

Philosophy Project Reflection

My project started at the very beginning of this unit when I first decided that I wanted my final product to be a poem book. Throughout the entire semester, I would take inspiration whenever it came and write poems in place of some paragraphs when we had a short assignment. When it came to project work time, I already had half of my poems done. In my poems, I tried to answer as many of the essential questions as I could, including finding personal meaning, the significance of a sense of place, and my personal relationship with traditional philosophical beliefs. Many of my poems were intertextual from scratch because they were in response to poems or articles that we had read in our exploration already, but I tried to tie in my personal experiences and beliefs in each poem. For my final product, I strung together a poem book on thick pink paper I had picked up from Office Depot and annotated my own writing. This idea came from themes I explored in my personal philosophy statement about how much books can connect people when there's underlining and small pictures in the margins. I also created a youtube playlist which included some of the songs that inspired my poems and helped me get into a meaningful poetry mindset.

I realized a lot of things about my personal philosophy specifically when I was writing the poem *All Strings Attached*. I had previously not really thought about how much each person is connected to everything around them, whether people or nature. Once I had the idea to make these connections tangible, I realized how connected we really are. We are connected to every place we go, every person we meet, and every moment we affect which leads to the next moment. As individuals, we are each creating a ripple effect originating from our person shaping the world that we live in. After I read the *Cat's Cradle* by Kurt Vonnegut, I also realized how much of our world we create through philosophy and explanations of inherent social structures. I realized I did the same thing on my own, creating personal beliefs about a higher being: No cat, no cradle, no God. This also led me to seek out all of the intertextual elements in my poems after I read them. If it was determinism that led me to write each poem, it was because of the things I had experienced and the texts I had previously read. However, I believe that there is so much free will in writing poetry because it is where we don't have to write about specific factual accounts, but can instead follow random emotions and inspirations. During this unit I wrote a lot of things that I loved, and that hasn't ever really happened before. Something that we need to all realize as people, regardless of existentialism, is that we are all interesting, complex, and talented beings.

The questions I am still pondering is the following:

How can we answer existential questions through poetry?

How do personal experiences shape our creative expressions and beliefs?

What parts of our lives are predetermined?

How do we defy or embrace inherent natures?