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Honors Thesis Personal Reflection

From the beginning of my college career, I knew I wanted to write a senior thesis, and it was simply a matter of narrowing down what, precisely, I wanted to write about. As an English and Film double major, selecting adaptations as an area of study enabled me to bridge my academic disciplines and bring together the analytical tools I had learned in each department. Writing this thesis truly was the culmination of my academic career thus far. I studied novels I hadn't read since middle school, re-watched beloved films, and used articles and concepts from earlier college classes to provide a lens through which to examine these texts I had never before considered critically.

I found many joys in writing my thesis. In particular, I loved the process of exploration, searching for primary and secondary sources and examining them to discover the sort of argument I could construct and the themes that were present throughout. As I came to one discovery, countless more questions arose, creating a sort of puzzle that I was responsible for both designing and building. Though this certainly led me down many rabbit holes, it also helped me create a roadmap of the topics and ideas that interested me the most, allowing me to articulate exactly what it was that I was interested in. Perhaps the greatest joy of the thesis program, however, was the community that developed throughout the writing process. While many of us knew one another from previous classes, the massive undertaking of writing a thesis was something that brought us all together on a deeper level and provided me with a supportive group of friends.

Completing my thesis during the pandemic was, perhaps unsurprisingly, quite difficult for me. A lot of my project depended on access to resources from the Hesburgh Library, and I didn't realize how much of an advantage having my advisors and my thesis-writing peers on campus with me was until I had lost it. I think one of the biggest things that writing my thesis from home taught me was resilience and learning to roll with the punches. I ended up somewhat narrowing the scope of my project to focus on the sources I had at home and online materials in order to remedy the loss of the library, and through (many) Zoom calls with advisors and friends, the supportive community did continue on, albeit in a very different way. Though the pandemic upturned my writing process and my finished thesis does not look quite like what I had initially anticipated, it pushed me to go out of my comfort zone, and I did complete this adventure with a piece of written work that I can be proud of. While it wasn't always perfect or easy, particularly during this pandemic, I am extraordinarily glad that I decided to write a thesis.