

Interviewer: Great, so you checked that you wanted to tell us about your reading and your writing practices in grad school, and maybe anxiety too. So, tell us about, how do you approach your weekly tasks in grad school?

Justin: Well, I've sort-of played around with a lot of different ways, I'm sort-of still playing with how to...do you want me to talk to you or the camera?

Interviewer: It's up to you it's fine, you can talk to me.

Justin: Reading in grad school can be very tricky because of the quantity of readings you have to do, and different people go about it different ways. I initially tried to sort-of just tried to divide it up into you know how many days...seven days a week, divide it up into how many pages I needed to read per day, but I found I didn't like that because I was just getting snapshots of each reading on different days of the week rather than really engaging with the text. So then I switched over...and I sort-of dedicate certain days I do this reading, so rather than doing four you know coursework readings of 30 pages I'll do one book 120 pages, and that day I read that for that class. So, that's how I've sort-of changed to try to manage the readings and grad school work which can be extensive. Now, the writing I have learned, and I like to give myself a lot of time in the planning, pre-writing phase, so if it's an end of seminar project I really want to have an idea by week four or five...at least a sense of what I want to write about and start playing with that, because I find if I wait until the end, then I have to go back and start thinking alright, what texts did I read that are related to this whereas if I have an idea early-on as I'm reading I can start to take notes and say this can really relate, and I usually have a couple...I'll start a folder in my USB drive that will say potential paper for this class and that will... by the time I come to write it that will have a couple documents in it as far as just stupid notes to myself of page 150 of this book. In that way I have to spend less time going back and trying to remember what I wanted to do. So, as far as the writing and those longer seminar papers I like to do a lot of it throughout the semester rather than trying to blitz it all at the end. Of course, sometimes I can be in a situation where I don't really have an Assignment Sheet or know what I'm going to do until a week in and then it becomes more difficult. That's how I try to break up the reading and the writing.

Interviewer: So, did you want to talk about anything else with that or maybe I know that you said sometimes...I guess where does the anxiety sit for you? Is it in the planning, in the actual trying to do it, is it...like that's one way you avoid it I guess is to try to get a project idea in mind as early as possible...

Justin: Yeah, for me the greatest anxiety is the... you know what seem to be the three tons of tiny things. You know...I don't really get stressed out about writing a paper because it's one big thing. But it's when I start my day and I have like two hundred tiny things to do. And, then the other difficult thing is that you become so engrossed in getting all of your work done that you forget all the other personal things you're supposed to be doing, you start missing...oh, I was supposed to pay my bill last Friday or crap, it's my sister's birthday and I get the call...or you know, trying to plan those things...it becomes...you get so obsessed with trying to break up the readings and the writings that everything else in your life drops out. Then, for me having a healthy relationship with my family and my friends is what keeps me sane so then if I let that drop out I start to get shaken, and I'm like I need to have a weekend with friends or my family, and of course then I get backed up on my work, so it's sort-of this vicious cycle. It's trying to get all the tiny things done and still remember your personal details. Of course then I end up having a calendar that is the lame snapshot of my life where I have to write things down like, "call mom," you know, in a

calendar that shouldn't be working its way in there but...sometimes that can be depressing just looking at your calendar and having all these little reminders of things to do.

Interviewer: Do you have anything else you want to say?

Justin: Reading and writing in grad school for me it's difficult, but it's also fun. I always tell myself...if I find myself getting stressed out I say, dude, your life is reading and writing I mean how bad can that be. So, it can stress you out by comparing to...when I was working in a corporate environment I was only working nine hours a day but I would still get stressed out because I was saying, I'm not doing anything creative with my life, I just need time to read and to write, so then quit that job come to grad school and now it's, I'm doing all this reading and writing I just want to do something else. So, I always tell myself, it's always going to be something else you just got to...I like reading and writing a lot more than working a corporate job. At the end of the day, if all I have to do is read 100 pages and write about it – it's a pretty good life.