

Internship Final Reflection Essay

My CityBeat internship was the best internship experience I could have possibly imagined. My talent for writing was noticed early on, so while I still had to do a fair bit of menial intern work – fact checking long listicles about which restaurants and bars allow pets, the banal CityBeat summer camp guide, and the recent Brunch issue feature – I was tasked with writing at least half the time. And as time went on, I spent less time writing short features about the candy available at Cincinnati's historic ice cream parlors (a tough task, Grater's doesn't spent a lot of web space taking about their candy), and more time writing 300-400 word blog posts about everything from hot dog eating contests, to water lamp ceremonies.

Shorter write-ups for slide-show introductions and individual slides were also done per request by Hailey Bollinger and always met with praise, and I was tasked with writing 10 total staff picks – five which I pitched and five assigned by Maija – for CityBeat's annual "Best of Cincinnati" edition. During mid-late April I was particularly busy writing for their Arts & Culture section; writing two 400-word reviews for the performance art pieces done for the Contemporary Art Center's inaugural "This Time Tomorrow" festival – one of which required me to walk from near the intersection of Jefferson Ave. and Martin Luther King Blvd. to the CAC and then back (since my car was in Clifton) – and I wrote a 750-word article, featured in their April 17 print edition – about Cincy Shakes actress, Kelly Mengelkoch's interpretation of Lady Macbeth.

I am extraordinarily fulfilled with my work at CityBeat this semester, not only because I was a late edition to their intern pool, but because I was successfully able to sideline the unfortunate outside circumstances that have harpooned my attendance and performance in all of my classes this year to produce some of my best written work to date for their publication. I went

into this semester knowing I would only be able to fully mentally commit to one obligation and I chose my CityBeat internship hoping that by showing my upmost capabilities that I would be asked to continue to write for them – which I has been by both Maija, and Mackenzie Manley, the Arts & Culture editor.

I am unsure if ever intern received some level of quasi-payment, but for the two “This Time Tomorrow” reviews, and the Lady Macbeth feature, I was given two Keystone gift cards worth \$25 by Maija – two items I’m sure were left over from some gift basket or birthday card – an action which I chose to interpret as an apology that I could not already be paid for some of the work I was doing for them.

Given the creative nature of this internship, I didn’t utilize much of the journalism curriculum in this internship, rather, I found myself more going back to the history classes and electives I took throughout my years. A Jewish humor class, a contemporary world drama class, a pop culture history class, and an introductory Shakespeare course were what I mainly drew upon for my work as an intern. The voluminous critical theory I read in those three classes greatly informed my vocabulary, ability to construct arguments, critical thought process, and provided witty references to insert into the bohemian writing assignments I was often given – or, in the case of Lady Macbeth, proposed.

I loved the workplace environment, especially when Maija would bring her three (or two?) dogs with to the office on Fridays, and everyone there was highly encouraging and funny to work with. Pop culture conversations could always pop up out of nowhere and spark heated conversation for ten-to-fifteen minutes and everyone is still able to get right back into their work. In my view, it’s an environment like this that produces such a successful alt-weekly in 2019, when the medium is a dying breed. I also found no diversity issues whatsoever and if I did make

a bold outfit choice like matching a lowcut halter-top with distressed jeans and a choker, or a blouse tucked into a short pink skirt, it was only met with compliments.

I will be forever grateful to Maija for giving me this opportunity and allowing me to blossom as a writer this semester with consistent assignments and positive reinforcement. I look forward to any future work I do for them after my internship is over, as well as the intern pizza party this Thursday, which should cap off my college experience on a high note. I can't imagine another internship that would have given me this level of creative freedom in my writing, or appreciation of that creativity, and I couldn't recommend CityBeat as a publication or a place of work highly enough after my time there.