



Kaitlyn Diskin
Film



Photo courtesy of Kellyn Lock.



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Moving Forward: Kellyn Lock

Kellyn Lock ('18 English) specialized in Creative Writing with a minor in Anthropology at UWM. Currently, she lives in New Orleans, Louisiana working on an M.A. in English at Tulane University.

Her decision to apply to schools in New Orleans directly relates to her experience on the annual Honors College [Alternative Spring Break](#) trip.

"The New Orleans trip was very influential to me" she states. "It quite literally changed my life. When we were there, I just loved how colorful the city was, and I always wanted to see what else was out there."

Given the instability of the last year, Kellyn felt she had to seize the opportunity to explore a place she now holds close. "I actually found out that I got into Tulane the second week of quarantine, so I had to figure out if it was a good a time to kind of start over," Kellyn says about her decision to move to New Orleans.

The Honors College did much more than just introduce her to a new city she loves, it helped her form ongoing connections and prepared her for graduate school.

"The Honors College was probably the favorite part of my UWM undergrad experience, especially in the community it built; there's even still a group chat with a bunch of us," laughs Kellyn.

While she remembers the time with her classmates warmly, a significant influence was working with Honors College faculty member Benjamin Schneider.

"The first class I took with Ben was called 'Dirty Realism' (lovingly called 'Dr. Ben's Sad Class') which cracked open a world of literature and friendship for me," recalls Kellyn.

However, it was the second class that Kellyn took with Professor Schneider, "Nostalgia," that she feels still directly impacts her today and set her up for her graduate school studies.

"'Nostalgia' is in part a critical theory course and most of my graduate studies involve some sort of critical theory, mainly deconstruction, queer theory, and critical



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race theory," says Kellyn. "Ben's class was one of the first courses in which I used literature as a sort of life raft in a deep sea of metaphysics and superstructures."

Outside of graduate school, Kellyn recently began working as both a tutor at Tulane and at an off-campus library.

"I absolutely love my job at the library; it's my first job in my desired field," Kellyn exclaims. "It consists of a lot of working with amazing old books, newspapers, and special collections."

With graduation from Tulane around the corner in December, Kellyn looks forward to the prospect of joining the workforce and starting her career. After graduate school, she wants to work toward decolonizing museum structures.

"Because of the overlap with my Anthropology and English degrees, I will probably stay somewhere in archival works," Kellyn imagines. "Just put me in a museum basement or another library, so I can help build a more ethical museum structure."

Kellyn is planning even a bit farther into the future, too: "Eventually, I do want to become a professor, and influence a batch of weirdos like me, but first comes the doctorate."

While living through this unprecedented year ultimately influenced Kellyn to make the jump to New Orleans, she stresses that "people shouldn't feel pressured to go to graduate school right away and shouldn't feel pressured to find a job in their field right away either. All of those things come in time, but especially right now, it's important to just be."