

What got you interested in your essay topic?

I became interested in my topic of houselessness and its relation to architectural theory due to my past education. I attended my freshman year of college studying Architecture History, my sophomore year I studied Architecture. Upon moving to LA, and observing the adverse behaviors and opinions certain individuals hold for the houseless– I felt that it would be interesting to connect Laugier’s principles of architecture to the structures built today. To me, all structures are architecture, there is no education or degree required to form spaces of living. I wanted to prove that architectural theory is classist, and if we truly analyze the words of individuals like Laugier and apply them to basic structures– any human is capable of ‘good and correct’ architecture.

What’s the best / most surprising discovery you made about this topic while working on your essay?

The most surprising result that came from researching architectural theory and houselessness in Los Angeles was how closely classical orders relate to shelters built today. While I knew I wanted to write about houselessness and architecture– I was at first unsure of how to connect the two concepts, utilizing one piece of art. It was thanks to my professor Lorinda Toledo’s encouragement and guidance that I was able to settle on the cover art of Laugier’s *Primitive Hut*. While I had only ever analyzed the cover art, while under the guidance of traditional architectural education, it was upon dropping the classist guise and relating it to regular people of today in which I found such an interesting connection. It was thanks to the prompting of WITDA to write about social issues today that I was able to view Laugier’s work with new eyes. The Greek classical orders relate quite beautifully to shelters built today. Proving to me that all buildings are architectural and impactful.

What’s a tip you can give first-year Otis students to help them make their writing/their time in WITDA as successful as possible?

I believe the most important thing future students can do when writing and attending WITDA, is to use the class as an opportunity to discover more about something you feel passionate about. Learning to utilize tools we have available to us in the 21st century– and using them effectively is an invaluable key to writing. Continuing to pursue social issues you are passionate about when writing, and utilizing WITDA as a stepping stone to further your education about the world and its problems is a unique opportunity. I encourage all future students to write about issues they find important in the world and continue to write, advocate, and share to others about changes that should be made.