

After looking at the “about me” page on Foliotek from week 1, I already see so much growth in myself. From my journal, I feel like you could tell that I was maybe more shy and I was sort of ready to let this class guide me rather than let me guide myself. I’m not sure how to explain it, but when I reread my first writing entry in Foliotek, it sounded shy and nervous. I think part of it was the use of exclamation points and not going very deep into the questions. When first coming to college, I was very nervous about people’s perceptions of me. I was nervous to talk in class and share my own thoughts because I thought others would judge me or think of me weird. Again I don’t know how to explain that I see that in the first writing, but I just do. I was sort of masking or hiding. By the end of this semester, I have noticed a big change in myself. Coming into this class, I had no idea what it would be like or about. I knew religion would be an aspect, but I wasn’t sure about the “stuff” part. I had so many questions and concerns. With my religion being a key pillar in my life, I was at times nervous to share about my own experience. I didn’t want others to judge me for my own beliefs, which was something common in high school. But, nonetheless, I pushed myself out of my comfort zone. I made friends in the class, spoke my truth regularly, and didn’t let my fear take over. I think one thing that has stayed the same thought is my curiosity. As we are wrapping up, there is still more “stuff” to be explored, to dive deeper into. There will never not be “stuff” and I’m so incredibly curious to continue my own journey of looking into it. One thing on my first writing entry in Foliotek was that I didn’t have a driving question. I think part of that is because I was in a space where there was so much going on all at once, the thought of even putting down a question to guide my life freaked me out. But now, I feel like I have lots of questions. Why do I really want to study nursing? How will I work every day to strive to be the best person I can be? How can I truly impact the world to make it a better place? These questions are ones that I have been asking myself regularly since the start of this year and the start of this class. I’m proud to say that I have grown, in my own way.

Looking back at the first module, Religion and Body, I took some time to reflect on the rituals and practices that I completed. One ritual that I continued throughout the semester is praying before meals. While there will be times where I forget, I have been pretty consistent of at least recognizing where the food is coming from and how I am grateful to be enjoying the meal. Sometimes, it isn’t the typical prayer, but I feel like it covers the same meaning. I have found that this has led me to be more grateful in other areas of my life. I become grateful for the little things, like hot water when I shower or when someone holds the door for me. It’s the little things that I am now realizing more. Another thing that I have continued doing is eating meals by myself. At the beginning of the year, I was really nervous to eat alone or go to the cog by myself. But as time has gone on, I find it relaxing. I feel like I rarely have time for myself, so eating these meals by myself has left me with time to reflect and just be in my own zone. I hope to continue on with both of these rituals as they have truly helped me center myself this semester. Looking at the whole picture, I think that space plays a huge role in how people use their bodies. The space or where someone is completely influences how one dresses, acts. Etc. For instance the video about the Hijab in France. Kids are not allowed to wear the hijab in schools. That space

of school completely affects how someone expresses themselves and their religion. Sometimes, I find it scary to think about how institutions on occasion have complete control over people.

When looking at the Gonzaga Mission statement, it is easy to find that there is correlation between Religion and Stuff and the mission statement. For instance “Developing the whole person”, this class has strived to develop the whole person through the three different realms of the class. We have looked at the body and how Mauss describes the importance of the techniques of the body. Then we have looked at things and seen how Hodder connects the dots of how everything is entangled together. For space, Tweed has opened our eyes and shown us how a space can be five different things, kinetic, interrelated, differentiated, generative, and generated. These three topics have allowed me as a student to develop and learn a broad circle of things regarding religion, contributing to me developing as a whole person.

Another section of the mission statement that is directly related to this class is “Gonzaga cultivates in its students the capacities and dispositions for reflective and critical thought, lifelong learning, spiritual growth, ethical discernment, creativity, and innovation”. This class did just that. Through our discussions, we reflected and critically thought about the different readings and connections of what we read to this class and to ourselves. Our seminar tables allowed us to speak freely and show others our thoughts on the topic of the week and allowed the hosts to be creative and guide the class in a certain way. For instance, when I lead it, my group and I focus on the Clergy, Veiling, and Mahmood readings. We wanted the discussion to cover the hardships of clothing and being a woman in religious spaces and the hardships regarding choice and order. As a class, we were able to touch on each one of those sections in the mission statement and integrated it into class every day.

The Show and Tells for me were one of my favorite parts about this class. They allowed for people to show us a sliver of who they are while leaving us to wonder and ask questions. I think that the Show and Tells tell a common story and are diverse at the same time. From what I pulled, everyone chose something that is near and dear to themselves. Something that represents a part of them or is something special that means something to them. In that way, all of them told a similar story of what is important to them and what they hold close. But, everyone chose something different, something that wouldn't mean the same thing to the person sitting right next to you. There was never repetition in what people brought in. Everytime, I was interested in the Show and Tells. I really enjoyed how this was a way that I got to learn more about my classmates in a different light than just icebreakers.

The Show and Tell that I remember is Sam's. She did hers on the same day as mine and I remember her bringing in her baby blanket. The reason why I remembered hers is because I also have my baby blanket and mine also means a lot to me. While mine is not with me at college, mine still holds just as much love and memories. When I was younger, my baby blanket would not leave my side. I saw how much love and care Sam had towards her baby blanket and it reminded me of my Show and Tell. My ring is something that I hold very close to my heart, it is something that has been a part of my family and holds significance.

My top three readings for this semester are Mauss "Techniques of the Body", Articles of Interest "Modesty", and Articles of Interest "Clergy". These three were all a part of the body unit which was one of my favorites of the year. While I think that all three of these readings/podcasts were similar, they each had their own tweak to them and told their own narrative. I think that "Clergy" and "Modesty" would both show the relationship between religious clothing and conservatism. Modesty would explain how the people of a religion are required to dress a certain way and sometimes there are repercussions for not following the rules or just are never deemed fit enough. Then Clergy would show the side of religion where the leaders and clergy have to follow similar rules and they also face hardships, but they come in their own form.

I think that "Techniques of the Body" would interact with both "Modesty" and "Clergy". I think that Mauss would be able to touch on the fact that when we wear religious clothing, we act a certain way and our body doesn't do certain movements and mannerisms that might only happen when we wear the specific clothing. It would be a very interesting conversation to play out and to witness them converse. I think it would open my eyes to the fact that there is a reason for the wearing of this clothing and it isn't just to put people in a box. Mauss would also be able to teach us about how we can change and adapt to new movements through time and learning. All three of these readings/podcasts would allow for readers to see the similarities between religions and the influence of religion on movement.

When talking about Religion and Stuff, if I had to sum up the class in a sentence, I would say: Religion and Stuff is a class that takes a deep dive in religion and the different aspects that make up a religion while segwaying into what stuff impacts religion. The class is split up into three main topics: body, things, and space. While there are three main topics, this class dives so much deeper than just those three and branches out into so many other realms, really leaning into the "stuff" portion of the class name. For instance, when we were in the space unit, we went and visited three different religious spaces to better our understanding of different faiths and where they practice. This was very insightful, especially for me, because I am catholic and have been my whole life. Up until my senior year in high school, I had never learned about other religions and their practices. My eyes have been opened and I plan on continuing to learn about different religions. Then, for our body unit, which I think was my favorite, we talked a lot about clothing and religious clothing. For me when I was in elementary school, I was captivated by the dressings that the priests wore and that the Pope wore. So getting to learn about not only Catholic dressings but also Mormons and Muslims was very interesting. But, we also learned about some of the hardships that people in these faiths face and how sometimes they don't have a choice on what they wear. This unit was hard at times, but also was so interesting and insightful. This whole class is insightful and allowed me to continue questioning my faith and looking into what I believe.

If I were taking Religion and Stuff 2.0, the main topic that I would want to expand further on is space. While the space unit was the last and in my opinion the most important, I still feel like there are so many unanswered questions and many different spaces that could be explored. One idea that I have would be that this Religion and Stuff 2.0 could be a class you take when you

study abroad. For instance, being in Florence and taking the class, getting to explore the duomo and all these other different beautiful places, just like how the Father gave his talk on architecture, you could go and explore a space just like how he explored it and looked into it. Yes, we have all these different beautiful places here in America, but in Europe and throughout all these other places in the world, that's where it started, that's where it was first. There is so much more to spaces than just the spaces themselves, it is about the people who worship, who devote their time to practicing, the priests who preside. That is what Tweed talks about in "Space". That the place is generative and generated. That people change the space. I feel like there could be a whole section of the class spent on that paper we read and going to a place as a class and finding each of the five points in that space. We might have started that in this class, but I think it could be expanded on. I want to visit more spaces. For the small amount of time we had to expand on spaces, we went to a fair amount of churches and spaces. But, I feel like there could be a whole class on spaces and visiting different religious sites. I think that when we visited, that is where I learned the most. I had to fully embody the spaces and truly take in what they were communicating to me. The Orthodox church that we went to opened my eyes into a different religion for the first time. I saw the icons in first person and saw the difference in the shape of the building. I want more of that. That was how I learned about space, through action. Space can alter how people feel and how they worship, it is the greatest effect of religion.

When looking back over the semester at my participation, I am very proud of how I did. While I feel like I was slow to start chiming in during class, I feel like after a few weeks of class, I was eager to speak and say my piece. If I had to give my participation a grade, I would give myself an A. There were definitely a few days where I was having a rough time or was not very talkative, but besides those few days, I feel like I contributed a lot to the class and our discussions. For Foliotek, I would also give myself an A. I turned in all the assignments on time, put in a lot of effort, showed improvement, and was completely authentic and myself. Professor Porter said at the beginning of the year that this class was to make us think and to change over the course of the year. I believe that I have changed. I feel more confident in speaking in front of everyone, can listen and hear what others are saying even when we don't agree, can talk about difficult matters, and do so much more. While I could do that at the beginning of the year, I definitely couldn't do it as well as I can now. Also, I have made friends in the class. Annie, Zoe, and Norah are all girls that I met through this class and we talk outside of class, Zoe is basically my neighbor, and Norah and I see each other outside of class and talk. I'm really proud of myself for opening up to making new friends and letting people in. One other thing to consider is that when I was in groups, I often was the one leading the conversation, taking notes, and keeping the conversation going. This course has changed me, and for the better