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For Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion



The Study of Religion is Like a Workshop for Critical Thought: A Dramatization with Legos

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Years ago I devised a classroom demonstration, to use early in a semester when trying to help students become more aware, first, of the multiple dimensions of religion and, more importantly, of the ways in which diverse analytical lens for comparing and contrasting religion in a “toolbox for critical thought” will bring different dimensions forward while leaving others in the shadows.

Conceptually this is not a groundbreaking theoretical intervention for a first week of class exercise, although it does imply some theoretical “chess moves” that I feel strongly about.

Its main value here is to hone an entertaining and effective way to dramatize my points with a set of children’s blocks—both old-school wooden blocks and a few legos—plus a few crowd-pleasing additions to spice up the demonstration.

I wrote this up for *Teaching Theology and Religion* in 2009 and have used it “live” with reliable success many times since then. Since I recently have been experimenting with moving one of my classes online, I decided to make a video version for my voice-over-powerpoint lectures. It seems potentially useful to share the video here.

<https://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/2020/03/the-study-of-religion-is-like-a-workshop-for-critical-thought-a-dramatization-with-legos/>