

Final Reflection

As this is my first college grade English class, I really do believe there is a lot I have picked up in this passing semester. I have learned a multitude of techniques and writing elements that I could use both in my future classes and within my community. Firstly I learned how to better understand both my reading and writing from the essay "How to Read Like a Writer" as well as other pieces we covered in class. I've learned how to use drafts effectively to excel my writing, and how to structure my writing accordingly, as well as when I should branch into a new paragraph. This also helped me to better my punctuation and grammar while writing.

My comprehension as a reader has improved drastically. I now get more out of reading and have a better understanding of what I'm looking for as I read. For example while I read I now ask myself these questions, what is the purpose of the writing, who is the intended audience, what is the author trying to convey, and what genre is the author writing in. This has helped me to get a better understanding of what I'm reading.

Secondly I learned about some useful websites to use like Purdue owl, and how to use the database for the college's library. Finding articles has never been easier with the library database. Finding newspaper articles, peer review articles/journals is now easier for me than prior. This has also helped me to get a better understanding of where to find reliable information.

Thanks to Purdue Owl, I now know what citations are, how they are used, and how to include them in my essay/paper, as well as how to structure them.

All this new information I now have a clear understanding on how I can convey myself more clearly which will help to easily communicate with others and express myself. I can also use this information for future assignments. For example now when I am asked to cite or to find articles I now know what websites I should be using. Overall both my writing and reading have drastically improved which I will be taking to my future classes.

Over this semester I have learned a lot about myself both as a reader and writer. A major thing within my reading is that I would pause while reading, I did this so I could read the sentences further on so I knew when to pause for a comma or period. I've also found that I did not get much out reading something once, just a few minor details and a simplified summary.

As a writer I've noticed that the structure of my writing was unclear jumping from topic to topic. I've also distinguished grammatical errors and missing punctuation. With this I have also taken note of areas that should have been split into a new paragraph.

Through the semester I've developed dramatically both as a reader and a writer. As a reader I now get more out of reading than before. I no longer pause while reading, I'm able to read more consistently and clearly.

As a writer my overall skills have improved. I make less grammatical errors and have better punctuation. I've gotten better at structuring my essays as well so I'm not jumping from topic to topic like I used to. My vocabulary has expanded, leading me to use better words to express myself in my writing.

Here are quotes from each of my major writing assignments that I believe show exponential improvement of my writing.

"Have you ever seen someone so unrecognizable even to himself?". This was from my first major writing assignment, the educational narrative. The reason for choosing this quote is because I believe it is the most crucial part of that essay, it was what I was going to hook the reader with. I was debating on what I wanted to open with, I needed to construct a sentence that would both make a reader think to himself and want to continue reading. Another example of this would be from my Unit:3 writing in a new genre "Hostile/Defensive architecture is a problem that New Yorkers see everyday yet it hides in plain sight. It goes unnoticed by most because of how inconspicuous it can be." Overall this helped me with opening a piece of writing with the intent of gaining interest of the reader.

Here is a quote from my U2 annotated bibliography that I believe helped me learn how to convey my ideals in an effective way.

"The question here is if the design of the architecture could be considered as discriminations against the less fortunate. It's an understanding of whether this violates both peoples rights and dignity." This quote influenced my writing because I chose to not state hostile architecture as discriminatory with the current knowledge I had of the subject matter at that time. After conducting more research I was then able to label hostile architecture as discriminatory because it fit the criteria of discrimination, which was something I didn't know prior to doing more research. This helped me form better judgment while writing.

Lastly, here is what I have chosen to revise. Out of the three major assignments I chose to revise my Unit 2 annotated bibliography. After both rereading my essay and looking at the feedback provided on my bibliography, I plan to revise grammatical errors, missing punctuation, and sentences that can be both reworded and condensed. I've also found topic changes in the middle of paragraphs.

I plan to revise my essay by creating a checklist. I've highlighted sections of my essay where I found the issues I've stated. I have also listed them all in a separate google document and corrected each highlighted section. From here I will fix these sections indefinitely into my essay.

Unit 1

A Battle With Addiction

Have you ever seen someone so unrecognizable even to himself? Have you ever seen someone so close to you change for the worst? This is the face of addiction. A painful, agonizing and horrid thing to happen to someone. Unfortunately, I know it all too well.

I remember when I was eight my brother Dylan was the coolest person I knew. He made friends easily and everyone liked him. He had a personality that was so charming. I aspired to be like him. There was no one like him in my mind. He was unique, he was strong, athletic, and kind. He put his friends and family first and would do anything for them. There was no other word to define him as other than my cool big brother. I was so glad to have him as my brother. He was my role model, someone I looked up to dearly.

All of this changed when my brother started to experiment with drugs. This experiment would eventually lead my brother, the pinochle of the word cool, to waste away in front of my eyes. I remember at the beginning I noticed slight changes in his behavior and mood. His face was changing from a healthy happy smile to an emotionless and sickly grin. I noticed that he started to distance himself from the family. He no longer wanted to participate in family functions and he withdrew progressively each day. At the time, I knew nothing of drugs, I was too young to fully understand the changes that were taking place right in front of me.

My mother started to take notice of this and knew something was wrong. My brother would avoid eye contact with her. He was staying out later and later. He often was angry and would explode at the drop of a hat. This was so opposite of his normal

disposition that she knew that something was not right. When she was able to pin down the problem that my brother was experimenting with drugs, the whole household started to dilute into constant screaming and yelling. My mother thought it was an easy fix by just punishing him. This just made him more explosive. His anger made me feel even more confused because I didn't understand the change that was happening to him.. As the days went on, the deeper my brother fell into his addiction. Hence, my brother became more distraught. He started looking paler and his eyes were constantly red. He also had constant mood swings. Now looking back, I believe these were the highs and lows of the drugs my brother was abusing. He was a train wreck. . I was watching the downfall of my brother and I didn't know what to do or how to act in response. I distanced myself from him and withdrew. He was becoming a stranger to me. He was someone completely different from the one I used to know. As days passed, he just got worse.

This addiction would lead him to use stronger drugs. He started missing school and drifting away from the family even more. Constant untrust and denial began to build up in our house. This only heightened the screaming and yelling. Everything out of his mouth was a lie. We didn't know what the truth was anymore. He started to not care and left tell tale evidence around the house. I am not sure if he did this unconsciously or not. At this point his addiction was too powerful for him to hide. He was being overpowered and drugs now ruled his every waking thought. Nothing else mattered but chasing the next high. Everything else just took a back seat.

Days went on and I could see my brother slowly withering away. He became thin and started to shake. One day he actually had a seizure. My mother was so frightened and called an ambulance. They admitted him to the hospital but he would not stay. He pulled out his iv and walked home. At this point, he was totally out of control. All my parents could do at this point was to pray and not give up hope. .

When I was twelve, I finally understood what was happening to him. I did not know how to feel about the whole situation. It felt like there was nothing I could do to help him, I was powerless as I watched my brother fall more and more into his addiction. He wasn't my brother anymore he was something else, a stranger almost. His use of drugs transformed him into a completely different person. During this time he was in horrible shape. There were times when my family felt he was knocking on death's door. He started to steal from the family to fuel his addiction. He had no conscience and even stole from me.. Once this happened, I felt completely betrayed. From that day and going forward, I never trusted him again. I would make it my business to stay away from him. The whole family distanced themselves away from him, as he was not

trustworthy anymore. My parents would sleep with their wallets and car keys every night. This led him to start stealing from people outside of our home.

His luck finally ran out and he was caught stealing and was put in jail. During his arraignment he was to appear in drug court. Here minors are given the choice to either stay in jail or go to a court appointed drug rehab. He chose to go to drug rehab and at this point I thought that it was finally over. The whole family thought we can now all breathe a sigh of relief.

After my brother got back from rehab, he looked healthy but I could still sense something was wrong. At first everything seemed like it would be fine. However, addiction is something that you need to fight one day at a time. My brother was not strong enough for this fight. . A week later my brother would relapse again and all of our hopes were crushed in an instant. This cycle would repeat itself several times. My mother put her hands up and said that was enough. My brother had to have wanted this for himself. He couldn't do it for anyone but for his own peace. He was tired and worn down. He was ready and signed himself up for a new drug rehab. As he has sung this song before, we did not have much hope. Fortunately, when he returned days turned weeks and weeks ran into months. As we sit here now, it will be two years that my brother is drug free . He now chairs meetings himself to help others. He was determined to make a change and his desire and will guided him back to life he once knew.

This ordeal with my brother has taught me to keep fighting even when it seems impossible to win. It has taught me to never give up on yourself. With determination, desire and faith anything is possible. I apply this knowledge and experience to my education. When things get tough, I will not quit but . Persevere. This was the most important lesson in my life. It taught me that to really make a change you can't always rely on others. Sometimes it's up to you to make that change.

Unit 2

U2 Reflective Annotated Bibliography

Introduction

Does hostile architecture discriminate against the homeless population and if so what actions are being taken against it?

There are multiple reasons why I've become interested in this topic. I first started to see hostile architecture on social media where I saw a train grate that had extruding curves coming out of it making it uncomfortable to sleep or sit on. After learning of this it enlightened me to take notice of my surroundings. I started to see more and more of this type of architecture in my area which made me want to research the subject. I was curious about both the designs and the intended use for the architecture. I wanted to know why this type of architecture exists if it seems like it's only hurting people rather than something beneficial. Additionally I want to know the history behind this subject. Where did it first begin? What is the public's view on this type of deterrent? In conclusion I wanted to know if there were any positive effects on the homeless crisis. I was curious to see if this architecture could be labeled as discrimination since it mostly effects a certain group of people to my knowlage. I also wanted to know the reason behind implementing architecture like this and if it is effective in its intended use. I'm also interested to find out where hostile architecture is most prevalent as well as who decides to construct this type of architecture and why.

While conducting my research for this subject I expect to find a multitude of things. For example I believe I will find different types of defensive architecture as well as the people who made the decisions to use this type of architecture. Also, I suspect that I will find the cause and effect of these constructions on society and which group of people it mostly affects. Lastly I conclude that I will find actions being taken against this subject and general opinions about it.

Source Entries

Citation#1

De Fine Licht, Karl Persson. "Hostile Urban Architecture: A Critical Discussion of the Seemingly Offensive Art of Keeping People Away." *Etikk i Praksis - Nordic Journal of Applied Ethics*, no. 2, 2017, pp. 27–44., <https://doi.org/10.5324/eip.v11i2.2052>.

Summary

For years urban architecture has excluded unwanted groups of people from various locations. This type of architecture can be referred to as defensive architecture or hostile architecture. Within recent years this architecture has been more predominant throughout the city. Recently it has caused an uproar within the general public with some debating that it's not a solemn way to handle the worst off in the population. This architecture is used in various countries such as the UK, Sweden and the United States. The people who have the power over these constructions consist of politicians, landlords, and owners of small shops. The question here is if the design of the architecture could be considered as discriminations against the less fortunate. It's an understanding of whether this violates both peoples rights and dignity. The designs of this architecture vary for example benches having armrests or slopes that make it uncomfortable to sleep. Stainless steel has also been used to make the construction slippery. Other examples include spikes which are called anti-homeless spikes and are placed in various areas like on the ground or on a windowsill. This prevents people from sitting or standing there. With this there is also less noticeable hostile architecture like large plant boxes or other objects in areas where panhandlers are usually found. Another way that has been used to exclude unwanted individuals is to completely remove a structure such as a bench. In most scenarios, it's easier to remove a construction rather than altering its design. It starts to become clearer that the people who are less fortunate are not wanted within a society.

Reflection

I do agree with De Fine Licht theory that hostile architecture tells homeless people that they are not wanted within our society. It starts to become clear that all this architecture is being used to exclude the homeless. This architecture is mostly being placed where homeless people tend to panhandle. It also makes these structures impossible to sleep on. De Fine Licht provides a lot of visuals of the architecture which helped me to realize that this architecture is meant to keep people away rather than to stay. It begs the question, could we consider this discrimination if were excluding a group of people?

Quotation

“But for those who are so vulnerable as to not have a bed to sleep in, they is another slap in the face-very clear signs that they are not welcome in the social community”(4). Citation#2 illuminaughtii. (2021, December 23). Hostile architecture: The fight against

the homeless | prism of the past. YouTube. Retrieved October 26, 2022, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bITz9yQPjy8%29>

Summary

The author gives many examples of how hostile architecture is being used and their causes and effects, as well as a brief history behind hostile architecture and how it started. "The idea of controlling human behavior by building outdoor space around them dates back to the French Revolution. After the revolution, many narrow streets were replaced with wide boulevards. This was done so to repress any kind of rebellion. What came out of this was the start of using architecture to keep out unwanted people" . It is pointed out that Robert Moses, a former secretary, was one of the first to use architecture to discriminate against black people. One example is the Long Island Parkway which had a clearance too low for buses to travel under. The result of this was anyone who did not have a car, particularly low income families, were not able to visit Moses parks. Over the past fifteen years, hostile architecture has been increasing according to Cara Chellew, a Toronto based researcher. "There's been an increased focus on public spaces in city buildings. We're creating public spaces but within public spaces there is the intention to keep public space orderly and maintained, to save on policing costs or to reduce maintenance and vandalism". It was pointed out in one of the articles that she quotes that hostile architecture is " an unkindness that is considered, designed, approved, funded and made real with the explicit motive to exclude and harass". Examples of these types of architecture consist of concrete benches that are sloped so it's uncomfortable to sleep on. Spikes are used to deter people from loitering in a certain area, especially panhandlers. In the Canadian city of Calgary, authorities have covered the ground beneath the Louise Bridge with bowling ball sized rocks to prevent homeless people from taking shelter there by making it uncomfortable. Public benches around the world now feature more armrests to deter people from sleeping on them. A tanning salon in Bristol installed sprinklers to spray people loitering on the property. There was also a church in San Francisco that also used sprinklers to deter homeless people from sleeping under the doorway. Bike racks that are rarely used have been installed in areas where homeless people tend to set up camp.

Reflection

The author provides a multitude of examples to link hostile architecture to discrimination. The architecture is rather cruel than beneficial to a society. Most of the examples provided only seem to target people who are homeless. Bike racks being set up where homeless tend to set up camp. Sprinklers to deter people from staying in a certain area. Spikes being placed where panhandlers congregate. A good sum of the

architecture in this video primarily targets the homeless population. If what Robert Mosses did is considered discrimination then why can't this type of hostile architecture also be considered discrimination.

Quotation

In the video at (11:17/30:37) the author reads a quote from an article from the Guardian saying "hostile architecture is It is a sort of unkindness that is considered, designed, approved, funded and made real with the explicit motive to exclude and harass".

Citation#3

Jock, Kaitlin. "You Are Not Welcome Here: Anti-Homeless Architecture Crops up Nationwide." Street Roots, Street Roots, 9 June 2019, <https://www.streetroots.org/news/2019/06/07/you-are-not-welcome-here-anti-homeless-architecture-crops-nationwide> (Accessed: October 26, 2022).

Summary

In this journal article by Kaitlin Jock, she takes the stand that hostile architecture is unfair to the homeless. It sheds light on the different ways architecture is used to deter unwanted people. She has singled out New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania and California as being just some states that have implemented some kind of hostile architecture. Some examples are outright cruel to homeless people. She goes on to say that "New York City's long-famed Strand Bookstore installed sprinklers as part of its iconic awning, spraying people seeking shelter and sleeping under it. Another example that was given is that in Portland planters were placed under bridges so people can't rest there when it rains. She does bring out the fact that the homeless do belong in shelters. However, oftentimes people will feel better outside than they do in shelters due to the safety conditions in shelters. In San Francisco, benches were removed in the middle of night. Also, "UV treated paint that forces urine to bounce back on the person that is urinating was implemented in San Francisco". In Sacramento, metal balls were placed on ledges so people cannot sit. In Philadelphia, benches were installed which are curved and slotted with metal bars dividing them into sections.

Reflection

This article by Jock Kaitlin has partially answered my question on whether homeless people are being discriminated against. Prior to reading this article, I knew that permanent structures were part of hostile architecture. However, I didn't know the

extremes that organizations would go to to deter unwanted behavior. I believe that the sprinklers and the UV treated paint are some extreme measures. The article also enlightened me of other states that are affected by hostile architecture. I agree with the author that I find this hostile architecture discriminatory.

Quotation

Near the end of this article the author states "There are people who need public space more than people who desire it".

Conclusion

After researching this subject, it does seem that hostile architecture is unsympathetic to those less fortunate. There are just so many facts and examples against this type of architecture that it's hard to believe it's beneficial for a society. Before I started with my research of hostile architecture,, my thoughts were that any type of this kind of architecture does not benefit a society and just makes matters worse for people, especially the homeless. However, after reading the peer reviewed article from de Fine Licht, I learned that a portion of this architecture could be beneficial for some. For example, public store owners who want an aesthetic appeal in front of their store to entice customers (de Fine Licht 5). Also, I do see the ramifications that it has on the working class people. For example, take a person who is coming home for a hard day's work and is waiting for the bus. All they want to do is rest their feet but can not because a homeless person has made the bus stop bench their bed.

The problem I found in my research is that there is no complete study of hostile architecture showing if the pros outweigh the cons. While there are some good uses for this construction, it's hard to ignore all the other examples of this architecture doing more harm than good. Hostile architecture is a band aid solution for the homeless crisis. Instead of trying to fix the root cause of homelessness, we are just relocating them to the point where they have nowhere to go and feel somewhat safe. It's like a reminder to them that they are not wanted here. "But for those who are so vulnerable as to not have a bed to sleep in, that is another slap in the face and a very clear signal that they are not welcome in the social community" (de Fine Licht 4). Just like there are Republicans and Democrats, there will always be two sides on the topic of hostile architecture. One is not wanting homeless people in your community. Then there are those who feel the homeless are part of our society and need to be taken better care of. I believe that instead of funding for hostile architecture, we should put this funding to homeless shelters. While some might not want to have a homeless shelter constructed near them, we need to remember that these people aren't animals. They're human beings who

have the right to live just as much as us. If America is supposed to be the land of opportunity and chance, why are we stripping this away from the homeless? Don't you believe that they should get a second chance to land back on their feet? In the end, I believe it will take an electoral vote to determine if these architectural structures will stay in place. I believe this info should be directed to politicians to make a change in the funding from hostile architecture to the root cause of homelessness

Unit 3

https://docs.google.com/document/d/19Mfl29bXGTdWjZ5G_Mlvdn7G68f55M4gyTQLA9-POA/edit

Optional revision of unit 2

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