Kevin Austin

ARTS 458

T/Th 1-4

Social Propaganda Proposal

**Working Title:** Homelessness

**Type of Project:** Documentary Photography

**Project Statement:**

Homelessness has become one of the great tragedies of our time, at least in my opinion. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, as of 2018, there were 552,830 homeless people in the United States. That means that roughly 17 people out of every 10,000 in the U.S. are homeless. Men make up the largest category of homeless people, about 70% off the total homeless population. White Americans make up the largest racial category, about 49% of the total homeless population. The causes of homelessness can and will change from person to person. However, some of the main causes are lack of housing opportunities, low income individuals and/or families, health problems, survivors of domestic violence, and racial inequalities.

I happened to be one of the people that made up the homeless statistics for 2018. I was homeless from March 4th, 2018 until July 4th, 2018. During this time, I lived in the back of my Ford Explorer on most nights and on friend’s couches a handful of times. I probably could have stayed on couches more than I did but I constantly had a feeling of being an imposition. The reason I became homeless was a combination of two of the causes I listed above. I was in an accident in August of 2016 that left me unable to work for more than a year and a half. I was on state disability for a year but then that ran out and I was living off what I had saved for retirement. Then that ran out and I had no money coming in at all. I was still injured and could not work. I was kicked out of my house because I was not able to pay rent, even though I was living in the house the injured me. That is another story though.

Everybody’s experience with homelessness is very different and this project will be different from most documentary photography projects on homelessness. I will be documenting my journey with homelessness, or at least my most recent experience. I have been homeless a total of three times in my life. However, this project will be exploring the situations I experienced from March of 2018 through July of 2018. The photos that I will be including will be: what I would see out of my car windows before I fell asleep and when I woke up, landscape shots of the parking lots I slept in, recreations of how I had the back of my vehicle set-up, recreations of me sleeping on friend’s couches, and architectural shots of the community services buildings I went to for help. This project will not have images of other homeless people because this is about my journey.