

Georgiana Swan

Travel Report

I presented at the Popular Culture Association Conference in Washington, D.C. Dr. Shoup and I presented our current project, “Rebuilding Mainstreet” on a gaming panel April 17th. I was very nervous beforehand but presenting gave me a lot of confidence when it comes to speaking in an academic setting. This confidence will help me present at future conferences over the course of my Junior and Senior years. I also learned how to consolidate my thoughts and sum up a very complex project in several minutes. This skill will come in handy when it comes to writing essays and presenting in other classes because these academic purists require the same skill sets. This will benefit me tremendously as a Political Science and Psychology double major. These two majors require a tremendous amount of writing and consolidating. The panel also included a section for questions and answers. This gave me the opportunity to learn what questions people have about the game and how to explain the game more thoroughly. This gave me a deeper understanding of the game itself and taught me the communication skills required to explain the game. This will help me in the future on the team by giving me the ability to see the game from an outsider’s perspective. The next day, our research team brought our board game to the game night. The game night was an open invention to all people at the conference. Having people play the game allowed us to see how different people interpret the game. In addition, I went to three different panels. It was very eye-opening to see people in an academic setting analyzing my favorite tv shows and movies. I was under the impression that professors had to focus on serious, technically problems. This made me realize that professors have the freedom to explore numerous areas of interest. In addition, tv shows are important and can have a positive impact on society, especially one’s with women and people of color in the leading role. As a woman, I found it inspiring to learn about the impact of women in shows, such as How to Get Away with Murder and Scandal. I would not have been able to get this experience at Mississippi State because the people were from all across the United States and some from out of the country. In addition, since I was in D.C., I was able to meet up with my good friend and mentor, Sean McCarthy. He graduated from Mississippi State University last year and is currently working at the Center for American Progress. Lastly, I was able to develop my relationship with my two professors, Dr. Brian Shoup and Dr. Melaine Loehwing. They are tremendously helpful

and pour so many resources into me and my fellow undergraduate research assistances. I know I will remember this trip for a very long time and I am so grateful I got to go. Even though I was nervous and there was some bumps in the road, the lessons I learned made me a stronger, more thoughtful person.