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### Keylor Travel Grant Reflection

Through the Keylor Travel Grant, I was able to travel to South Korea from December 23, 2025, until January 9, 2026, in support of my Honors Thesis through the Pardee Honors Program. While there, I visited sixteen museums, a Sunflower Center, and other places that I felt women could visit for comfort or inspiration around the Seoul area, Daejeon, Busan, and Jeju Island. These four large cities are prominent in Korea with deep cultural and historical backgrounds, and I was able to get more clarity for my research direction. More specifically, my research focuses on how the roles and support of women, especially sexual violence survivors, have evolved throughout Korea's history since the 1900's.

A striking thing I witnessed is the fragile political system in Korea. In Gwanghwamun, a busy area of Seoul, a large protest was held in support of bringing the impeached conservative president, Yoon Suk Yeol, back into power. The scale of the protest was surprising, given that this former president unlawfully asserted martial law, and his anti-feminist rhetoric goes against progressive support for women. Additionally, multiple museums note the Republic of Korea's young age, given that Japanese colonization and the Korean War were quite recent. Longstanding religious and traditional influences from Confucianism and Buddhism are also displayed throughout museums, indicating the strong patriarchal system in place. Therefore, I was able to see the cultural implications of women's roles and expectations in the country firsthand.

Nonetheless, South Korea places great emphasis on national pride, resilience, and change. Many museums highlight resilient Comfort Women, political figures, and activists who were pivotal in shaping present-day Korea. Additionally, a unique place in Jeju Island was the

Museum of Sex and Health, which is a very progressive example of open-minded discussion regarding healthy sex and avoiding sexual violence. This can alleviate the stigma behind the topic and create an open space for women to discuss boundaries, especially considering possible pregnancies, complications, or any other associated struggles.

Although I planned for more, I was able to conduct two lengthier interviews: one with writer Ha Mina and the other with the Daejeon Sunflower Center. Author Ha shared information about growing feminism and women's struggle with depression in Korea, while the Daejeon Sunflower Center gave me a tour of the area and discussed the background, system, and directions of the government-affiliated organization. Both were meaningful conversations where I learned directly from involved people who care deeply about women and disadvantaged people in Korea. However, if I were to have the opportunity to travel to Korea again for this research, I would be more aware of the challenges that come with interviewing. Knowing specific terms in the language and scheduling interviews on this sensitive topic proved difficult, but the two interviews conducted were longer and highly valuable to my research, along with museum visits.

This experience helped me grow tremendously. My organizational and communication skills improved from interviewing and arranging all the museum visits around closed days. Also, this travel experience further inspired me to become an empathetic physician, not assuming anyone's story and emphasizing that humans can be very resilient. Another goal I have from this experience is to create a social media page associated with this project, documenting my travel as a source for women, or anyone, to view ideas to escape societal restrictions, roles, or trauma, such as with places or activities, like at museums, lookouts, parks, cafes, shops, or restaurants. I truly appreciate this opportunity to study in Korea and make meaningful progress and connections and look forward to incorporating this travel experience into my thesis and goals.

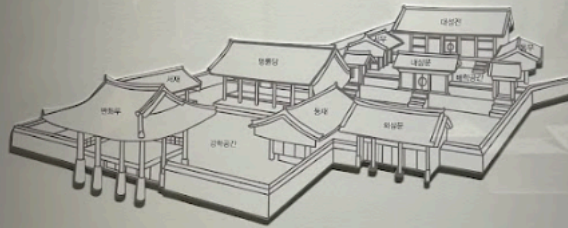
## 동래향교(東萊鄉校) ㉞

부산광역시 지정 기념물 제 61호

향교(鄉校)는 서당 교육을 받은 15~16세의 소년들이 입학하는 조선 시대 국립 중등교육기관이다.

조선은 1392년(태조 1) 건국과 함께 지방에 향교를 설립하기 시작하였다. 동래향교도 이때 설립되었으나 임진왜란(壬辰倭亂) 때 동래성(東萊城) 함락과 함께 불타버렸다. 임진왜란 이후 1605년(선조 38)에 다시 세워졌다가 1704년(숙종 30)에 동래부 동쪽 관노산(官奴山) 아래로 옮겨졌다. 그 후 학소대(鶴巢臺), 인생문(人生門) 부근으로 여러 차례 옮겨졌다가 현재 위치(동래구 명륜동)에 자리 잡았다.

『경국대전(經國大典)』에 따라 초기에는 종6품의 교수 1명이 있었던 것으로 보인다. 또 교생의 정원은 70명이었으며, 향교를 유지 관리하기 위해 학전(學田) 7결(結)도 지급되었을 것으로 보인다.



## 안락서원(安樂書院) ㉞

서원(書院)은 조선 중기 이후 학문 연구와 선현 제향을 위해 사림(士林)이 설립한 사립 교육기관이다. 안락서원은 1652년(효종 3) 동래부사 윤문기(尹文暉)가 임진왜란(壬辰倭亂) 때 순절한 동래부사 송상현(宋象賢)과 부산진첨사 정발(鄭發)을 향사(享祀)했던 충렬사(忠烈祠)를 안락리(安樂里)로 이전하면서 강당(講堂)·동재(東齋)·서재(西齋)를 함께 지어 안락서원이라고 명명한 데서 비롯되었다. 이후 임진왜란 때 순절한 여러 열사들을 합사(合祀)했고, 다대진첨사 윤흥신(尹興信)도 추가로 모셔 봉사(奉祀)하였다.



Taken at Busan National Museum. This display has a primary source shown and discusses a prominent Confucian school, highlighting the significance of the patriarchal system in Korea.



Taken at Museum of Sex and Health in Jeju Island. This figure shows a tree of sex-related things, including positives and negatives.



Taken at the House of Sharing in Gwangju near Seoul. Behind me are figures of Comfort Women, who were sex slaves for Japanese soldiers during the colonization.



Taken at the Daejeon Sunflower Center. An interview was conducted here, and they are a one-stop center for those experiencing sexual or domestic violence.



Taken at Gwanghwamun in Seoul. This picture shows a screen displayed at one part of a large protest to bring impeached former president Yoon Suk Yeol back into office. A few people protesting are also shown towards the bottom right.