

Interviewer: Right. Thinking across your writing experiences at U of M, what do you think it means to write well?

Interviewee: Well, originally I would say, “It meant getting an A.” I would now revise that to saying, “It’s writing to your audience, and if you are to write well, it means two things to me. Number one, the person who read it enjoyed the piece. They at least thought, “Okay. I think this piece was well written and was understood.” When I say that “it’s enjoyed,” it’s like, “Hey, I wasn’t confused. This reading process was fun for me, and regardless of whether I disagree with, maybe, something he said in here or not, I still thought this piece was good.

The other one is to get people talking about that piece of writing. I think a real piece of writing transcends. A great piece of writing transcends a good piece of writing when other people continue to talk about it. A newspaper, a clip of mine, for example, that maybe gets people talking. Whether they hate it or not it’s still a piece that’s done better than the one that did not.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Great. Okay. What do you think made that change between looking at good writing as an A, and then looking—

Interviewee: Good question. Yeah. That really is a good question. I would say that it’s when I started to realize that each person grading my writing was partly doing it subjectively just because that’s how to make it in creative writing.

You can actually grade it objectively, and when I realized—I had a piece of writing, and people, we’d discuss it in a class once, and then it’s like the longest discussion in the class for the day, and I realized like, “Wow. This must have been a really good piece if people are still discussing this in class as compared to just getting an A and one person’s

opinion,” because I feel like I was doing it for one person, and when I realized I was starting to do it for myself, and to get others, and then—let me rephrase that. Okay. I was originally doing it for one teacher. Like, I’d be writing a piece for you.

Interviewer: Yeah?

Interviewee: I said, “I’ll scrap that. What if I write it for just myself, and then let others read it,” and it’s as if when I went to a bigger audience, when I went to The Daily. That was a shift. You know?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: It was like, “I’m not just writing for one person. I’m writing for multiple people.” I think then I stopped caring about trying to please one person, and go back to that type of formal writing I was referring to earlier, and then just kind of letting it flow.

Interviewer: Yeah.