Bryn Loftness

ENGL 112 –WA4 Portfolio Assignment

**Reflective Essay**

My progression as a writer has been a lengthy, arduous, and occasionally comedic process. My writing career started early- much earlier than many other children. One of my first (unofficial) familial publications was *Dog Man vs Bone Man*, the epic antagonist/protagonist comic book series I wrote and illustrated when I was 7 years old. Flash forward to high school. My skills are being honed, and nurtured through my various accelerated writing courses. I am writing full length essays every week; I am being challenged and stressed to the point of true academic and literary growth. I had never had a course throw me down and pick me back up—truly recreate my style—like my AP Language and Composition course. Without the weekly essays and consistent feedback, I would not be the writer I am today. Moving forward into the University setting, I am ever-progressing. Like the continuous cycle of the academic conversation through academic writing, my depths of knowledge and literary tool-kit is always being built upon and added to. I am confident in saying that I have been able to apply what I have learned to create cohesive, well-researched, fairly-addressed, interesting compositions over the duration of this course.

I felt very strong with all my paper submissions of this course. I felt I put forth a good amount of effort in shaping my ideas into essays that really mattered to me, not just trying to fit the guidelines. Therefore, choosing a paper to revise was a significant challenge. However, having just finished WA3, I had an overarching feeling that there was still so much more I could include and discuss in regards to the topic of consumerism, immediate gratification, and mass consumption in American society; our country is founded off free-will, freedom, and the push to attain it.

My original WA3 topic examined the push to consumerism and mass consumption in the 1950s sparking from the industries of money in regards to credit cards, sex and the rise of *Playboy*, and the fast/convenience food industry. I held the claim that these industries “deeply, but not singlehandedly, affected the movement to an immediate gratification/mass consuming society.” (Journal Entry 7) I organized my paper in a unique, sectional, manner. I personally really find this style more appealing and easier to follow, as not only a reader but also as the writer. I felt I could make more of a full-circle feel by including the preface to introduce my topics and claims as well as the conclusion, restating those same claims and topics.

In revising and significantly changing my paper to create WA4, I was hoping to take it into a slightly new direction while also maintaining the same general structure. For these efforts, I have added sections and more information going into how these industries are still affecting mass consumption and immediate gratification in America, 60 years after their foundations. Not only that, I have chosen to add more information on how these industries are specifically affecting the people of this nation, not only their spending habits. These industries have taken a new position in the societal workings and I wanted to address that shift. I feel this is a significant modification of the paper because originally, I had intentionally tried to omit any specific references to modern day events and consequences. I wanted the paper to be more of an historical analysis and a discussion of the adoption of these industries rather than claims and considerations about their long term place in our society.

Due to my extensive trainings with writing and composition, I felt I was a bit advanced comparatively to other students’ grammar and structural abilities. However, I still tried to refine my craft by pushing myself to diversify my styles, grammar, and language. During the course of the semester I also found myself truly enjoying peer reviewing papers, which is pretty new for me. I felt I got a better understanding of what my classmates were struggling with in terms of grammar, set up, and claims within their papers, and I had the opportunity to use that knowledge to ensure mine wasn’t lacking in that same aspects.

I haven’t always enjoyed my English/Literary courses in the past due to content, or inflexible guidelines. I strongly believe that the looser format of this course has allowed me to explore my own ideas and write papers that, like I earlier mentioned, I felt true value and interest in. This in turn allowed me to craft compositions that were genuinely interesting, well composed, and that gave me a true sense of accomplishment and satisfaction when completing them.

Thanks for a fun semester. I have truly enjoyed taking your course.