For my final project I'm considering looking into the relationships people can build with inanimate objects. The initial idea came to me from the concept of those childhood plush toys that people tend to have. While we could simply discard those, especially if they become weathered over the years, there are many people who don't part ways with those objects, even keeping them and treasuring them into adulthood. We all have those sorts of treasures that we don't want to let go no matter what. Whether it's a present from a special someone or a toy from your childhood, there's many sorts of different connections we can make with objects. Of course we don't really give it much thought but something such as a wedding ring is just an inanimate object, but it serves as a permanent reminder of a bond you've formed with someone.

As a hoarder myself, I think this topic would be interesting to look into, since I've always had problems with getting rid of my belongings. A lot of it isn't really from emotional value either, I just like keeping various objects I've acquired over the years. Looking into the mindset of collectors and motivations is another possible route this project can go, since I don't really understand the purpose of collecting things other than having them as a sort of bragging point. Another reason for my interest in this, is the fact that I simply find psychology fascinating. It's been a few years since I did anything psychology related, and while I'm not necessarily an expert or anything, it wouldn't hurt to do a study like this for fun.

For interviews it can really be anyone. This is a very general topic and it shouldn't be hard to find people that can relate to this sensation. However, because of the broadness of the topic, I believe that having a larger sample size would be more beneficial. I'm not exactly sure if this is the right way to do things, but perhaps I can have the three interviews as well as a more general survey sent out. Getting responses from people from different backgrounds and demographics would greatly help understand a more basic topic such as this. For example, someone younger may have different sorts of objects that they would form connections with, such as a toy that brought them comfort during their childhood, while someone older may have something entirely different, perhaps a memento from a family trip. On the other end of the spectrum, a general survey would provide insight for people who don't relate to this sort of phenomenon. Since it is a more informal topic, I believe that these interviews would be easier to conduct as well. I don't exactly have many people in mind, but one of the people I interview will be one of my closest friends. He's into collecting all sorts of different things, from plush toys to clothing, so I believe that I could get some valuable insight from him.

Between now and the end of the semester, I'm hoping to learn how various factors play a role in these connections. For example, are stronger connections formed on the perceived value of the object? Does it depend on what point of your life the object was obtained? What about the person that gave you the item, would that be more significant than the perceived value? What about cases where the person has no emotional attachment to the items at all? They say that memories are priceless but would a person be willing to give up a random object that they've kept if it was worth a ton of money? It's hard to tell what exactly affects this sort of thing since it's a very general topic, a more formal study would try to check for correlations and causations between societal aspects such as income, background, etc. but I feel as though looking for those sorts of relationships would be unnecessary. Focusing on clear concise questions directly related to the subject matter, while having a few general questions such as age, objects that you collect if applicable, and oldest object that you still own for example may be good to have. For the most part, the simpler questions are going to be unnecessary for this.