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Intro to Sociology

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“Do Nothing” Lab Response

**Pre-Lab Thoughts**

Right now, I am intrigued about this activity. I’m sure it will be interesting, but it’ll be hard to “do nothing.” Every time I take a break from things and just sit around, doing nothing, I tend to think about things quite a lot. Not only that, but if I stay still for a bit, I feel like I constantly need to scratch myself, as I think my nerves are very active and I pay attention to them more when I am staying still.

**Thick Description**

When the lab was beginning, I found a spot that was under a tree right outside of Rhodes/Robinson Hall and looked out towards the middle of the quad. As I stood there, I observed that there were a few small groups of people that were spread around the quad (mostly in shaded areas). Some were sitting under trees and others were sitting out in the sun. There was the occasional person walking, biking, and skateboarding along the sidewalks to where they needed to go. Over time, people started to look at my sociology class as we stood in our spots, motionless. Some stared, some took pictures while grinning and laughing, and one person came over, smiling and giggling, to take selfies with a few of my classmates and may or may not have asked what we were doing. I was out of earshot and was not able to hear the conversation that they had with one of my classmates, so I didn’t know whether or not the person even asked that question. Besides those specific things, there wasn’t much else that had happened.

**Post-Lab Thoughts**

After doing that lab, I found a few things to be interesting. First of all, if that person I mentioned earlier did not ask what we were doing, I wonder why no one had come up to ask about why all of these people standing around and doing nothing? Instead, it felt like people that saw this either silently wondered or spoke to a friend next to them, discussing what they thought may be the reason for this odd behavior. That brings me to my next point. Why is this weird? Why do people think that “doing nothing” is something that is not “normal?” I find it very interesting that in a sense, by doing nothing, you are doing ***something*** weird. I feel that this is the case because we are so used to everyone always doing things all the time, and because of that, we find it odd when someone is doing the exact opposite. Our lives are usually constantly busy and requires everyone to be doing something and to not do anything makes someone stand out like a sore thumb. It reminds me of videos of people just sitting in the same place as the world moves by while the person sitting doesn’t change, as they aren’t doing anything but observing. So, according to our society, it seems that people HAVE to be doing something in order to fit in. A possible reason for this is that people in society expect others to progress, to do something with their time and lives to contribute to the world around them. It has more than definitely made people try to make something of themselves in order to “get somewhere in life” and puts pressure on people to do so. Those who don’t do anything seem to feel like they sort of slide out of place in society and are viewed differently than a person that is doing something with their lives. This brings me back to my main topic. Since we are doing nothing, it singles us out as people who don’t contribute and progress, while others continue to move on and do something with their time. In understanding this on both a macro and micro view, I can see how the pattern was shown in our lab on why people would perceive this as weird.