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Seminar

Change

Growing up, we were taught there are symbols to mean something, and so we automatically try to find the closest meaning with preconceived notions without trying to break it down, and find what it really means. In high school, we had to write essays over books, not writing research papers; it always followed the same five-paragraph essay format. Rather than making connections to support the thesis, we had to go looking for the information from multiple sources to get to the thesis. Without the process throughout this semester, like the mafia game, the gift giving, the photo essays, and making annotations, I wouldn't have made paper the way it is now.

When we started paper b, I went back to the curiosity questions we did, and got reminded of the mafia game, and how people had to lie. So, in my paper, I wrote why would people lie, and how there are many reasons why they would lie. They lie so they wouldn't hurt others or themselves, to hide something, to get out of trouble, and learning by watching and, or experiencing it. Everything we've done in this past semester lead me through the process, and creating a new habit without even realizing it like how we automatically try to connect a meaning to something, but it's not what it would really mean.

On the first day of class, we did an ice breaker by playing the mafia game. It was the first-time meeting, so nobody knew how they talked and acted, to be able to convince they weren't the mafia. But as we kept playing, there were more talking and questioning to each other

to find out, and discovered that there were believable liars. When someone was accused, they had to try to convince the others they weren't the mafia. Some people looked innocent, but they weren't, or they looked guilty, but they were innocent. I had watched people play the mafia game before, and sometimes the mafia had to turn against each other defend themselves, or making others suspicious on one target. Another strategy they used was by the end of the game, all the mafia would vote for everybody to take out even if it is one of their own because they would win anyway. Whether they were mafia or not, everybody was constantly making observations throughout the game.

Then the next class was where we had to differentiate between observing and assumption, we started doing the gift giving. We had to write what we see in the photos, solely on just describing what's in the photo itself, and not jump to conclusions because of what we see. By slowly breaking down, we got to see more every time we look back and piece more information together. Even last semester, my drawing teacher had always repeatedly said, "to draw what we see, and not what we think," because what we think is something is always different from the actual thing. We think we know what it's supposed to be like, but when we're actually taking the time to break down what we're trying to see, it could be completely opposite. Even in 'objects as history,' the way something is positioned, what it's made of, or where it is can tell some narrative about it. And during the counter gift, when we didn't have photos to observe to, so we had to find another way of getting our information.

In the photo and the identity essay, we asked friends questions about ourselves, how they see us, and how we think we present ourselves in front of people. I feel like taking the pictures, it was more literal, and if we were to observe the photos, it would be easy to understand the message. There were reasons behind the way we posed or didn't pose, how we acted in front of

the camera, or what we photo-shopped in the photos meant something. For paper b for studio, it shouldn't be symbolic, or trying to say what paper b is about. And since there are many situations should a person lie, and many reasons why a person may lie, I didn't think I should focus on just one situation. I made a video of just using signs of nervousness, or habits that people may see if they know what to find if a person is lying.

When we got our first reading, J.L Austin's *How to do Things with Words*¹, we started out picking the texts that were most confusing and didn't understand it, and annotate it. As we got more readings; John Searle's *What is a Speech Act?*² Christopher Bollas' *Wording and Telling Sexuality*³, and Judith Butler *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*⁴, we had to relate it back to the previous reading each time, it got harder because I wasn't used to taking different readings and making the connection. In high school, we would write a statement, then prove it with an example by connection with the world, text, or self, and then detail explaining it. But slowly, I was able to change the way I write, by using the new way we were taught. Like in paper b and c, completely rearranging the order, taking out words or sentences, and writing something else.

When we were writing our first drafts, we weren't just looking for small mistakes like grammar, but it was literally a first draft that we would reorder, or write a completely new paper than what we originally wrote. Reading what others wrote, and how they wrote their paper, helped me think of how I should change my paper. Even reading the paper that wasn't the same

¹ J.L Austin, *How to do Things with Words*, Harvard University Press (Cambridge, Massachusetts).

² John Searle, *What is a Speech Act?, Pragmatics, Discourse Analysis and Socio Linguistics*.

³ Christopher Bollas, *Wording and Telling Sexuality*, (*International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, Jan. 1, 1997).

⁴ Judith Butler, *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*, (*Theatre Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 4, Dec. 1988).

topic helped with the way I decided to write in the end. But when we did the peer review questions, I felt like I was more focused and able to take away from it even when I'm looking at someone else's paper, and helped me think of ways to change the whole paper than rewording a few lines.

Creating paper b was very different how I would have created at the start of the semester because I would have had the habits that I picked up during high school. Since the mafia game and the first curiosity q's, was about lying, and it stuck to me. And ever since, in every class, we keep using observation analysis. I wouldn't have taken two different writings and been able to connect it, I would have taken a simpler way, taking similar topics that was already connected in a way instead of letting the source leading me to a different source to include in my paper. Ever since we started the process of taking a piece of information, look deeper into it, and piece everything together, was starting to create a habit to do just that.

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Gift Giving

Mafia Game

Paper B

Peer Review Questions

Photo Essay

Searle, John. "What is a Speech Act?" 1-16.