did fine on it.

Interviewer: Pick one, which ever one, maybe one more recent ones if it's in your mind for what would you say are the strengths or the areas that you'd want to keep pushing?

Interviewee: Academically?

Interviewer: In just from that writing. Yeah.

Interviewee: From my papers I've submitted or just papers I've written?

Interviewer: Papers you've submitted.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: You said you're aren't quite happy with the one that you submitted for this semester from your writing class, but it's the one that you had.

Interviewee: Yeah. Wait I'm sorry what was the question?

Interviewer: In thinking about that paper what would you say are ways that it represents you or the strengths and maybe places you would want to keep pushing and growing?

Interviewee: I think it represents that I have a good foundation that I do have a good skill set, like I said, organized, queer, good grammar, spelling, clean. I think it has all those things.

Things I need to work on. To be honest, so the paper was for, my upper level writing class is a Polish Literature class; which I took because of I thought upper level writing and humanities and I didn't want to take humanities.

It was really hard for me to write because the book we read was very contingent on having a working understanding of Polish history, and I had only what he taught us class to go on. I knew nothing about Poland. I don't know what that says about me but, I didn't know anything about Poland. I feel like my paper was—I hate regurgitating what teacher's say in class. That's not the point of a paper to me. I like to come up with my own argument.

I do think I did that, but it was difficult for me to do that. It was just a strange writing process for that paper in particular because I was really struggling to find something different to say, but I didn't know about Polish culture so it was like this is weird. It was definitely very different from any paper I'd ever written in that respect because I'd never felt like I couldn't come up with own argument. It was strange, but I guess it was good practice. I did well on it.

I think I could've done better if I knew more about Poland, but I don't want to blame that. That's not a good reason to say that. Yeah it was strange.

Interviewer: What was the argument that you were making? Do you remember?

Interviewee: Yeah. It was about this book that we had read. Well, everyone else had read and I did not read.

Interviewer: Oh this is one that you didn't read?

Interviewee: This is the one I didn't read.

Interviewer: And you didn't know about Poland.

Interviewee: It was probably about Poland culture.

Interviewer: Okay, so now the pieces are coming together a bit.

Interviewee: I got a B plus on it. I can always resubmit it I guess if I want a better grade. Wow, I'm really coming off terrible right now.

Interviewer: You're not.

Interviewee: Yeah, the pieces are really coming together right? I read parts of it and he told us all about it in class. My point was that this—it was about Poland. It was after the war. I can't remember which war. I think first war. Yeah it was after the first war. My argument was basically that this restaurant that the men would go eat at was like a microcosm for Poland and that not only did the way it look, the way it felt it was like Poland, but also how the many view the restaurant with the arguments that were made while in the restaurant, just everything about it. Those were my three parts I guess.

Even though yes I did not read the book I had a Skype session with my GSI [Graduate Student Instructor] about that paper, just the way it worked out, I didn't ask for it, and she clearly thought I had read the paper. She clearly thought. She was like, "You did a really great job with your argument" just a few style things here and there, so that did not hinder. Don't let that fool you. It didn't stop me from writing a good argument.

Interviewer: What about the Poli-Sci paper that you uploaded?

Interviewee: What about it?

Interviewer: Why did you choose it? How does it represent you? What would you say is strong about it and not?

Interviewee: I chose it because I thought it was really interesting. When I was writing it I enjoyed writing it. It wasn't my best paper. It was my [distorted audio 48:00]. I think it was one I enjoyed writing the most. It was about a court case.

The whole class was about—I'm trying to think of the right word. I cannot think of the word. Oh my goodness. Okay it was about court cases. I guess that's fine. I just thought it was really interesting because at the beginning of the class she was like, "Okay we're gonna take a totally new take on these court cases. We're gonna say this is what everybody thinks about them, this is the general opening, but we're gonna take a totally new view."

I like doing that. I thought that was really interesting. It was less interesting by the end of the class because it was the same thing over and over again. I thought that paper did a good job of—I'm trying to think what I wrote my paper. I feel like it has my classic, classic that's not the right word. I don't want to say that. I take that back.

It has the same things that I have, I do well on all my papers, organization, clear, concise. I think the thing I could work on in it, I could work on all my Poli-Sci papers, I think it's actually a really good example of this of me not being explicit enough in my

argument. I think it's a really good example of that actually. I think that's why I got a B, B plus, whatever I got on it instead of an A was because of that perfect reason.

Interviewer: Yeah. You can imagine going back, if you ever had time and cause, going back and maybe doing something different with the argument to make it stronger?

Interviewee: Yeah I think I could definitely. I think it was the kind of thing where I only needed one sentence here, one sentence there to just put it together. I think now I could definitely go back and do that if I wanted to.

Interviewer: If you wanted to right.

Interviewee: I think yeah I definitely learned a lot from that, from that paper; went on from there so.

Interviewer: Sounds like it. I think that's all my questions. Do you have other things that seem relevant or things that you thought we would talk about we didn't?

Interviewee: I don't think so.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: We covered more than I thought we were gonna cover.

[End of Audio]