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# *Writer's Statement for "LGBT+ Media: What Went Wrong"*

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In Professor Holic's ENC 1102 class, we were asked to choose one topic to focus on for an entire semester-long topic. This topic had to involve media, as our entire semester heavily revolved around multimodal texts. This was exciting as media was all around us, and it is pretty easily accessible.

Initially, I had planned on writing about how photoshop in advertisements could impact people's self-image and could cause a rise in eating disorders. I had started collecting my sources for our first assignment, and after finishing that, I wasn't feeling it. I felt like it wasn't personal enough, and it wasn't something I could connect to at the moment.

After going back to the drawing board and thinking long and hard, an idea finally struck me. I wanted to write about LGBT+ representation in media, which quickly narrowed down to representation in television. As a transgender male, I knew firsthand how this representation could impact people like me, and, clearly, I was already in the community and had plenty of primary sources to pull from if needed.

Our first portion of the project had to be a comic of some kind, and as I wasn't an artist, this made me a little nervous. After all, you don't want to ruin your message with sloppy work. However, in the end, I think it worked out fine. Then, we did more of the nitty gritty and made our annotated bibliography, which took an all-nighter or two to finish because part of my bibliography included watching television shows and analyzing them. That part was fun, and it was interesting to view some shows from my formative years in discovering my identity. Also, it was fun to watch my roommate's reaction to some of the overacting in *Degrassi: The Next Generation*.

Finally, it was time to create what this had all been building up to. We were told to make a multimodal piece, and I knew that I could have gone with a comic like before or some other form of artwork, but it didn't seem fitting for what I had studied. Instead, I decided that since I was focusing mainly on television and its impact on the LGBT+ community, it would be most fitting to write a script and film a documentary. Plus, it didn't hurt that I used to write scripts all the time in middle school, so I was familiar with the format.

However, there were still challenges, as suddenly I had to work with writing transitions and figuring out where to place clips. I also had to discover the balance between myself and my words and presenting the example. After all, I didn't want any copyright laws coming after me for putting an entire episode of *Will & Grace* in my documentary. I also wanted to keep a touch of myself within the documentary since sometimes the genre can get a bit dull for viewers and can quickly become background noise. Perhaps it was the theatre kid in me, but I wanted to grab the audience's attention.

There were, of course, several constraints as time was not my friend while filming this documentary. First, I had to write the script which I knew would be what most of my grade was based off of, so it had to be perfect. Then, I had to film, and while I had hoped to get through it fast, I

kept tripping over my words and my roommate's schedule didn't match mine. I also didn't have the best equipment to make it a show-stopping documentary to win an Oscar. However, I had a ton of fun creating it. Finally, I got to editing, and due to a time crunch, I wasn't able to finish editing in all of the clips I wanted to include. I knew when I chose documentary it would be hard, but I had never imagined it would be that hard.

Overall, I hope that my work can help bring change to the industry or at least open people's eyes to the media they consume every day. I had a blast looking back at the history of LGBT+ representation, and I can't wait to see what the future holds.