

2008

Ethnic theme housing at Berkeley and Cornell : a critical hermeneutic understanding of ethnic identity

Daniel Ocampo

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.usfca.edu/diss>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ocampo, Daniel, "Ethnic theme housing at Berkeley and Cornell : a critical hermeneutic understanding of ethnic identity" (2008).
Doctoral Dissertations. 239.
<https://repository.usfca.edu/diss/239>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, Capstones and Projects at USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized administrator of USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center. For more information, please contact repository@usfca.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

ETHNIC THEME HOUSING AT BERKELEY AND CORNELL:
A CRITICAL HERMENEUTIC UNDERSTANDING OF ETHNIC
IDENTITY

A Dissertation Presented

to

The Faculty of the School of Education
Organization and Leadership Department
Pacific Leadership International Studies

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

BY

DANIEL OCAMPO

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

May, 2008

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone

Daniel Ocampo
Candidate

April 29, 2008
Date

Dissertation Committee

Ellen A. Herda
Chairperson

May 9, 2008
Date

Christopher N. Thomas

April 29, 2008

Alma Flor Ada

April 29, 2008

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank my committee chair, Dr. Ellen Herda, without her support, encouragement, and *force of the better argument*, completion of this work would not have been possible.

I am grateful to my committee members, Dr. Alma Flor Ada, and Dr. Chris Thomas.

I thank my conversation partners who in sharing horizons of their experiences revealed to me new understandings.

I thank Shannell Thomas whose passion and care for her students confirmed for me the need for this study.

I express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Jerlena Griffin-Desta for her support and allowing me to take the time out of my day job to write and complete this work.

I thank the Residential Living staff for their support, patience, and encouragement over the past few months as I attempted to make sense of all of this.

I am grateful for having the opportunity to work with the 2006-07 Academic Program Coordinators who made my time with them among the most memorable of my career—a special shout out goes to the UC Berkeley-Cornell Crew.

I wish to thank three role models and mentors: Cindy Zomchek, Dick Koehler, and Don King, whose commitment to students and staff continues to inform my practice.

I wish to acknowledge my friends and family who supported me in this endeavor—through the good times and bad—especially Eric, Tim, Greggor, Kathleen, Jake, Mikey, Anne, Craig, Kevin, Tom, Wendy, Bob, Tony, Mark, Anita, Wayne, Frankie and Virginia.

I thank my muse Tia.

Most of all, I thank and acknowledge my mother Ester, my sister Liz, and my brother Chris whose life-long support enabled me to pursue the limits of my own freedom and whose love helped me remain focused and motivated to finish this work. And I acknowledge my nephews Chris, Jr. and Brian, and my niece Jennifer with whom we entrust the future with our family's past.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge and dedicate this dissertation to my father Crispin who has watched over and accompanied me on this journey long beyond his time here on earth.

DRO 2008

A. M. D. G.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
CHAPTER ONE: The Research Problem	1
Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Research Categories	4
Research Questions	6
Background of the Research Issues	7
Concepts Clarified for This Research	13
Significance of the Research	16
Summary	17
CHAPTER TWO: Background of Research Sites	19
Introduction	19
Far Above Cayuga's Waters-Cornell University	19
Ujamaa Residential College	22
Latino Living Center	24
Let There Be Light-University of California at Berkeley	25
African American Theme Program	31
Casa Magdalena Mora	34
Summary	35
CHAPTER THREE: Review of Literature	36
Introduction	36
Student Affairs and Diversity on the College Campus	38
Identity	43
Ethnicity and Race	45
Look Who's Coming To Study: The Black Experience on the College Campus	48
Cross' Model of the Psychological Process of Black Identity	50
The Latin@/Chican@ Experience on the College Campus	52
Ferdman's Model of Latino Identity Development	54
The Argument Against Ethnic Theme Housing	57
The Position of Stanford University	57

Report on the Residential Communities at Cornell University	58
Identity and Community	60
A Community of Communities	62
Post-Proposition 209	64
Summary	65
CHAPTER FOUR: Research Protocol	66
Introduction	66
Theoretical Framework Pertaining to Analysis of Data	66
Critical Hermeneutics	66
Collective Identity	68
<i>Da-sein</i> and Being-in-the-world	69
Communicative Rationality, Competence and Action	74
Transformation of the Public Sphere	76
Research Guidelines	76
Research Sites	76
Identification of participants	76
Data Collection	77
Data Analysis	77
Pilot Study	78
Language	78
Timeline	79
Background of Researcher	79
Summary	80
CHAPTER FIVE: Data Presentation	82
Introduction	82
Understanding Cornell University	82
The Latino Voices at Cornell	93
The African American Voices at Cornell	107
Understanding UC Berkeley	113
A Latino Voice at Berkeley	113
An African American Voice at Berkeley	117
Summary	123

CHAPTER SIX: Data Analysis	124
Introduction	124
Collective Identity	124
Communicative Rationality, Competency, and Action	131
Transformation of the Public Sphere	134
Summary	140
 CHAPTER SEVEN: Findings and Implications	 141
Summary	141
Implications	143
Further Research Ideas	145
Personal Reflection	145
Conclusion	146
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 148
 APPENDICIES	
Appendix A- Letter of Invitation and Research Questions	159
Appendix B- Letter of Confirmation	161
Appendix C- Follow-up Letter	162
Appendix D- Sample of Research Participants	163
Appendix E- Consent to be a Research Participant	164
Appendix F- Pilot Study	166
 TABLES	
1.1 Selected Black and Latino Residential Theme Programs	9
1.2 Common Data Set 2006-07 University of California, Berkeley Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Category as of October 15, 2006	11
1.3 U.S. Black or African Americans, 2000 Census	14
1.4 U.S. Latinos by National Origin or Ancestry, 2000 Census	15

2.1	Common Data Set 2007-08 Cornell University Institutional Enrollment as of October 15, 2007	20
2.2	Common Data Set 2007-08 Cornell University Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Category as of October 15, 2007	21
2.3	Common Data Set 2006-07 University of California, Berkeley Institutional Enrollment as of October 15, 2006	26
2.4	UC Berkeley New Freshman Registrants by Ethnicity, Fall 1995 - Fall 2006	27
2.5	UCUES- Student Life and Development- Personal Growth and Development	28
2.6	UCUES- Core-Academic and Personal Development- Deeper understanding through conversations	29
2.7	UCUES- Core-Academic and Personal Development- Gained appreciation for diversity	29
2.8	UCUES- Student Services Module-Campus Climate	30
3.1	Ferdman's Model of Latino Identity Development	55
3.2	Population, Income, Education, and UC Eligibility by Ethnicity	65

FIGURES

2.1	Map of Cornell University	21
2.2	Ujamaa Residential College	22
2.3	Willard Straight Hall Takeover	23
2.4	Mural of Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King, Jr.	23
2.5	Comstock Hall/Latino Living Center	24
2.6	Map of University of California, Berkeley Campus	30
2.7	Barbara Christian Hall/African American Theme Program	33

2.8	Beverly Cleary Hall/Casa Magdalena Mora	34
2.9	Magdalena Mora	35

CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

The presence of ethnicity-based theme housing on college campuses has given rise to numerous debates, with critics (Meyers et. al., 2003; Sabia 2002; Lee 1996) purporting that they do little else but serve as a means of institutionally sanctioned segregation and division. Proponents (Stanford University, date unknown; Cornell University 1995), however, claim that if the programs are purposeful and intentional, ethnic theme housing can provide marginalized groups with the academic support and sense of belonging that are critical to their success as they transition to college life. This study explores African American and Latino residential programs at Cornell University and the University of California at Berkeley to better understand how ethnicity-based theme houses might contribute to the retention, academic success, and overall experience of these traditionally underrepresented groups.

This paper draws from various disciplines to achieve a deeper understanding of these programs. Critical hermeneutics serves as the philosophical framework to guide the research protocol. Through conversations with those familiar with such programs, this research aims to better understand the experiences of students residing in ethnicity-based theme housing and the departments which support them. By hermeneutic, we shift our understanding—from the epistemological to the ontological—to a research horizon “invoking the potential of humans to reflect on their history and to imagine worlds we could inhabit” (Herda 1999:6). Applying the concept of critical hermeneutics to the narratives, we ask Ricoeur’s (1992: 138) question: “Would the question of what matters arise if there were no one to whom the question of identity mattered?” It is my hope that these narratives may help others

understand the value of such programs, and how they might provide the validation and support to the communities residing within. In turn, ethnic theme houses might serve to help underrepresented students better transition to college life and eventually matriculate.

Statement of the Problem

Creating community is often deemed a priority within college and university residence halls and campus life. Frank Rhodes (2001: 53), President Emeritus of Cornell University writes that “in the best universities, community is fundamental to the process of discovery, an essential means of learning. No longer the community of conformity of the New England college, the new community is based on engagement, rather than agreement.” However, the American college campus—a microcosm of the United States—no longer accurately depicts the melting pot of assimilation metaphor. The college campus has become increasingly more diverse, yet an authentic and engaged multicultural student body representative of the larger society remains elusive (Altbach et al. 1999).

As such, providing supportive communities for traditionally underrepresented students on most campuses has often been difficult to achieve, particularly when there are relatively few minorities attending predominantly white institutions and while racist attitudes—both overt and covert—permeate our society and institutions of higher learning. Sometimes the comments are so innocuous and deep seated, that they are shrouded in the form of compliments. In a recent article released by the UC Berkeley News Center (Cockrell 2008), one student stated that “A white male student stated that he was ‘blacker’ than I am simply because I’m ‘articulate’...As accepting and aware as Cal attempts to be, I often run into students, whether white or of color, who expect me to behave in a certain way either due to my race, class, or both.” The insinuation is subtle, but infers that one’s blackness equates to being inarticulate.

Tatum (1999:165) suggests that "...racism increases the need for a positive self-defined identity in order to survive psychologically." How an individual comes to develop a positive self-defined identity in what some might perceive to be a hostile environment is the question. Cross' Black Identity Development Model of Psychological Nigrescence (1971)—which has been applied to other persons of color who have shared similar experiences of oppression—suggests immersion within an individual's culture as being a necessary stage in one's identity developmental process. For underrepresented ethnic minorities on predominantly white campuses, this view of a supportive community might result in some individuals living among others who share their same interests, culture, and indeed, identity. These reasons compel housing administrators to consider residential ethnicity-based theme programs so that students may be able to better acclimate to the college environment, gain a greater sense of self-identity, and find support among their peers so that they may be able to better focus on their academics. However, the existence of ethnicity-based theme housing on college campuses has given rise to a number of debates, with critics (Meyers et al 2003; Sabia 2002; Lee 1996) purporting that they do little else but provide another means of segregation and institutionalized racial separation. Joseph Sabia (2002: 1), a Cornell alumnus and current faculty at the University of Georgia states that:

Cornell's race-based dormitories serve as indoctrination centers where "ethnic studies" professors—mostly from the Africana department—brainwash minorities into believing that white supremacy is the dominant American ideology. This form of racial politics indoctrinates minorities into believing that being around whites is "unsafe" and that comfort can only be achieved through segregation.

It is this issue of self-segregation that has emerged as a crucial issue to many colleges as enrollment of minorities has increased in the U.S. Still, with comparatively few African Americans and Latinos attending college and therefore living on campus, underrepresented minorities on predominantly white campuses are often randomly assigned to their residence

hall rooms and spread throughout university housing. This often leaves students isolated in environments understood to be hostile, or at least in environments in which they feel alone, unwelcome, and without support.

This document explores the value of ethnicity-based theme houses in the overall experience and potential contribution to the retention and academic success of black and Latino students at Cornell University and the University of California at Berkeley. The three primary research participant populations were: 1) residents; 2) faculty, staff, administrators; and 3) others, including non-resident students and other non-affiliates, such as those vocally opposed to the existence of ethnic theme housing.

Research Categories

I relate the understanding of the essence of the theme houses to the research categories of Collective Identity as the *who*; Communicative Rationality, Competency and Action as the *how*, and Transformation of the Public Sphere as the *where* and *what* oriented toward a future horizon.

Collective Identity

Habermas (1979) refers to collective identity for reference groups that are essential to the identity of their members, which are in certain way “ascribed” to individuals, cannot be freely chosen by them, and which have a continuity that extends beyond the life-historical perspectives of their members. He further defines collective identity with the following claims:

- a. The collective identity of a group or society secures continuity and recognizability. For this reason it varies with the temporal concepts in terms of which the society can specify the requirements for remaining the same.
- b. Collective identity determines how a society demarcates itself from its natural and social environments...A personal lifeworld is bounded by the horizon of all possible experiences and actions that can be attributed to the individual in his exchange with his social environment. By contrast, the symbolic boundaries of a

society are formed primarily as the horizon of the actions that members reciprocally attribute to themselves internally.

- c. Collective identity regulates the membership of individuals in the society (and exclusion therefrom). In this respect there is a complementary relation between ego and group identity, because the unity of the person is formed through relations to other persons of the same group; and as I mentioned above, identity development is characterized by the fact that early identification with concrete and less complex groups (the family) is weakened and subordinated to identification with more encompassing and more abstract units (city, state). This suggests that we can infer from the ontogenetic stages of ego development the complementary structures of the tribal group, the state, and finally, global forms of intercourse (Habermas 1979: 111).

These concepts of collective identity can be understood as aspects of identity being readily apparent and recognizable to other, that collective identity is bound by space and culture, and maintained through relationship with others and fluid.

Communicative Rationality, Competence and Action

Habermas' Communicative Rationality presents a condition in which speakers and hearers committed to achieving common understanding may raise validity claims through their communicative rationality and establish through conversation the possibility to tell their story. This story telling as Kearney (2002: 156) suggests, compels us not to become mere agents of our own lives, but narrators and readers as well. It reveals to us that "the untold life is not worth living."

Transformation of the Public Sphere

Habermas (1991) refers to events and occasions 'public' when they are open to all, in contrast to closed or exclusive affairs—as we speak of public places or public houses. But as in the expression of 'public building,' the term need not refer to general accessibility; the building does not even have to be open to public traffic. 'Public buildings' simply house state institutions and as such are 'public'. The campus and theme houses represent the public sphere. Theme houses are public in the sense they are open to any and all who choose to live

within them. Habermas (1991: 29) believes that the public sphere “provided the training ground for a critical public reflection still preoccupied with itself—a process of self-clarification of private people focusing on the genuine experiences of their novel privateness.” These spaces allow for the critical dialogue to occur about the houses—about culture, race relations and identity—both within and outside of them. It is through these conversations in the public sphere itself that would lead to its transformation.

Research Questions

The guiding questions for the respective participating populations are as follows:

Residents

- What was your initial understanding of this ethnic theme program? Why did you choose to live there? Why do you choose to stay?
- How has living in this theme program influenced your college experience?
- What do you believe are some of the limitations of these environments? Why do you think more students don’t choose to live there?

Staff

- Where and under what conditions did you first become familiar with ethnicity-based theme housing? What was your initial understanding of these programs?
- What is the official position of ethnicity-based theme housing within your department? To what extent does the residential experience contribute to and link with the educational mission of the university? Do you believe that ethnic theme housing influences recruitment, retention, and the overall experience of underrepresented students?
- How has your experience with ethnic theme housing influenced you professionally and personally? How has this affected your values and thought processes in educating students? What do you believe are some of the limitations of these environments?

Others

- Where and under what conditions did you first become familiar with ethnicity-based theme housing? What was your initial understanding of these programs?
- Do you believe that ethnic theme housing influences recruitment, retention, and the overall experience of underrepresented students? Why do you believe some students might fare better academically in these environments? What do you believe are some positive influences of ethnic theme houses on the residents who reside there?
- What do you believe are some of the limitations of these environments? Why do you think more students don’t choose to live there?

Oriented in critical hermeneutics, this paper places “the locus of both social and personal change in language and tradition, which houses our being” (Herda 1999: 7). The above questions were directed by the research categories presented earlier: Collective Identity, Communicative Rationality, Competency, and Action and Transformation of the Public Sphere.

Background of the Research Issues

Ethnicity-based theme housing, also known as culturally-based, and/or program housing exist on relatively few campuses. Some of the first houses were a result of underrepresented groups in the late 1960’s attempting to claim a space in which they could live comfortably and free of the racial tension within the dominant society that defined that era. Traditionally, college administrators have assumed a one-size-fits-all approach to education, which has also served as the model for college housing. This orientation involves housing all students—irrespective of one’s background or identity—in the same living environment. Student housing has moved beyond merely providing a place where students sleep to places in which students can grow, develop, and achieve academic success.

The role and expectations of staff members within these residence halls have increased over the years and these staff members are charged with creating safe and healthy communities as they grow increasingly more diverse. The imperative becomes greater and increases the expectation of residential learning outcomes—including residents acquiring the skill of living with others different from themselves. The resulting challenge is that staff, irrespective of the training they receive are at times, ill-equipped to effectively deal with assisting students of different backgrounds and experiences if they have not acquired the skills of developing trusting relationships with those different from themselves. The housing assignment personnel in their charge to fill bed spaces, often fail to recognize the experiences

that the newly admitted students bring with them, and may at times place incompatible students together, and leave the resolution of conflicts to the residential staff.

While the goals of creating diverse communities is indeed a valuable and noble goal, the lack of legitimate choice does not accurately reflect how people live and are expected to live within the larger society. As we move toward a more diverse society, we must understand that the underrepresented voices now at the table have unredeemed claims and unfulfilled expectations of the larger society. While society has responded with constructs such as imposed segregation, affirmative action, reverse discrimination, and voter initiatives such as Proposition 209, the presence of minorities on the campus fails to recognize the damage and effect of slavery or centuries imposed superiority of colonizers on the conquered with respect to the psyche of a people. This belief is central to understanding the experience for historically underrepresented students on predominantly white college campuses.

African Americans are virtually unique in that any such attitudes, prejudices, and customs—particularly those inhibiting achievement that are internal to the group—have evolved almost entirely under the influence of, and often in reaction to, racially oppressive economic and political institutions indigenous to U.S. society. This is less true of the other nonwhite American ethnic groups whose numbers have swelled in recent decades owing to a large influx of immigrants from Asia and Latin America (Loury 2002: 12).

On predominantly white campuses, many students from traditionally underrepresented groups are challenged by not only finding their identity as they experience their four years, but community as well. One place these students can discover both identity and community is through living in a theme house. Though small in number and existing primarily at larger and prestigious institutions, these residentially-based programs are often linked academically to ethnic studies programs and focused on providing an environment for residents interested in learning more about a particular culture (See Table 1.1). As a result of this specific focus, these residential programs often attract students from their respective communities and ethnic

backgrounds. For some, this affinity toward those with a common identity serves as the basis for community.

Theme Housing vs. Interest-based Housing

For the purposes of this study, I use the terms theme program, theme house, and program house interchangeably. I did not focus on program houses of other ethnicities, such as Akwe:Kon (i.e., American Indian program house at Cornell) or APATH (i.e., Asian

Table 1.1 Selected Black and Latino Residential Theme Programs

Institution	Name of Community/Program	Cultural/Ethnic Focus	Founded	# Residents
Brown University	Harambee House	African	1994	
Brown University	Hispanic House	Spanish/Hispanic		
Cornell University	Latino Living Center	Latino/a	1994	56
Cornell University	Ujamaa Residential College	African Diaspora	1972	140
Dartmouth College	Latin Am., Latino, Caribbean	Latino/a	2001	14
Dartmouth College	Shabazz Academic Affinity House	African American	1970	26
Emory University	Black Student Alliance	African American		5
Ohio State University	Afrikan American Learning Comm.	African/African Am.		
Ohio State University	Spanish Language and Culture	Latino/Spanish		
Stanford University	Casa Zapata	Chicano/Mexican Am.	1973	101
Stanford University	Ujamaa	Black/African Am.	1970	130
Tufts University	Africana Unit	Africana	1969	15
Tufts University	Latino Culture Unit	Latino	1993	12
UC Berkeley	African American Theme Program	African American	1984	50
UC Berkeley	Casa Magdalena Mora	Chican@/Latin@	1990	32
UC Davis	African American & African	African American	2004	40
UC Davis	Casa Cuauhtémoc	Chicano/a/Latino/a	1987	61
UC Irvine	Ele Si Rosa Parks	African American		
UC Irvine	Casa Cesar Chavez	Chicano/Latino	1994	
UC Los Angeles	African Diaspora Studies Theme	African American	2008	75
UC Los Angeles	Chican@/Latin@ Studies Theme	Chican@/Latin@	2008	75
U of Southern California	El Sol y La Luna	Chicano/a/Latino/a	1974	32
U of Southern California	Somerville Place	African American	1994	32
Yale University	African American House	African American	1969	

Source: Information compiled in 2004 by Dan Ocampo, updated in 2008 with assistance from Tina Quach

Pacific American Theme House at UC Berkeley) though there may be some similar issues with those programs. I did not include housing in which language (e.g., Language House at Cornell) serves as the unifying construct, although some case may be made for Spanish language houses. I also did not consider programs that emphasize a cross-cultural or broader focus related to multiculturalism (e.g., Holland International Living Center and the Multicultural Living Learning Unit at Cornell). I focus specifically on ethnic-based, and

permanent (i.e., the program doesn't change on an annual basis) theme housing or program houses and not interest-based housing. I make the distinction between theme housing and interest-based housing with a clear and institutionally recognized link with an academic department or ethnic studies program. This may be achieved through a seminar or sustained faculty involvement. As I defined the parameters for this study, interest-based housing was omitted as it might not include an academic discipline, faculty involvement, or the interest topic may change from year to year based on resident interest (e.g., environmental, athletes, music, etc.). In the case of theme programs at Cornell University and the University of California at Berkeley, all four programs meet the criteria for my focus, and participation is not limited to those solely from the respective ethnicities, but is open to all who have an interest in learning and experiencing the cultures and histories within these communities. The primary consideration here is the expanded choice of where students may live and that they are not randomly assigned to a space, nor are they assigned to a particular location because of their reported identity.

It should be noted that some institutions recognize the potential benefits of the ethnic theme houses and consider this as part of their official housing assignments policy. At Stanford University, for instance, ethnic priorities for assignments are automatically issued to students of their respective theme houses based on ethnic data supplied by the Registrar's Office and offers a special priority to all students, regardless of ethnicity, who meet certain objectively defined criteria (Stanford University: date unknown). As a private institution there is greater opportunity to be more intentional with how the information gathered is used.

The case for the existence of ethnic theme programs is more compelling when we consider, that with respect to the overall campus population relatively few African Americans and Latinos are present on our campuses and reside within our residence halls.

For example, with an undergraduate residence hall capacity of approximately 6400, UC Berkeley guarantees housing only to first-year, second-year, and transfer students. UC Berkeley’s Office of Student Research reports that in the fall of 2007 there were 152 African-American or black new freshman registrants—3.6% of entering and enrolled First-year students; and 471 Hispanic new freshman registrants which equates to 11.3% of the freshman class (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 Common Data Set 2007-08 University of California, Berkeley- Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Category as of October 15, 2007

	Degree-seeking First-time First year	Degree-seeking Undergraduates (include first-time first year)	Total Undergraduates (both degree- and non- degree-seeking)
Nonresident aliens	112	770	770
Black, non-Hispanic	152	835	835
American Indian or Alaska Native	17	118	118
Asian or Pacific Islander	1,903	9,873	9,873
Hispanic	471	2,613	2,613
White, non-Hispanic	1,205	7,537	7,537
Race/ethnicity unk.	297	2,117	2,117
Total	4,157	23,863	23,863

Source: <http://cds.vcbf.berkeley.edu>

This equates to blacks entering UC Berkeley in their first year, and if they all choose to live in the residence halls would be a little over 2.1% of the residential population; Latinos entering UC Berkeley in their first year would be 7.6% of the residential population.

Independent of the African American Theme Floors or Casa Magdalena Mora, we should assume that these individuals would be randomly distributed among the roughly 27 residence hall communities with approximately 230 in each area or high rise building. This equates to approximately 5 first-year black students, and 13 first-year Latinos per community of 230. If we consider that there might be a few residents returning for a second year and a handful of

additional transfer students, the result might be one African American per floor and one or two Latinos per floor. The challenge for an authentic multicultural community is there just aren't that many African Americans and Latinos admitted into UC Berkeley, let alone living in the residence halls to be a visible presence. There isn't the critical mass of students to allow the traditionally underrepresented in search of identity and community to easily connect with others like them within the residential community. This resulting ethnic diffusion may leave the student feeling isolated—and without a positive self-esteem and others with whom he or she can identify—their retention, academic success, and eventual matriculation on precarious ground. In isolation, community by any standard is difficult to achieve.

Etzioni (1996: 127) defines community by two characteristics: first, a web of affect-laden relationships among a group of individuals, relationships that often crisscross and reinforce one another (rather than merely one-on-one or chainlike individual relationships); and second, a measure of commitment to a set of shared values, norms, and meanings, and a shared history and identity to a particular culture. This understanding can be applied to broader society and the various communities on our campuses. However, the issue of perceived self-segregation and self-imposed isolation remains a critical point to the understanding of the need for such options.

Although self-segregation does not start or stop at the door of the college residence hall, housing arrangements play a significant role in promoting or deterring interaction, dialogue, and friendship (Bocian 1997). Where students live, who they live with, and where they feel comfortable and at home, contribute greatly to their overall college experience. As such, proponents of ethnicity-based theme housing claim that if the programs are purposeful and intentional, ethnic theme-housing can provide marginalized groups with the academic

support and sense of belonging that are critical to their success. In addition to creating a sense of shared purpose, many theme programs serve as a means to bring academic life into the residential community through formal courses and assigning faculty connected to an academic department to the residential program. In essence, ethnic based theme houses serve as specialized learning communities, which purposefully restructure the curriculum to link together courses or course work so that students find great coherence in what they are learning as well as increased intellectual interaction with faculty and fellow students (Gabelnick et al., 1990). Though most would not question the goal for all students to be academically successful, some critics argue that the existence of ethnicity-based theme housing creates unnecessarily segregated communities, and does not facilitate the interaction between the different ethnicities in which a valuable exchange can occur.

I believe that my work may provide insight to better understand and lend credibility to the existence of ethnicity-based theme housing on college campuses. Critical hermeneutic and qualitative data will provide a better understanding of the ethnic-theme house experience and the value for the students who reside there.

Concepts Clarified for this Research

Race

The concept of race as used by the Census Bureau reflects self-identification by people according to the race or races with which they most closely identify. These categories are sociopolitical constructs and should not be interpreted as being scientific or anthropological in nature. Furthermore, the race categories include both racial and national-origin groups (US Census, 2000: A-2).

Ethnicity

An ethnic group or ethnicity is a group of human beings whose members identify with each other, usually on the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry (Smith 1986). In 1914, Weber (1978) defined “ethnicity” as those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for group formation; furthermore it does not matter whether an objective blood relationship exists. For this work I use “ethnicity” as I understand the terminology to be more encompassing than the concept of race.

Black or African American

Black or African American is a category encompassing persons having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa (See Table 1.3). It includes people who indicate their race as “Black, African American, or Negro,” or provide written entries such as African American, Afro American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian (US Census, 2000: A-3). For this paper I use the term black and African American interchangeably. However, I will more frequently use the term black to include those individuals of African descent who do not consider themselves American (from the Caribbean), but reside in this country.

Table 1.3 U.S. Black or African Americans, 2000 Census

Group	Number	Percent of U.S. Population
Black or African American	34,658,190	12.3%

<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/dp1/2kh00.pdf>

Hispanics and Latinos

People who identify with the terms “Hispanic” or “Latino” are those who classify themselves in one of the specific Hispanic or Latino categories listed on the census questionnaire—

“Mexican,” “Puerto Rican,” or “Cuban”—as well as those who indicate that they are “other Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino” (See Table 1.4). Origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the persons’ parent’s or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. People who identify their origin as Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino may be of any race (US Census, 2000: A-1).

Table 1.4 U.S. Latinos by National Origin or Ancestry, 2000 Census

Group	Number	Proportion among Latinos	Percent of U.S. Population
Mexican	20,640,711	58.46%	7.3%
Puerto Rican	3,406,178	9.65%	1.2%
Cuban	1,241,685	3.52%	0.4%
Other Hispanic or Latino	10,017,244	28.37%	3.6%
Total Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	35,305,818	100%	12.5%

Source: <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/dp1/2kh00.pdf>

The terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" are often used interchangeably to denote people of any race who were born in or who trace their roots to Spanish-speaking countries. The term Hispanic was introduced into the official government lexicon by the Office of Budget and Management in 1978, creating an ethnic category that included persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central America, South America, or some other Spanish origin (Treviño 1987). Hayes-Bautista and Chapa (1987) introduced “Latino” restricting the name to persons residing in the United States whose ancestries are from Latin American countries in the Western Hemisphere. It also includes people from Latin America who do not necessarily speak Spanish (e.g., Brazilian) (Castellanos & Jones 2003). Though the U.S. Census Bureau also uses the two terms synonymously, some experts say the words are not identical and those of Spanish-speaking descent have disagreed on which word is preferable.

Some individuals reject the term Hispanic as a government-imposed label or as placing too much emphasis on colonial Spain. (The word Hispanic is a derivation of

"Hispania," the Latin word for Spain.) "Latino," according to this view, suggests greater ethnic pride, not least because it is more Spanish sounding than "Hispanic." Others eschew "Latino" because they believe it excludes those from Caribbean countries such as the Dominican Republic or Cuba. The federal government has considered this debate and confusion and in the year 2000 expanded the wording on census forms, asking Americans whether or not they were "Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" (Sabar 2001). While there is much controversy over what is the more widely acceptable term, I use the term Latino more frequently as I understand it to be more acceptable to those with whom I spoke. To avoid the o/a (e.g., Latino/a, Chicano/a), I have occasionally used the "@" (e.g., Latin@) as it is becoming more acceptable with the Latin@s with whom I'm familiar and considers the dynamic of gender.

Significance of the Research

The findings of this study have potential political implications regarding the value of ethnicity-based theme housing. Proponents may use the study to support the belief that ethnicity-based theme housing for underrepresented groups provides a supportive space to assist in their identity development and help in their academic success so that they may matriculate. This assessment may shed some light on areas of success, which may aid in developing policy regarding such residential programs. If limited value is expressed, opponents will use the information to continue to challenge the need for ethnicity-based theme housing. Under the false guise of multiculturalism, critics (Sabia 2002) suggest that ethnic theme houses serve to divide the campus, and indoctrinate minority students into a belief system that is antithetical to achieving one campus community. This, however, does not account for, as has been suggested by Etzioni's (1994) position of the college campus being understood as a community of communities. More importantly, it does not value the

collective voice of a people and does not allow the individual the freedom of choice—of where to live and with whom one can freely associate. As Freire (2002) might suggest, this exercise of freedom of choice moves the oppressed from pseudo-participation to committed involvement. By applying the concepts of critical hermeneutics to practice, this dissertation attempts to reconfigure who we are as educators and researchers in which “a fusion of our research horizon comes in rethinking the nature of language to include moral and political imperatives” (Herda 1999: 6).

As previously noted, colleges and universities with ethnicity-based theme housing are relatively few, and research on such living environments is scant. As a result, this study relies on drawing from an interdisciplinary understanding of the human experience. For some in student affairs and higher education, this orientation of understanding and more specifically, one which is grounded in critical hermeneutics, may not be widely accepted. Since many within the realm of higher education continue to value a more positivist orientation, relying on numbers and absolutes, as well as a “one-size-fits-all” perspective, findings based solely on narratives may not receive the attention needed for change.

Summary

Ethnic theme housing exists on relatively few campuses, however in light of a campus climate of increasing diversity and racial tensions, these residential programs may help recruit, retain, and help underrepresented students find the additional support to successfully matriculate. The case for examining these communities begins in Chapter One. Chapter Two examines the four research sites—Ujamaa Residential College and the Latino Living Center at Cornell University, and the African American Theme Program and Casa Magdalena Mora at UC Berkeley. Chapter Three reviews the existing literature related to ethnic theme housing on the college campus. Due to the limited research on this subject

information is compiled from various relevant sources. The theoretical framework of critical hermeneutics which pertains to the analysis of data is described in the research protocol section of Chapter Four. The narrative data developed from conversations at both Cornell and Berkeley are presented in Chapter Five. Analysis of the data incorporating the concepts of Collective Identity, Communicative Rationality, Competency and Action, and Transformation of the Public Sphere can be found in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven outlines the implications for this study, further research ideas, and personal reflection.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH SITES

*“I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study.”
-Ezra Cornell*

Introduction

This chapter provides the reader with an understanding of the four research sites on the two campuses—Ujamaa Residential College and the Latino Living Center at Cornell University, and the African American Theme Program and Casa Magdalena Mora at UC Berkeley.

Cornell University

Far above the waters of upstate New York’s Cayuga Lake, Cornell University was founded in 1868. Cornell University is the land-grant college of New York, a private endowed university, a member of the Ivy League, and a partner of the State University of New York. It has been described as “the first truly American university because of its founders' revolutionarily egalitarian and practical vision of higher education, and is dedicated to its land-grant mission of outreach and public service” (Cornell University 2007). Cornell is home to 14 schools and colleges with seven located on the Ithaca campus—three statutory and four endowed.

Based on the 2007-08 Common Data Set for Cornell University (Table 2.1), current demographics include a student population of 19,800, with an undergraduate population of 13,510. For undergraduates, the gender breakdown is fairly even—51% men and 49% women. Based on the 2007-08 Common Data Set (Table 2.2), blacks made up 5.2% of the undergraduate population and Latinos made up 5.5% of the undergraduates, though there are

a number of individuals in the category of race/ethnicity unknown, and this also may not account for persons of multi-ethnic backgrounds.

Table 2.1 Common Data Set 2007-08 Cornell University- Institutional Enrollment as of October 15, 2007

	FULL-TIME		PART-TIME	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Undergraduates				
Degree-seeking, first-time freshmen	1,556	1,454	0	0
Other first-year, degree-seeking	20	26	0	0
All other degree-seeking	5,297	5,102	0	0
<i>Total degree-seeking</i>	6,873	6,582	0	0
All other undergraduates enrolled in credit courses	24		0	0
<i>Total undergraduates</i>	6,897	6,613	0	0
First-professional				
First-time, first professional students	130	168	0	0
All other first-professionals	239	378	0	0
<i>Total first-professional</i>	369	546	0	0
Graduate				
Degree-seeking, first-time	1,281	765	0	0
All other degree-seeking	1,982	1,342	0	0
All other graduates enrolled in credit courses	3	2	0	0
<i>Total graduate</i>	3,266	2,109	0	0
Total all undergraduates:	13,510			
Total all graduate and professional students:	6,290			
GRAND TOTAL ALL STUDENTS:	19,800			

Source: <http://dpb.cornell.edu/documents/1000395.pdf>

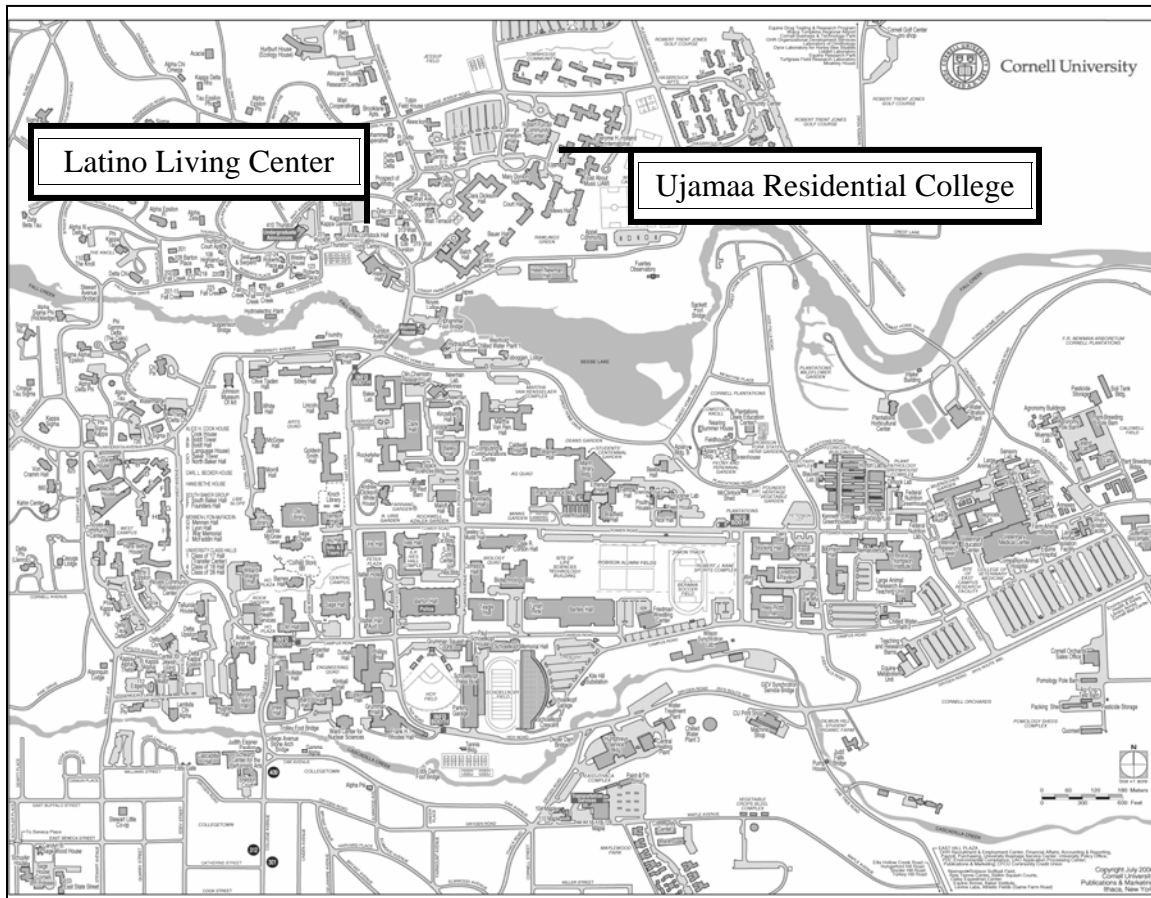
Cornell University has ten program houses designed to offer students communities that “combine living and learning experiences, intellectual exploration, a focus on topics of special interest, interaction with faculty members, and academic and personal support.” Of these ten program houses, three are ethnicity-based: Akwe:Kon (American Indian), Latino Living Center, and Ujamaa Residential College (African Diaspora). The two program houses related specifically to the African American and Latino cultures are reviewed in this section, the locations of the program houses are shown on the campus map (Figure 2.1).

Table 2.2 Common Data Set 2007-08 Cornell University- Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Category as of October 15, 2007

	Degree-seeking First-time First year	Degree-seeking Undergraduates (include first-time first year)	Total Undergraduates (degree & non-degree-seeking)
Nonresident aliens	279	1,028	1,073
Black, non-Hispanic	167	712	712
American Indian or Alaska Native	16	69	69
Asian or Pacific Islander	477	2189	2,191
Hispanic	173	748	748
White, non-Hispanic	1,278	6,714	6,716
Race/ethnicity unknown	620	1,995	2,001
Total	3,010	13,455	13,510

Source: <http://dpb.cornell.edu/documents/1000395.pdf>

Figure 2.1 Map of Cornell University Campus



Source: <http://www.cornell.edu/maps/large.cfm>

Ujamaa Residential College

Ujamaa, which loosely translates from Kiswahili to English as “familyhood and cooperative economics” was founded in 1972, and houses 140 residents. Ujamaa’s mission is to “create a living environment that celebrates the rich and diverse heritage of black people, while promoting the integration of personal goals with academic and professional opportunities.” It was founded following the takeover of Willard Straight Hall by armed black activists (See Figure 2.3). The program is managed by a Residence Hall Director, four Resident Assistants, and a Program Assistant. Additionally, four Faculty Fellows work with the staff to provide the wide variety of activities and events such as lectures by internationally renowned speakers, dinners hosted by faculty, as well as larger, annual events such as the State of Black America Conference, the Festival of Black Gospel.

Figure 2.2 Ujamaa Residential College



Source: <http://www.campuslife.cornell.edu/campuslife/housing/undergraduate/ujamaa.cfm>

Figure 2.3 Willard Straight Hall Takeover



Source: <http://instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/courses/dsoc375/studentproj/Website/bottom.html>

Figure 2.4 Mural in Main Lounge of Ujamaa (Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr.)



Source: Photo taken by Dan Ocampo, October 2006

Each week, the residents organize a forum called Unity Hour—at which educational discussions on a variety of topics take place. The residence hall has three television and social lounges, a kitchen, a computer room, a study lounge, a library, a laundry room and a conference room. (Cornell University 2002: 15). Located on Cornell’s North Campus, it is housed in Low Rise #10 within the Freshman residential area.

Latino Living Center

Founded in 1994, the Latino Living Center (LLC) is the newest program house on the Cornell campus. Housing 56 residents, the Latino Living Center brings together individuals with an appreciation for the values of a Latino heritage. One Residence Hall Director, one Program Assistant, and two Resident Assistants work with the Latino Studies Program and the four Faculty Fellows to organize programs and events such as the *Café con Leche* weekly discussion series, community service activities, and the annual *Día de los Muertos* program. The LLC has a kitchen, library, computer room, a television-social lounge, a study, and laundry facilities (Cornell University 2002:11).

Figure 2.5 Comstock Hall/Latino Living Center



Source: <http://www.campuslife.cornell.edu/campuslife/housing/undergraduate/latino-living-center.cfm>

Fiat Lux- Let there be light.

University of California at Berkeley

Located on the western slopes of the Berkeley Hills and overlooking the San Francisco Bay sits the campus of the University of California, Berkeley. Also known as “Berkeley,” “the University of California,” “UC Berkeley” or “Cal,” the University of California at Berkeley is the flagship institution and first campus of the University of California System. The University was founded as the land grant college for the state of California in 1868, when the drafters of the State Constitution required the legislature to "encourage by all suitable means the promotion of intellectual, scientific, moral and agricultural improvement" of the people of California (University of California, Berkeley: 2007¹). Her motto “Fiat Lux” *let there be light* illuminates the darkness of ignorance in the intellectual pursuit of knowledge.

The richness of the past can be seen in the great hall of the Faculty Club in which the ten stained glass windows—university shields of the ancient eight Ivy League colleges, Stanford University, and the University’s own—filter the light and illuminate the room in a manner which seems to capture the rich history of it’s founding. The University’s colors are Yale Blue and California Gold—Yale Blue because a large number of early campus administrators and faculty were Yale graduates—and California Gold which embodied the spirit of the state’s founding from the 1849 Gold Rush (University of California, Berkeley: 2007²). The University of California, Berkeley has 14 schools and colleges—the majority of undergraduates enrolled in the College of Letters and Science (University of California, Berkeley: 2007³). Based on the 2007-08 Common Data Set for UC Berkeley (Table 2.3), current demographics include an overall campus population of almost 34,000 students, with

an undergraduate population of 23,863. The gender breakdown for undergraduates is 46.0% men, and 54.0% women.

Table 2.3 Common Data Set 2007-08 University of California, Berkeley- Institutional Enrollment as of October 15, 2007

	FULL-TIME		PART-TIME	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Undergraduates				
Degree-seeking, first-time freshmen	1,883	2,255	11	8
Other first-year, degree-seeking	188	240	6	5
All other degree-seeking	8,555	9,986	338	388
<i>Total degree-seeking</i>	10,626	12,481	355	401
All other undergraduates enrolled in credit courses	0	0	0	0
<i>Total undergraduates</i>	10,626	12,481	355	401
First-professional				
First-time, first professional students	137	219	0	1
All other first-professionals	262	439	1	4
<i>Total first-professional</i>	399	658	1	5
Graduate				
Degree-seeking, first-time	1,099	991	250	77
All other degree-seeking	3,181	2,621	536	239
All other graduates enrolled in credit courses	2	11	0	0
<i>Total graduate</i>	4,282	3,623	786	316
Total all undergraduates:	23,863			
Total all graduate and professional students:	10,070			
GRAND TOTAL ALL STUDENTS:	33,933			

Source: <http://cds.vcbf.berkeley.edu>

Based on the 2007-08 Common Data Set, blacks made up 3.5% of the undergraduate population and Latinos made up 10.9% of the undergraduates, though there are a number of individuals in the category of race/ethnicity unknown, and this also may not account for persons of multi-ethnic backgrounds (See Table 1.2). Post Proposition 209 African-American First-Year enrollment took a sharp decline in 1998 and has not regained the 1996 levels. Latino First-Year enrollment took a noticeable drop post Proposition 209, with a sharp decline in 1998 and steadily climbing back and maintaining, but still short of pre-Proposition 201 levels (See Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 UC Berkeley New Freshman Registrants by Ethnicity, Fall 1996 - Fall 2007

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
CITIZENS & IMMIGRANTS												
American Indian/Alaska Native	52	23	14	22	20	22	14	16	16	14	17	21
Asian/Asian-American/ Pacific Islander												
Chinese/Chinese Am.	776	764	789	783	776	796	821	836	872	951	1026	1001
East Indian/Pakistani	130	143	163	134	160	141	138	124	135	179	182	185
Japanese/Japanese Am.	65	65	81	70	58	71	59	52	59	98	64	63
Korean/Korean Am.	204	252	240	229	230	222	202	170	193	257	205	222
Filipino/Filipino Am.	76	86	104	129	135	167	156	157	142	142	143	164
Pacific Islander	9	10	14	10	12	7	8	14	8	11	9	11
Vietnamese/Vietnam-American*	86	79	98	129	151	167	144	142	114	160	157	149
Other Asian	86	69	76	99	107	117	111	103	88	113	119	124
<i>Asian Subtotal</i>	1432	1468	1565	1583	1629	1688	1639	1598	1611	1911	1905	1919
African-American/Black	233	257	126	126	148	143	141	149	108	135	152	136
Hispanic												
Mexican/Mexican Am./Chicano	389	390	191	222	227	296	291	293	250	308	334	357
Other Spanish-American/ Latino	160	82	80	108	93	92	110	100	90	118	137	132
<i>Hispanic Subtotal</i>	549	472	271	330	320	388	401	393	340	426	471	489
White/Caucasian	1090	1018	1090	1111	1122	1134	1062	1050	1168	1233	1206	1263
Other	60	76	48	61	63	54	32	44	49	56	40	54
No Ethnic Data	196	187	540	294	341	343	276	299	282	235	257	225
<i>Citizen & Immigrant Subtotal</i>	3612	3501	3654	3527	3643	3772	3565	3549	3574	4010	4048	4107
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS	96	72	81	91	92	70	90	103	97	95	109	118
TOTAL FRESHMEN	3708	3573	3735	3618	3735	3842	3655	3652	3671	4105	4157	4225

Source: <https://osr2.berkeley.edu/newfroshtrend.html>

The University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) is administered to all UC Berkeley students each Spring and to all other campuses every other year by the Office of Student Research at UC Berkeley. UCUES was first administered in the spring of 2002 as a sample, online survey under a contract with the Social Science Survey Center at UC Santa Barbara. It is the only survey designed as a longitudinal study on the student experience at research universities. All undergraduates are asked a common core of

questions about time use, student development, academic engagement, and background characteristics (demographics). Upper-division undergraduates with declared majors are also asked to evaluate various aspects of their major. Following the core, each student is asked a set of questions from one of five modules on the topics of academic engagement, civic engagement, student development (moral and psychological), student services and programs, and a “wild card” module of items unique to each campus. The first four modules are identical across the system, but each campus chooses its own questions for the wild card module each year. In the most recent UCUES, students reported that both their understanding of their own racial and ethnic identity improved since they arrived at Cal, as did an understanding and awareness of racial, ethnic, and differences (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5 UCUES- Student Life and Development-Personal Growth and Development

Think back to when you first entered Cal. Please rate your understanding and awareness of the following issues at that time and now:		
	When you entered Cal...	As you are now...
My own racial and ethnic identity	78 (3.9%) Very poor	32 (1.6%) Very poor
	129 (6.4%) Poor	26 (1.3%) Poor
	565 (28%) Fair	297 (14.8) Fair
	597 (29.6%) Good	626 (31.1%) Good
	366 (18.1%) Very Good	616 (30.6%) Very Good
	282 (14.0%) Excellent	413 (20.5%) Excellent
	Racial and ethnic differences/issues	74 (3.7%) Very poor
237 (11.8%) Poor		42 (2.1%) Poor
785 (39.1%) Fair		345 (17.1%) Fair
611 (30.4%) Good		704 (35.0%) Good
203 (10.1%) Very good		633 (31.5%) Very good
100 (5.0%) Excellent		267 (13.3%) Excellent

Source: <http://ucues.berkeley.edu/2007/dv2007resp.html>

Based on the core area of the UCUES data, a majority of students (59.2%) felt that they often gained a deeper understanding of other perspective through conversations with other students of a different race or ethnicity (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6 UCUES- Core-Academic and Personal Development

How often have you gained a deeper understanding of other perspectives through conversations with fellow student because they differed from you in the following way?:						
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Somewhat Often	Often	Very Often
They were of a different race or ethnicity than your own	470 (4.3%)	1118 (10.3%)	2865 (26.3%)	2482 (22.8%)	2322 (21.3%)	1643 (15.1%)

Source: <http://ucues.berkeley.edu/2007/core2007/resp.html>

In the core area of the UCUES, students overwhelmingly felt that their ability to appreciate, tolerate, and understand racial and ethnic diversity had improved over when they started at UC Berkeley (Table 2.7). Almost ninety-four percent (93.9%) of students felt that they now had a good, very good or excellent ability to appreciate, tolerate, and understand racial and ethnic diversity.

Table 2.7 UCUES- Core-Academic and Personal Development

Please rate your abilities now and when you first began at this university on the following dimension:		
	When you started here...	Current ability level...
Ability to appreciate, tolerate, and understand racial and ethnic diversity	55 (0.5%) Very poor	74 (0.7%) Very poor
	280 (2.6%) Poor	117 (1.1%) Poor
	1587 (14.6%) Fair	475 (4.4%) Fair
	3484 (32.0%) Good	2304 (21.3%) Good
	3318 (30.5%) Very Good	4357 (40.2%) Very Good
	2149 (19.8%) Excellent	3505 (32.4%) Excellent

Source: <http://ucues.berkeley.edu/2007/core2007/resp.html>

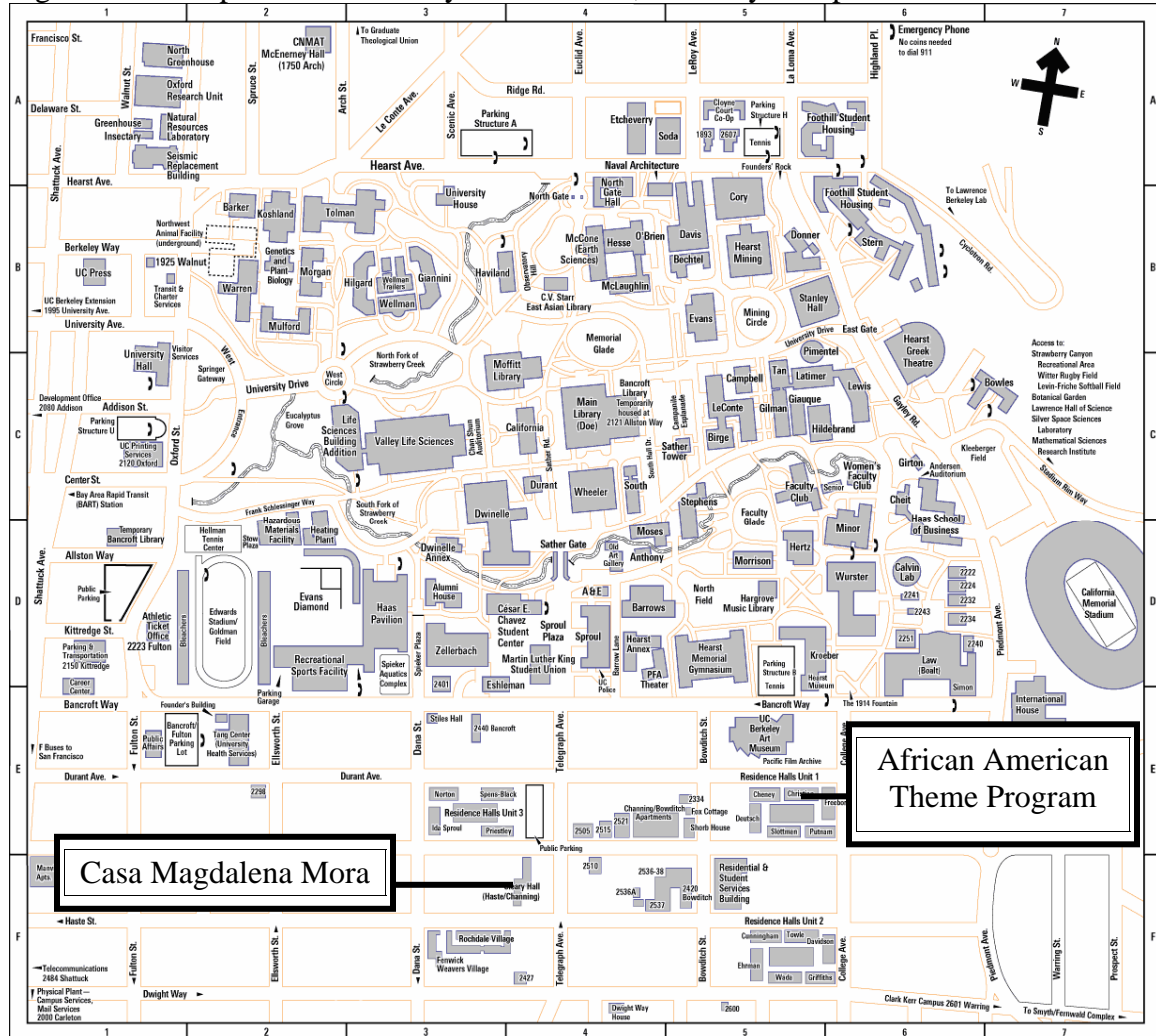
A majority 83.2% of the students believed that students are respected at UC Berkeley regardless of their race or ethnicity (Table 2.8).

Table 2.8 UCUES- Student Services Module-Campus Climate

Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Students are respected here regardless of their race or ethnicity	42 (2.4%)	84 (4.7%)	174 (9.8%)	485 (27.2%)	671 (37.6%)	328 (18.4%)

Source: <http://ucues.berkeley.edu/2007/wc2007resp.html>

Figure 2.6 Map of the University of California, Berkeley Campus



Source: http://www.berkeley.edu/map/maps/large_map.html

The University of California at Berkeley (Cal) has six theme programs, three of which are ethnicity-based. They are: African American Theme Program (AATP), Asian Pacific American Theme House (APATH), and Casa Magdalena Mora (Chicano/Mexican-American identity and culture). For the purposes of this study, I focus on the African American Theme Program and Casa Magdalena Mora (See Figure 2.6).

African American Theme Program

One research site is the African American Theme Program (AATP) at the University of California, Berkeley. Housed in Christian Hall (Figure 2.7), which is named in honor of noted feminist author and Professor of African American Studies Barbara Christian, the AATP is co-sponsored by the African American Student Development Office, the Department of African American Studies and the Office of Student Development. The African American Theme Program serves as a vital component of the black community at UC Berkeley. The two floors house approximately 50 primarily first and second-year residents. The resident staff members of the program include a Resident Director (RD) who is a full time professional with a master's degree in counseling, and a Theme Program Advisor (TPA). Both serve on the AATP Advisory Board.

The TPA is often a past resident of the Theme Floor who serves as a guide and a Resident Assistant for residents in the program. The TPA is responsible for implementing various transitional, academic, and community development programs. By helping residents to organize programs and events, the TPA facilitates educational opportunities for AATP, the black community, and the larger Berkeley community. The AATP is one of six theme programs that are special residential communities co-sponsored by an academic unit and the Office of Student Development, providing a living-learning environment for student share a specific academic interest in Africana Studies. Residents explore the academic theme

through required weekly participation in a for-credit seminar, unit programming and the experience of living with others who share the same interest. Residents complete an application which includes an essay as to why they would like to live on the floor. Students of all ethnicities are welcome to apply.

Not only does the program serve as one of the core networking structures for black students on campus, it also provides a forum for holistic exploration of the black experience at Cal. Residents and interested community members are given the opportunity to openly discuss specific issues as they relate to African Americans in the University community and the world. Through its various programs, services and resources, the theme program ensures that students receive the transitional and academic support critical to a successful collegiate career. By encouraging solidarity and unity among students of different backgrounds, the program cultivates a broader understanding of social issues within a global context.

Residents must commit to participating fully in the programs and services provided, and can expect to spend 2 to 4 hours per week engaged in theme program activities. Continued residency is conditional upon the following: at least 5 hours of community service per semester, attendance at house meetings, participation in programs sponsored by the African American Student Development Office, and the African American Studies 98/198 seminar. The seminar is an essential part of the Theme Program, providing students with a forum to discuss issues that are pertinent to the African American community at UC Berkeley and beyond (UC Berkeley 2002).

Figure 2.7 Christian Hall/African American Theme Program



Source: http://content.answers.com/main/content/wp/en-commons/thumb/5/53/300px-Christian-Unit_1.jpg

Casa Magdalena Mora

Founded in 1990 and housing 32 residents, Casa Magdalena Mora is a residential theme program for residents who share an interest in Chicano/Mexican culture. Located in Beverly Cleary Hall (Figure 2.8), the staff of Casa Magdalena Mora consists of a Resident Director and a Theme Program Assistant. The program promotes an interdisciplinary focus integrating language, history, politics, economics, art, music, and literature into a holistic and dynamic range of academic and social activities. It is jointly sponsored by the Office of Student Development, and Chicano Studies Department (UC Berkeley 2002).

Figure 2.8 Beverly Cleary Hall/Casa Magdalena Mora



Source: Photo Courtesy of Roland Addad, Residential Student Service Programs, UC Berkeley

Figure 2.9 Magdalena Mora



Source: Photo Courtesy of Roland Addad,
Residential Student Service Programs, UC
Berkeley

Magdalena Mora

Magdalena Mora was a UC Berkeley alumna and scholar who was also an activist working toward the empowerment of women and workers. She was instrumental in organizing labor strikes in the 1970's all over the state of California. The *Casa* is named in her honor.

Source:
<http://www.housing.berkeley.edu/theme/casa.htm>

Summary

This chapter examined the four research sites—Ujamaa Residential College and the Latino Living Center at Cornell University, and the African American Theme Program and Casa Magdalena Mora at UC Berkeley. The two programs at Cornell occupy their own buildings and the academic link is sustained through departmental faculty. The two programs at Berkeley exist as a floor or floors within a larger residence hall community and the academic link is through a seminar sponsored by an academic department. The following chapter reviews the existing literature related to ethnic theme housing on the American college campus. As there is very little existing research on ethnic theme housing, the information is drawn from a variety of disciplines and sources.

CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The campus racial situation of today is the result of a rise in the number of underrepresented students and faculty in American colleges and universities during the 1960's (Altbach et al. 1999: 450). In the South, segregation barriers made it impossible for blacks to attend white colleges (Fleming 1981: 279), and when that practice became unlawful, the inclusion of a significant number of underrepresented students on campus presented implications for academic institutions that are still not fully understood:

In the early period of active recruitment for diversity, academic institutions failed to provide adequate support services for these new students; not surprisingly, dropout rates were extraordinarily high. Later, it was recognized that these students required special assistance to overcome the disadvantages of often inferior secondary school preparation and to cope with an unfamiliar and frequently hostile environment. The provision of such services has proved costly in terms of financial and staff resources, engendering resentment from some white students (Altbach et al. 1999: 452)

Fleming (1981: 279) notes that each year more black and other underrepresented students are entering major American colleges and Universities, and for the first time a majority of them are enrolled in predominantly white schools. He continues and suggests that these students face special adjustment problems, both social and academic, which colleges must recognize if they are committed to providing equal opportunities for minority students. As the campuses become increasingly more diverse, college educators must respond and think differently about how to best help students succeed academically. We must then consider the responsibility of creating campus environments in which students can feel included and find community so that they may better focus on their academic pursuits. We are compelled to be

more intentional about developing inclusive and multicultural campuses, which Powell defines as:

One in which members are purposefully diverse; communication is open, sensitive and supportive of the different cultures; interaction is promoted between and among its diverse groups; and part of its mission includes embracing, valuing and celebrating the achievements, talents, and uniqueness of all its members (1998: 112).

The multicultural campus does not occur at the cost of marginalizing majority students, faculty, and staff. However, it does mean creating space and voice within the existing structures in which their voices may have been absent, unheard, or unrecognized. This movement towards diversity and multiculturalism on the campus calls to consider the stories of the unheard voices and a past whose roots lie deep in a legacy of exclusion:

Multiculturalism has been most associated with the movement in higher education to be more inclusive in teaching about diverse group experiences. Multiculturalism gives attention to the historical exclusion of groups from the educational curriculum. It is a movement for institutional inclusion. The language of multiculturalism and diversity emphasizes difference and appreciation, and it has come to be expressed as including a range of “voices.” Indeed, “giving voice” has become a new phrase, intended, however grammatically awkward, to represent a process by which previously silenced groups can be heard (Anderson 1999: 15).

Indeed, there are stories unfolding on the campus and more students finding their voice—an empowering, liberating and redemptive claim. As we begin to hear these voices, we begin to hear the narrative of experience, which helps us understand the historicity of identity. One example of this narrative of identity contained within Stark and Griffin’s Facing You, Facing Me is one of David who tells the story of growing up on Long Island New York and shows the complexity of race relations and how identity emerges.

I had one friend who lived next door; he was a white boy named Joseph. As kids we were the best of friends, but once we hit junior high, race became a major issue. He stopped ‘hanging out’ with me and only played with other white kids in the neighborhood. His new friends did not care for me and would yell out racial slurs anytime that I rode my bike past their house. It was not long before we became enemies; I hung out with the blacks and Puerto Ricans, while Joseph stuck with the

White kids. We would fight over use of the baseball field at the neighborhood park and bike trails in the area. One time they caught me riding my bike alone and jumped me. One mother watched everything happen through her window and did nothing. When I went home with cuts and bruises, my older brother was not pleased. He told me to ride down the street again and he would hide in the bushes to see if they tried to do anything again. Sure enough they did, as they threw me off my bike, my brother came running down the block and began throwing them off me. He didn't hurt anyone, but made it clear that they should leave me alone. At that point the same mother that watched me get jumped came outside telling him to leave her kids alone. She didn't care that I was the one with the cuts and bruises, only that my brother was scaring her kids. Within minutes after that event, the police, parents, and a whole bunch of white kids came knocking at my door. They threatened to arrest my brother if he touched those kids again. To make a long story short, I hated that place.

My move to California at age fourteen was very refreshing. It took me a while to open up to White kids, due to past experiences. I was shocked to see black and white kids hanging out together at Berkeley High. Life in California was nothing like New York; racism was not as blatant, it came across subtler and that was fine with me (2001: 63).

David's story is but one example of race relations and experience, but his experiences are indicative of how we identify ourselves in relationship to others according to the temporal nature of our lived experiences. We are not born with prejudices, hatred, or indifferences, but they emerge in response to our experiences. Later, David tells the story of his decision to attend UC Berkeley and believes that "Berkeley is a very open and accepting community to people of all kinds... [and] helped define my views on life." (Stark & Griffin 2001: 64).

Student Affairs and Diversity on the College Campus

In an attempt to address the increasing diversity on campuses, there has been an increase in student affairs staff to provide services and programs for these students. Exactly how services are provided with such divergent opinions remains a major obstacle. In a study conducted by the Public Policy Institute of California (2000), compared to Latinos, Asians, and African-Americans, whites are more likely to believe affirmative action programs are unnecessary and unfair. Whites are also more likely to have supported Proposition 187,

which denied public services to illegal immigrants. The increasing diversity on campus has as Altbach et. al. (1999) and others (Feagin, Vera & Imani 1996) suggest, made race one of the most volatile and divisive issues in American higher education and manifests itself in different ways, from incidents of bias on campus, to policy and curriculum development. The incidents lead minority students, who often labor under the weight of self-doubt to ask if they are really welcome to participate fully in the life of the college. Some wonder if they can really be successful in college and if their admission to college was an unearned 'gift' irrespective of their hard work and academic accomplishments. When these students encounter difficulty, they may worry that it is because of their skin color. Left unasked and unanswered, such questions can have a crushing effect on the social environment of a campus. And such an environment chills and detracts from, rather than enables and nurtures students' learning (Lyons 1990: 34). Freire (2002: 63) refers to this self understanding as a "colonized mentality" and self-deprecation as a character of the oppressed as a result of the internalization of the opinion of the oppressors.

Despite an expectation that black students would be accepted and absorbed into the mainstream of university life and less likely to experience racism and discrimination in a university setting, many experience what they understand as racial prejudice—experiences of traumatizing indignities, which creates the sense of being in a hostile environment (López 2005; Fleming 1981). As research of college students has shown, identification and affiliation go hand in hand with the need for acceptance and approval: one generally seeks acceptance and approval from those associates who are regarded as being like oneself (Astin 1993: 400).

Monroe's (1973) account considers the experience of being assigned to live with white roommates and points out that such an encounter can constitute one's first real

confrontation with the issue of blackness, especially if one hails from an all-black environment. Even if the previous learning environment has been integrated, the intimacy of living arrangements necessitates a different level of contact. Black students may become upset and angered by white students' ignorance of black people and black customs and their unrestrained curiosity about physical and cultural differences (Fleming 1981: 284).

This is but one example of what minorities, some of whom have come from largely homogeneous neighborhoods face when they attend predominantly white colleges. Often, racism at its core tends to be less subtle. Roommates may request room changes within the first few hours they move into a residence hall—before any problems emerge—though sometimes this is at the request of the parent. Often, the motivation behind the request is due to preconceived differences of the roommate. This has often led some college housing officers to adopt a policy of rejecting room change requests within the first few weeks of school to give the roommates an opportunity to get to know each other and move beyond their prejudices. While this may help some students avoid being subjected to incidents of bias, are we as college administrators doing enough to ensure the success underrepresented students? Studies have shown that retention in college (degree attainment) is enhanced by a number of factors, including the on campus residential experience, and student involvement with peers and with faculty (Astin 1993: 242).

Although racial and ethnic groups agree about many of the major policy questions facing California, there are considerable differences among groups concerning racially and ethnically oriented policy questions. Whites and non-whites tend to sharply disagree over the correct approach to affirmative action, immigration, and bilingual education. Specifically, as reported by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC 2001), blacks tend to be the most supportive of programs to aid minorities, while whites are often the most opposed. Latinos and Asians fall in the middle, with Latinos usually closer to blacks and Asians usually closer

to whites. How each group understands the hostility of racism and ethnic superiority varies greatly.

Though students may face isolated incidents of bias in the classroom, most acts of bigotry on the college campus occur in the domains of student affairs and it falls upon the leadership to try to prevent acts of bigotry and to marshal responses to them when they occur (Lyons 1990). One may be surprised, as Altbach suggests, that many universities, even where racial incidents have been started by white students it is the reaction of underrepresented students that often engender administrative sanctions. This does not promote trusting relationships with the administrators, let alone other students of different backgrounds. Thus, racial incidents have created confusion in the academic community as many administrators seem to feel that racial questions are peripheral to the academic enterprise—individual problems brought to center stage by small groups and unnecessary distractions from the real business of higher education (Altbach et al. 1999: 449-450). This complements the belief of Thernstrom and Thernstrom as cited by Anderson (1999: 16) which suggests that:

multicultural thinking is even further clouded by the fact that the dominant discourse on race is now being articulated by conservative thinkers who frame their perspective on the assumption that race is not—or at least should not—be significant in the organization of American life.

This position, however, does not assume any culpability by the privileged, nor acknowledge any oppression or casual indifference endured by the minority. This disregard for race as a consideration for a multicultural campus results in the unredeemed claim for recognition on behalf of the underrepresented. The result is often a feeling of marginalization of the minority student, which without intervention becomes self-perpetuating. This marginalization not only serves to undermine the sense of belonging or community on the

campus, but strikes at the heart of the individual's identity and self-esteem. The presence or absence of trust and the presence or absence of symbol that minority students are welcomed members of the college or university community can profoundly shape the quality of a student's educational experience (Lyons 1990: 34). Minority students then are viewed by some as unworthy of being able to attend more selective colleges and universities, and their presence a result of affirmative action policy created by liberal administrators. This lack of recognition and acknowledgement is viewed both as demeaning and dismissive. For the underrepresented, their presence becomes a redemptive claim for establishing their worthiness of admission through objective admission standards and the respect by members of the campus community to which they feel entitled. Unwelcome by the larger community, they seek to find and create spaces of their own.

Central to providing students with safe spaces is exercising the option of choice and opportunities to explore issues related to their identity. As Freire writes (2002: 83), "people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation." The ethnic theme house becomes symbol of a safe space and of freedom through the expansion of choice. Those in student affairs are often able to view the student experience through a lens that helps them understand how the environment affects students. Hence, they can act as architects who help design and shape the environment to help students achieve. Included in this achievement is the importance of community and friends, the absence of bigotry, the freedom to doubt and question, and the challenge to practice effective citizenship. Colleges and universities must protect and encourage ideological exploration and avoid policies and practices that bind the inquiring

minds and spirits of students, faculty, and staff (Lyons 1990: 35-39). This freedom from restrictions will enable the student to explore not only what they'll come to know, but who they'll come to be—a paradigm shift from the epistemological to the ontological. If students fail to find their space or identify with the larger community, their success and eventual matriculation stands on precarious ground. If we cannot retain our students, the battle is lost.

Tinto's Theory of Student Departure (1975, 1988, 1993) posits that departure decisions are impacted by a variety of factors. Understanding that we all arrive to each new situation, not unlike when students arrive to the academy, we do so from various backgrounds, intents, expectations and commitments. Tinto suggests that two key concepts impact persistence: academic and social integration. If students are not well integrated into the campus environment, they will likely withdraw. In other words, persistence can be related to how one's identity finds support and nourishment from being in community.

Identity

The Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology (1996: 292) refers to identity as properties of uniqueness and individuality, and also the qualities of sameness in which persons might associate themselves with others based on group commonality. Ricoeur (1992: 116) helps us understand identity as a confrontation of the two components of sameness (*idem*) and selfhood (*ipse*). He suggests that identity can be understood as *idem* “what am I” and *ipse* “who am I.” Both speak to our identities, the “what” of sameness and the “who” of selfhood. Ricoeur provides an example to help us understand *idem*:

Thus we say of an oak tree that it is the same from the acorn to the fully developed tree; in the same way, we speak of one animal, from birth to death; so too, we speak of a man or of a woman....we see photos of ourselves at successive ages of our life. As we see, time is here a factor of dissemblance, of divergence, or difference (1992: 117)

The photos at the different stages of our life reflect the temporal sameness of our identity—the pictures reflect the sameness of “what I am.”

Selfhood, or ipse, on the other hand, we understand “implies no assertion concerning some unchanging core of the personality. And this will be true even when selfhood adds its own peculiar modalities of identity” (Ricoeur 1992:2). He adds, “The selfhood of oneself implies otherness to such an intimate degree that one cannot be thought of without the other, that instead one passes into the other as we might say in Hegelian terms” (Ricoeur 1992:3). It is this relationship with the other that the essence of who we are comes into being. As Tatum (1997: 18) suggests that who we are depends on who the world around us says we are. This shares a horizon with Ricoeur’s understanding in which the life of individuals can be discerned and identified in their manifestations, and offered to others for deciphering (1981: 50). Taylor (1989: 27) suggests that people may also understand their identity as:

defined partly by some moral or spiritual commitment or by the nation or tradition to which they belong. This understanding implies that individuals are not only strongly attached to this spiritual view or background, but moreover implies a framework in which they can determine where they stand on questions of what is good, worthwhile, admirable, or of value.... Without a frame or horizon within which things can take on a stable significance, the meaning of all possibilities remains a painful and frightening experience: unfixed and undetermined.

The concepts of one’s heritage and one’s horizon are key concepts in understanding our identities—how we view ourselves, and how others begin to understand and know us. Fanon, as cited in Serequeberhan (2002: xiii) defines heritage as “effective history” which makes up our identity. It is through this heritage—stratified layers of our past—through which we appropriate a possible future. As Serequeberhan (2002:44) writes, to claim an identity is to interpretively appropriate heritage, for identities are historical-political actualities and, thus, are fluid and always in an ongoing process of interpretation and

reinterpretation. We all have identities, and the truth of heritage is the dialectical self-overcoming and self-unfolding of our existence in and out of the negativity of our lived experience (Serequeberhan 2002: 34). We carry with us our lived experiences, through our culture, our upbringing, our issues, and our baggage. It is through these lenses with which we understand the world. Human existence is always—and necessarily—actualized within the lived heritage of a specific tradition or culture (Serequeberhan 2002: 74).

Unfortunately, we can't always control our conditions and situations which influence the way we come to know the world. As Marx (1948) suggests, human beings make their own history, but not under conditions of their own choosing. Heidegger refers to this as thrownness—that when we come into the world we are in *the always already*. The thrownness of this being into its there; it is thrown in such a way that it is the there as being-in-the-world. The expression thrownness is meant to suggest the facticity of its being delivered over. Beings of the character of *Da-sein*—being in the world are their there in such a way that they find themselves in their thrownness, whether explicitly or not (Heidegger 1996: 127). In other words, I inherit and am born into an already existing world—my experiences and access to those experiences are shaped by my identity and of those who share my identity who have come before me.

Ethnicity and Race

Although the terms "ethnicity" and "race" are sometimes used interchangeably and together, some analysts have offered analytical distinctions between the two. Leiris (1951: 6) suggests that race is a purely biological concept, from which—at least in the present stage of our knowledge—it is impossible to draw any valid conclusion whatever as to the disposition or mental capacity of a particular individual, however, while this focuses on mental capacity,

it does not address our experiences based on our identities or how others see us. Therefore, he does not explore the different developmental needs different racial or ethnic groups—particularly in the US—might have or experience. Pierre Van den Berghe (1978), however, makes a clear distinction between the two terms. "Race" is said to be socially defined but on the basis of physical criteria, whereas an "ethnic group" is socially defined on the basis of cultural criteria. Since the boundaries of ethnicity are socially constructed and negotiated, ethnic groups can change the boundaries of membership (Song 2003: 10). In American discussions of race and ethnic identity, it is very difficult to disentangle these two terms, because the meanings and images associated with each tend to bleed into the other (Song 2003: 34). Weber (1978: 387-398) defines ethnic groups as groups whose members share a unique social and cultural heritage passed on from one generation to the next. Ethnic groups are frequently identified by distinctive patterns of family life, language, recreation, religion, and other customs that cause them to be differentiated from others. He further acknowledges the paradox and complexity of defining the term 'ethnic'—requiring detailed examination and states, "It is certain that in this process the collective term 'ethnic' would be abandoned, for it is unsuitable for a really rigorous analysis (Weber 1978: 395)."

As Rose (1981: 7) suggests, members of some ethnic groups or their ancestors may have come from a common homeland. Such groups are often referred to as "nationalities." Other ethnic-group members, like Jews or Gypsies, are joined by common traditions and experiences that cut across political boundaries and are frequently referred to as "peoples." Though we in this country often refer to blacks in this country as "African American," the historicity of how they've come to the United States varies greatly. In the case of blacks in the United States, there are distinctions between what is African, Afro-Caribbean, what is

American, and what is uniquely African-American: a result of the succession of generations within the historical consequences of slavery. Each within the larger African Diaspora has a very different lived experience, but often subjected to the same racism of how others see them.

Leiris (1951: 7) writes that “racism, overt or covert, continues to be a baneful influence, and the majority of people still regard the human species as falling into distinct ethnic groups, each with its own mentality transmissible by heredity.” In a society of many cultural groups like the US, the intensity of ethnic identity or ethnicity is most often determined by the attitude of the members of the ‘host’ society toward the ‘alien’ living among them. The attitude toward the alien is often influenced by how closely the ethnic group approximates *or appropriates* the culture of the dominant society (Rose 1981: 7, emphasis added), contributing to the overall societal acceptance of the alien. Gadamer (2002: 252) suggests that:

Life is defined by the fact that what is alive differentiates itself from the world in which it lives and with which it remains connected, and preserves itself in this differentiation. What is alive preserves itself by drawing into itself everything that is outside it. Everything that is alive nourishes itself on what is alien to it. The fundamental fact of being alive is assimilation. Differentiation, then, is at the same time non-differentiation. The alien is appropriated.

Gadamer suggests that the appropriation of the alien as being a lived experience, but as it relates to identity, in the case of the colonized, it may infer the loss of the humanity. In an effort to better understand reclaiming one’s humanity, Freire (2002: 47) makes clear the role of freedom of choice as it relates to transformation of one’s consciousness and identity.

One of the basic elements of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed is prescription. Every prescription represents the imposition of one individual’s choice upon another, Transformation of the consciousness of the person prescribed to into one that conforms with the prescriber’s consciousness. Thus, the behavior or the oppressed is a prescribed behavior, following as it does the guidelines of the

oppressor. The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom.

The metaphor then, of mandated appropriation as it applies to identity—understood as assimilation—assumes the identity in power (majority culture) preserves itself by feeding off on the alien (minority culture), the alien eventually absorbed into the mainstream.

In *Economy and Society*, Weber (1978) predicted that ethnicity would decline in the context of modernity, which he saw as marked by the rationalization of human action and organization; ethnic attachments were considered “communal” and were not expected to thrive in modern societies, which would gradually displace such putatively traditional relationships. However, it should be noted that American theories of assimilation were based on the experiences of white European immigrants to the USA (Song 2003: 8). It is this racism, *and expectation of assimilation* which increases the need for a positive self-defined identity (Tatum 1999: 165, emphasis added), particularly among underrepresented minorities. The college residence hall is no different than our communities in the greater society. More careful probing reveals the existence and persistence of ethnic ties, and the maintenance of many ethnic neighborhoods among the white population of western and southwestern cities, as well as the ghettos and *barrios* and suburban clusters of nonwhite minority group members. Such enclaves have long existed even on the frontier itself (Rose 1981: 60-61), highlighting the need and desire for affinity groups.

Look Who’s Coming to Study: The Black Experience on the College Campus

The first African Americans graduated from predominantly white Bowdoin College in 1826 and from Amherst College in the same year (Powell 1998). Nearly one hundred and seventy years later their accomplishments, genetic heredity, and their capacity for intellect would continue to be reexamined and questioned. The preface of the book The Agony of

Education (Feagin, Vera & Imani 1996) begins with the story of Francis Lawrence, the former president of Rutgers University. The authors provide a prime example of why many minorities feel unwelcome at traditional colleges and universities and why trust in their leaders is at times non-existent.

In the fall of 1994, Francis L. Lawrence, the white president of Rutgers University, spoke to a faculty assembly on the admission of African Americans. In a rambling comment he noted that average SAT scores for African Americans were low and asked, “Do we set standards in the future so that we don’t admit anybody with the national test? Or do we deal with a disadvantaged population that doesn’t have that genetic heredity background to have a higher average?” When his words became public months later, Lawrence apologized, saying he had misspoken and had intended to say “that standardized tests should not be used to exclude disadvantaged students on the trumped-up grounds that such tests measure inherent ability.”

On February 7, 1995, at half-time some 150 mostly black student protesters sat down at mid-court interrupting a Rutgers University basketball game. In the following days numerous students demonstrated on campus and demanded the university president’s resignation. President Lawrence was quick to admit his words were false and insensitive. Yet much damage was done. Lawrence’s phrase and the subsequent press coverage sent an injurious message to millions of African American students. And unfortunately his kind of comment is common (1996: vii).

The story continues with the mainstream media defending President Lawrence, and when students continued to protest, the media blamed the reaction on the university’s alleged political correctness and multiculturalism. These events occurred amid the release of Richard Hernstein and Charles Murray’s controversial book The Bell Curve, which argued for genetically determined differences in intelligence that favor white over black Americans (Feagin, Vera & Imani 1996). Forty years earlier, the Supreme Court ruled on *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, and declared “separate but equal education” illegal for blacks—and indirectly all students of color—yet many traditionally white colleges and universities resisted fully opening their doors. Many complied only after state and federal courts intervened (Powell 1998). The above examples serve as reminders of what blacks

and other minorities sense, but may not hear: You are not welcome here or you are not qualified to attend this university. Even so, traditional campuses have paid more attention to recruiting and admitting students of color and much less attention to retaining them. Too often, these students suffer because of the way they experience their college environments (Powell 1998), and yet the system fails to acknowledge any culpability or responsibility for perpetuating these systemic ills as Ballard writes:

Nothing reveals the direct connection between American higher education and the operating principles of American society better than the record of white universities in regard to the black question over the 100 year span between Emancipation and the beginning of open admission efforts in the mid-1960s. There can be no charitable explanation for the almost total exclusions of Blacks from the faculties, student bodies, and curriculum of these colleges. Never can there be any justification for the role that the universities played in creating a scholarly rationale for the caste system that emerged over the past century. Little can be gained by punishing the white educational structure for its past actions, but the extent to which the American university tradition was an active ally in the national policy of repression of African American people should be made absolutely clear. (Ballard 1994: 39).

Cross' Model of the Psychological Process of Black Identity

Psychologist William Cross' model of Black Psychological Nigrescence (1971) provides a valuable framework for understanding the developmental process of blacks in the U.S. Developed in 1971 his model suggests five stages of identity development: preencounter (prediscovery); encounter (discovery); immersion-emersion; internalization; and commitment. These stages are outlined as follows:

Preencounter- In the preencounter stage, the person is programmed to view and think of the world as being non-black, anti-black, or the opposite of black. The person's world view is dominated by European-American thinking and believes that the assimilationist-integration paradigm is the only way to achieve cohesive race relations. The individual tends to distrust black controlled businesses or organizations and prefers to be called a human being or an American citizen.

Encounter- In the Encounter stage, the person has an experience or witnesses an event that changes how the person feels about him/herself and her/his interpretation of what it means to be black in America (e.g., witnessing a friend assaulted by a police

officer; televised reports of racial incidents). The person starts to test his/her new perceptions, listens to what others have to say, and begins to consider different interpretations of the black experience. They now begin to identify positively as a black person and may experience guilt from previous feelings of not identifying positively as a black person and may experience anger as one realizes that he/she has been “programmed” or “brainwashed.”

Immersion-Emersion- The person immerses her/himself in anything that pertains to being a black person. Everything of value must be black or relevant to blackness. It is an immersion into blackness and liberation from whiteness. The person turns inward and withdraws from everything that is perceived as being or representing the white world. After a period of intensive immersion, the person emerges synthesizing anger/rage with reason and focuses on the black community. (*N.B. According to the model, this is the stage in which a number of students are in during college*).

Internalization- In this stage the person achieves a feeling of inner security and is more satisfied with him/herself and is receptive to discussions or plans of actions, but is not committed.

Commitment- In this final stage, the person is committed to a plan and actively trying to change his/her community.

It should be noted that many black students when they come to college are in an immersion-emersion stage. How to assist them in their development while ensuring they remain engaged in the larger community can be a challenge. One’s awareness of their racial identity may also come at a cost. According to Thompson and Carter (1997), “Advancement of racial identity can threaten a person’s sense of connectedness to the social environment.” For the theme programs, this remains among their greatest challenges.

Latin@/Chican@ Experiences on the College Campus

I Am

*I am a strong-willed Chicana
I wonder why you can't accept me
I hear you criticize the way I live
I see that my people are strong
I want you to respect my color
I am a strong-willed Chicana*

*I pretend that you are not there
I feel the presence of my ancestors
I touch my mother's silky hair
I worry that traditions are getting lost
I cry at night for I am sad
I am a strong-willed Chicana*

*I understand that we are different
I say that I'm here to stay
I dream that I will get far
I try to represent my people
I hope that you can see my goals
I am a strong-willed Chicana*

-Elizabeth Cruz Godínez (2006)

According to the US Census Bureau, Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic population in the United States and are projected to be the largest racial and ethnic minority group by 2010 (Haro, Rodríguez, & Gonzales 1994). Since the early 1970's the Latino proportion of the U.S. college-aged population has more than doubled. However, the proportion of Latinos among all bachelor's degree recipients continues to increase at a much lower rate (Chapa 2005; Altbach et al. 1999). Part of the reason for this history of low enrollment in college is that Latinos, particularly Mexican Americans, tended to have high attrition rates at both the elementary and high school levels (Jones & Castellanos 2003). Further, of the over 1.3 million Latino/a students enrolled in higher education by the year 2000, only 40% were enrolled in four-year institutions. This figure represents the lowest

level of four-year participation of the other racial/ethnic groups in the country (Hurtado & Kamimura 2003). Fortunately, Latinos that do eventually enroll in college seem to at least initially make their transition without many incidents of racism.

López (2005) reported that first year Latino students initially did not report racism as being a major stress factor, and intra-group expectations being a factor. As the year progressed, students reported experiencing a greater degree of racism over time, noted as “being discriminated against,” “being treated rudely due to race” and “others having expectations of poor performances.” The same students reported that by the end of the year, they had more exposure to a hostile campus racial climate, reporting that they experienced more racism than they did at the beginning of the year. It is this experience of racism while attempting to focus on academics which compels us to consider the concepts of and need for space.

In her paper “Here They Go Again with the Race Stuff,” Bañuelos (2006) conveys the stories of five self-identified Chicana students enrolled in graduate programs at two University of California campuses. While the women perceived exclusion, they often challenged this exclusion by collectively creating “counter-spaces of cultural citizenship.” Their resistance was linked to a collective claim to space rights within the university. Rather than just view cultural citizenship as “white” social space of which students of color are excluded, they sought out or created Chicana/student of color spaces within larger exclusionary structures. When asked how her experience compared to others students in her program, one student wrote:

Most obvious is the sense of belonging. That’s what was always difficult for me because all this was new...it was dealing with always having to be an outsider. You were never smart enough. It was always “here they go again with the race stuff.”

Always feeling like whatever you had to say, all your contributions to discussion were not as important (Bañuelos 2006).

Bañuelos further notes that students measured how exclusionary a program might be was student and faculty diversity, and also found mentoring relationships to be of great importance. In other words, there were people who cared and were willing to help her negotiate the university experience. Bañuelos also asserts that there is a strong link that students make between mentorship and the right to claim a space of their own. She found that the importance of race as a marker of exclusion and for creating spaces of cultural citizenship was evident in the women's discussions about identity, which were intertwined with discussions about struggles to create spaces of belonging and give voice. The claiming of space is claiming one's lost humanity—transcending one's colonized mentality. As Cruz (2006) states, “Reclamation, for the Chicana social agent, is not only a strategy to make visible Chicana voices and histories, it is also the struggle to develop a critical practice that can free the brown body from a neocolonial past into the embodiments of radical subjectivities.”

Ferdman's Model of Latino Identity Development

Ferdman and Gallegos (2001: 33) found that much of the thinking on race in the United States stems from the history of blacks and whites and their relationship to one another, and found the development of a model applicable to Latinos reactive to other models that were constructed without Latinos in mind. Additionally, developing a model applicable to all Latinos is difficult to achieve in light of the diversity involved as Romero (1997) writes:

The reduction of Mexicans, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans, Salvadorians, Nicaraguans, Costa Ricans, and other groups to the single category of “Hispanic” has met with resistance. There are two main objections: one is the

depoliticization of each group’s distinct history with the U.S. (colonized, conquered, exploited, etc.); the other is the emphasis upon Hispanic (European) culture and ancestry, rather than African and indigenous cultures (Ferdman & Gallegos 2001: 35).

In developing an identity model applicable to Latinos, Ferdman (2001) developed a model in 1990, which relies less on stages but categories of orientation. They are: Latino-integrated, Latino-identified, Subgroup-identified, Latino as Other, Undifferentiated/Denial, and White-identified (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Ferdman’s Model of Latino Identity Development

Latino and Latina Racial Identity Orientations					
Orientation	Lens	Identify as/ prefer	Latinos are seen	Whites are seen	Framing of Race
Latino-integrated	Wide	Individuals in a group context	Positively	Complex	Dynamic, contextual, socially constructed
Latino-identified (Racial/Raza)	Broad	Latinos	Very positively	Distinct; could be barriers or allies	Latino/not Latino
Subgroup identified	Narrow	Own subgroup	My group OK, others maybe	Not central (could be barriers or blockers)	Not clear or central; secondary to nationality, ethnicity, culture
Latino as Other	External	Not White	Generically, fuzzily	Negatively	White/not White
Undifferentiated/Denial	Closed	People	“Who are Latinos?”	Supposed color-blind (<i>accept dominant norms</i>)	Denial, irrelevant, invisible
White-Identified	Tinted	Whites	Negatively	Very positively	White/ Black, either/ or, one-drop or “mejorar la raza” (i.e., improve the race)

Source: Racial Identity Development and Latinos in the United States in *New Perspectives on Racial Identity Development* 2001:49

Despite somewhat linear, categorized possibly Cartesian progression of defined stages, if we are oriented to the possibility of these models as valid, we can open ourselves to understanding that students, particularly traditionally underrepresented students may have distinct needs during their college experience. Therefore, we can then assume that in a “Latino-identified” or “Immersion” stage, surrounding oneself with others of similar backgrounds—at least initially—can aid in navigating one’s shared understanding of the world. It is also worth noting that other models of identity development exist, such as Helm’s Theory of White Racial Identity Development (1984) and Cass’ Model of Homosexual Identity Formation (1979). In this case, however, we seek to address the transitional needs of culturally underrepresented students.

A study of high-achieving Latino students revealed that students tended to perceive a less hostile and more inclusive climate at predominantly white institutions with relatively higher Latino student enrollments (López 2005; Hurtado 1994). Hurtado and Kamimura (2003) suggest seven principles for Latino retention:

- 1) Increase participation rates to create a Latino/a presence on campus
- 2) Assist student in navigating the institution
 - orientation programs
 - bridge programs
- 3) Monitor adjustment for retention
 - recognize academic problems early
 - help students manage their time and resources
 - encourage study groups and use of academic support services
- 4) Build support from peers: “it takes one to retain one”
- 5) Increase communication between racial groups
 - programs that seek to change intergroup dynamics
 - formal educational activities around race and cultural understanding
 - activities to increase the campus knowledge of the Chicano/Latino culture
- 6) Employ faculty and administrators as a form of structural support
 - role modeling
- 7) Understand retention on campus through research

The Argument Against Ethnic Theme Housing

Despite the potential for developing communities of support, Michael Meyers, Executive Director of the New York Civil Rights Coalition believes that “by treating minority students as surrogates for their communities rather than as individuals, ethnic dorms foster racial group thinking and defeat a university’s mission to broaden all students’ horizons” (Lee 1996: 3). This position is argued despite the reality that on predominantly white campuses with so few minorities, the residence halls in turn serve as enclaves for the majority. With underrepresented students spread throughout, they are often viewed as at best, isolated, or worse, beneficiaries of affirmative action with no legitimate rights to claim their status as students. If these students, most often the first in their families to attend college do not develop trusting relationships and feel as if they matter, their retention and eventual matriculation remains questionable.

The Position of Stanford University

To make their position clear on the topic of ethnic based theme housing, a document from Stanford University’s Office of Residential Education states the following:

They (ethnic theme houses) provide a home in which exploration and study of racial and cultural identity and the celebration of pluralism are promoted...The houses provide an environment in which significant numbers of students of the same racial and cultural background may live together. Elsewhere on campus, residences may have 3-5 students of shared background; this may lead to a sense of isolation. The ethnic theme houses enable students of color to live in a supportive, comfortable setting. This can be especially important for students new to Stanford, who are making the sometimes difficult transition from home and high school into the university (Stanford University, date unknown).

Stanford’s position recognizes that there are dynamics of isolation that relate to identity and the need to be with others with whom we can share our collective stories. Our identities (i.e., housed in our stories) are not only historical political constructs (Serequeberhan 2000: 43),

but core to our being and need to be understood contextually according to the appropriate historical horizon. If we fail to understand this, we risk the full significance of the narrative.

Gadamer (2002: 303) writes:

In the sphere of historical understanding, too, we speak of horizons, especially when referring to the claim of historical consciousness to see the past in its own terms, not in terms of our contemporary criteria and prejudices but within its own historical horizon. The task of historical understanding also involves acquiring an appropriate historical horizon, so that what we are trying understand can be seen in its true dimensions. If we fail to transpose ourselves into the historical horizon from which the traditional text speaks, we will misunderstand the significance of what it has to say to us.

Indeed, we must not only be open to what others may have to say, but what is revealed to us through text, conversation, and in our relationship to others. It would be difficult for a person in the majority to fully understand the issue of oppression as his or her own lived experience. They would need to rely on the stories of those who have experienced them first hand. Additionally, as Habermas (1994: 108) writes:

This struggle over the interpretation and satisfaction of historically unredeemed claims is a struggle for legitimate rights in which collective actors are once again involved, combating a lack of respect for their dignity. In this “struggle for recognition” collective experiences of violated integrity are articulated...

Therefore, in understanding the student experience, if underrepresented students inform us that they don't feel safe, feel uncomfortable, or feel like they don't belong, do we have a duty to provide a space within reason to maximize their transition and academic success? It is for this reason of providing supportive housing for underrepresented groups as they transition to college life that some universities created theme housing.

Report on the Residential Communities at Cornell University

Ujamaa Residential College, a program house for the African Diaspora at Cornell University was originally founded in 1972 after black students took over the student union.

Since then, other program houses were founded on the Cornell campus. In 1995, nearly a quarter of a century later, the Residential Communities Committee at Cornell released its report which affirmed the value of program houses at Cornell. In the report, the program houses were not only affirmed as viable communities, but recommended as models for the creation of additional theme housing.

Clearly the residents of program houses regard them as an important element in their success at Cornell. Students report that program houses engender a sense of community that frequently provides the primary basis for support for the residents. The strong community and the integration of the academic and residential aspects of life at Cornell are characteristics of the program houses that serve as the model for the recommendation of the creation of living communities throughout the residence halls (Cornell University 1995: 9).

Ethnic theme houses then, aim not to divide among racial and ethnic lines, but more importantly provide underrepresented students with the freedom of choice to live where they want, with whom they want. This choice presents the opportunity of free association and respects the notion of communities existing within the context of the larger campus community. Often, the understanding of critics places a judgment on the communities which are then formed, highlighting the caveat of cultural relativism. Levi-Strauss (1952: 12) informs us of the paradox of cultural relativism, which essentially means the more we claim to discriminate between cultures and customs as good and bad, the more completely do we identify ourselves with those we would condemn. Mainstream U.S. culture and the concept of the “melting pot” was largely the evolution of the Western, European, and Christian tradition upon which this nation and our institutions were founded. In a majority dominated culture, how do we justify imposing our will on those who have never held the power in our society, particularly if there is a possibility of increasing academic success and a sense of mattering on those residents who reside in theme housing? We may wish to consider the

developmental needs of students to have a better understanding of the issues they may experience.

Identity and Community

According to Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1998: 11) there is a paradox of individualism and connectedness. How does one begin to define themselves as an individual and in relationship to others? Ricoeur (1992: 3), believes that “one cannot be thought of without the other” suggesting that I am not who I am unless it is in relationship to another. To that end, the communities we form are often based on our identities or aspects thereof. We are compelled and seek to belong to communities, as Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1998: 81-82) state, “we are using the instinct of community to separate and protect us from one another, rather than creating a global culture of diverse, yet interwoven communities. In other words, we search for those most like us in order to protect ourselves from the rest of society.” Ethnic theme housing then serve as safe spaces to protect residents from the sometimes hostile of experience of adversity.

Communities have a history—in an important sense they are constituted by their past—and for this reason we can speak of a real community as a ‘community of memory,’ one that does not forget its past. In order not to forget that past, a community is involved in retelling its story, its constitutive narrative, and in so doing, it offers examples of the men and women who have embodied and exemplified the meaning of the community.” (Bellah et. al. 1996: 153). This relationship is supported by Amitai Etzioni (1994) who defines community as having two characteristics. The first characteristic, a web of affect-laden relationships among a group of individuals that reinforce each other; and second, a commitment to a set of shared values, norms, and meanings, and a shared history and identity to a particular culture.

The idea of community is in some sense a social covenant that the individuals of the community have with one another reflecting similar values or sense of purpose, defined by the things they share in common within the subculture, and negotiated through mutually understood forms of communication. To this end, John Dewey (1916) made this observation:

There is more than a verbal tie between the words common, community, and communication. Men live in a community in virtue of the things which they have in common; and communication is the way in which they come to possess things in common. What they have in common in order to form a community or society are aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge—a common understanding. [...] The communication which insures participation in a common understanding is one which secures similar emotional and intellectual dispositions—like ways of responding to expectations and requirements.

As a result, the communities we form are based on our identities, or as Habermas refers to as our collective identity. Throughout the course of history in our Western-centered society, are people on the outside of the communities with the power and privilege in the social order who defined the initial identity and parameters for the various communities—such as the terms “Negro” or “Hispanic.” It is usually not the individuals within their respective groups with the privilege of defining themselves to those in power. Individuals assigned to these groups rarely identify themselves according to this artificially contrived categorization, but rather, by their culture, or country of origin. How individuals within the United States identify themselves is through a constant negotiation of meaning. Ricoeur (1981) suggests that how we bring meaning to our lives is through our history. Each community has its own history and as they bring new meaning to their history, their history changes, changing meaning. This reconfiguration of historical time is the process of interpreting or bringing meaning to the past so that it may be part of our present and future. Our cultures and communities influence our identities and helps not only shape who we are,

but how we shape the community. With regard to the learning communities that exist in the theme program, Stanford University's Office of Residential Education affirms that:

Part of the learning that should be taking place in all residences is the recognition that each of us has a distinctive identity drawn from our family, regional, religious, racial gender socio-economic, and ethnic background. What we share as members of the human family is our being part of several distinct and some overlapping communities. Awareness of racial heritage on the part of one group in the house can promote a sharing of backgrounds of all residents. The fact that some programs in the house focus on race identity should not in itself be experienced as emphasizing difference over similarities. The promotion of cultural awareness in one group—in an atmosphere of inclusion, freedom to participate, and mutual belonging—can be an invitation to all to share valued aspects of people's personal histories (date unknown: 2).

A Community of Communities

A community emerges not as one monolithic community, but what Etzioni (1994) refers to as a "community of communities." For the greater society to flourish, this pluralism must be bounded by a shared framework, which the larger community must be. The theme house is no exception to this concept of a community within a community, and we should not impose our one way of being or living onto our students. Though we may not know the specific questions regarding what defines community, as Etzioni believes, the answer will come when all sub-cultures have a voice and are affirmed. We need to understand the temporal role oppression has played in shaping the identity of underrepresented groups in the United States. Freire (2002) suggests that the only effective instrument is a humanizing pedagogy in which the revolutionary leadership establishes a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed and proposes a participatory approach which takes the people's historicity as their starting point. He believes that the movement of inquiry be directed towards humanization and writes,

The pursuit of full humanity, however, cannot be carried out in isolation or individualism, but only in fellowship and solidarity; therefore it cannot unfold in the

antagonistic relations between oppressors and oppressed. No one can be authentically human while he prevents others from being so (2002: 85).

Community dwells in our collective history. If we forget our history and what has been revealed, we may fail to notice and fully understand a past of colonialism and as Kipling (1899) supported, taking up “the white man’s burden.” This too, is often forgotten and overshadowed by our legacy of slavery. Both involved the imposition of values, and the effects of both can still be felt today. One example of understanding a historical context is present in Serequeberhan’s Our Heritage: The Past in the Present of African-American and African Existence. In attempting to explain our historical horizons in the United States, Serequeberhan shares a perspective in responding to colonial influences and the experiences by examining the result slavery has had on Africans and African Americans. While acknowledging the past, Serequeberhan appears to take a more optimistic view with promise toward the future. In the words of Cheikh Hamidou Kane, he writes, “We have not had the same past, you (Europe), and ourselves (Africa), but we shall have, strictly, the same future. The era of separate destinies has elapsed (2002: 11).” Rather than dwell in identifying a people as oppressed, he acknowledges the past, and moves toward a place of empowerment as he shares in the story of a slave named Demby who is killed by his overseer. He believes that as in Demby’s case, for a slave to revolt or refuse is to reject the internalized “pity and terror” through which the slave master holds the enslaved groveling in their bondage, ultimately challenging the enslavement the slave is forced to accept (2002: 32). The enslaved and their free descendants do not struggle to reclaim some true past fixed identity, rather, their struggles are directed at “reclaiming humanity within the ambient that has negated it” (2002: 74). Ultimately, theme programs provide a claim to this humanity and an option for people to choose where they might achieve their greatest potential. Creating a safe

space in which one chooses to live, such as a theme program, pays homage to reclaiming this humanity.

As previously stated, critics suggest that theme housing serves to divide the student body and leads to self-segregation. Even some proponents of theme housing might agree that ethnic theme housing separates out students of color, but the question remains why administrators do not view exclusively all female residence halls, or predominantly white fraternities and sororities in the same manner. One begins to achieve a greater understanding of this duality, particularly when these Greek houses are supported by wealthy alumni. Nonetheless, Stanford University makes their position clear regarding the issue of self-segregation:

On the issue of perceived self-segregation, some people have questioned whether distributing the students who live in theme houses among other houses would not better advance the goals of pluralism than the ethnic theme houses do. That view ignores the essential role the theme houses have in building bonds and supporting members of the group who are the focus of the theme. It is also the case that were the students of color now living in the theme houses to distribute themselves throughout the residence system, the racial makeup of individual houses would be largely unchanged. Until the total number of students of color at the university changes significantly, it will still be true that the theme houses serve as an important community within a community for students of color (date unknown: 2).

We all have an innate need and desire to be understood. Ethnic theme housing merely provides the space in which greater and deeper understanding through trusting relationships can be achieved, and that greater freedom of choice can be exercised.

Post Proposition 209

The experience of the University of California over the years, post-Proposition 209 indicates that in a highly selective institution, implementing race-neutral policies leads to a substantial decline in the proportion of entering students who are African American, American Indian and Latino. At UC, these declines have been partially mitigated by

programs designed to increase enrollments of students from low-income families, those with little family experience with higher education, and those who attend schools that traditionally do not send large numbers of students on to four-year institutions.

Table 3.2 Population, Income, Education, and UC Eligibility by Ethnicity

	United States	California					
	Percent of US Population Census 2000	Percent of CA Population Census 2000	Median Household Income 2000	Percent with BA or Higher 2000	Percent of Public K-12 Enrollment 1999-2000	Percent of Public High School Graduates, 2000	UC Eligibility Rate, 1996
African-American	12.3%	6.6%	\$39,726	17.2%	8.5%	7.3%	2.8%
Indian/Alaskan Native	0.7%	0.5%	\$38,547	11.4%	0.9%	0.9%	NA
Asian American	3.7%	11.1%	\$61,383	40.9%	11.2%	14.7%	30.0%
Chicano/Latino	12.3%	32.2%	\$35,980	7.7%	42.3%	32.6%	3.8%
White	69.1%	46.6%	\$65,980	33.8%	37.2%	44.6%	12.7%
Other	1.8%	3.1%	\$34,079	8.9%	NA	NA	NA
All	100%	100%	\$53,025	11.2%	100%	100%	11.1%

Source: http://www.ucop.edu/sas/publish/aa_final2.pdf

Summary

This chapter reviewed the existing literature related to ethnic theme housing on the college campus. Due to the limited research on this subject information was compiled from various relevant sources. The next chapter outlines the research protocol and provides the theoretical framework of Critical Hermeneutics, specifically Collective Identity, Communicative Rationality, Competency and Action, and Transformation of the Public Sphere which will be used to analyze the data.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH PROTOCOL

Introduction

This chapter outlines the research protocol and explores the value of ethnicity-based theme houses in the understanding how black and Latino students at Cornell University and the University of California at Berkeley experience their campuses and respective programs. Critical Hermeneutics serves as the conceptual framework for this proposal to better understand the experiences of students residing in ethnic theme housing at the two campuses above institutions. To better explain the concepts of Critical Hermeneutics, I introduce Gadamer's of Fusion of Horizons; and the essence of identity by incorporating Ricoeur's concept of Idem and Ipse, and Heidegger's *Da-sein*. More specifically, however, the concepts I use pertaining to the analysis of data are: Habermas' Collective Identity, Habermas' Theory of Communicative Rationality, Competency, and Action, and Habermas' concepts of Transformation of the Public Sphere.

Theoretical Framework Pertaining to Analysis of Data

Critical Hermeneutics

Within a Critical Hermeneutic orientation, we move from an epistemological position of knowledge to an ontological position oriented in being. It is this philosophical understanding which frames the context for this paper. As Herda (1999) writes, "there is a unity that overrides that traditional dichotomy of subject and object...Heidegger's conception of understanding is meant to capture the object and subject, both the interpreted and the interpreter." Through text and conversation, understanding emerges and new horizons are

revealed. Gadamer calls us to consider the horizon of the present and our own understandings:

A hermeneutical situation is determined by the prejudices that we bring with us. They constitute, then the horizon of a particular present, for they represent that beyond which is impossible to see. But now it is important to avoid the error of thinking that the horizon of the present consists of a fixed set of opinions and valuations, and that the otherness of the past can be fore-grounded from it as from a fixed ground. In fact the horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed because we are continually having to test all our prejudices. An important part of this testing occurs in encountering the past and in understanding the tradition from which we come. Hence the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. There is no more isolated horizon of the present in itself than there are historical horizons which have to be acquired. Rather, understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves (Gadamer 2002: 306)

As Ricoeur (1998) writes, Critical Hermeneutics is not a reflection on the human sciences, but an explication of the ontological ground upon which these sciences can be constructed and notes:

Hermeneutics comprises something specific; it seeks to reproduce an interconnection, a structured totality, by drawing support from a category of signs which have been fixed by writing or by any other process of inscription equivalent to writing. So it is no longer possible to grasp the mental life of others in its immediate expressions; rather it is necessary to reproduce it, to reconstruct it, by interpreting objectified signs (Ricoeur 1998: 51).

It is with this orientation that we can begin to understand identity and who we are in relationship to others. The concept of a “collective identity” then becomes a central theme to understanding ethnic theme housing and those who choose to live there. Open to anyone who chooses to live there, theme housing creates the public sphere for the discussion of issues of race, ethnicity, social justice, discrimination, racism, and from within the personal narratives are shared and revealed. Through the expansion and availability of choice, we provide students with the opportunity to choose with whom they can freely associate. This opens up a world of trust and opportunities for conversation for fusing horizons and moving

students as Freire might suggest from pseudo-participation to committed involvement. The narrative data, achieved through conversation as Bernstein (1983: 162) suggests reflects a genuine dialogue in which what is understood between the hearer and speaker guides the movement of the dialogue. It is this concept of movement and fluidity of the conversation itself which is distinctive about hermeneutical understanding and research. This understanding, according to Ricoeur (1998: 56) is “not concerned with grasping a fact but with apprehending a possibility of being.” I relate this possibility of understanding to the research categories of Collective Identity as the *who*; Communicative Rationality, Competency and Action as the *how*, and Transformation of the Public Sphere as the *where* and *what* oriented toward a future horizon.

Collective Identity

Habermas (1979) refers to collective identity for reference groups that are essential to the identity of their members, which are in certain way “ascribed” to individuals, cannot be freely chosen by them, and which have a continuity that extends beyond the life-historical perspectives of their members. He further defines collective identity with the following claims:

- a. The collective identity of a group or society secures continuity and recognizability. For this reason it varies with the temporal concepts in terms of which the society can specify the requirements for remaining the same.
- b. Collective identity determines how a society demarcates itself from its natural and social environments...A personal lifeworld is bounded by the horizon of all possible experiences and actions that can be attributed to the individual in his exchange with his social environment. By contrast, the symbolic boundaries of a society are formed primarily as the horizon of the actions that members reciprocally attribute to themselves internally.
- c. Collective identity regulates the membership of individuals in the society (and exclusion therefrom). In this respect there is a complementary relation between ego and group identity, because the unity of the person is formed through relations to other persons of the same group; and as I mentioned above, identity development is characterized by the fact that early identification with concrete and less complex

groups (the family) is weakened and subordinated to identification with more encompassing and more abstract units (city, state). This suggests that we can infer from the ontogenetic stages of ego development the complementary structures of the tribal group, the state, and finally, global forms of intercourse (Habermas 1979: 111)

These concepts of collective identity can be understood as aspects of identity being readily apparent and recognizable to other, that collective identity is bound by space and culture, and maintained through relationship with others and fluid. The concept of collective identity can further be understood by Heidegger's concept of *Da-sein* and the temporal existence of being in the world.

Da-sein and Being-in-the-world

The world of *Da-sein*, according to Heidegger, is a with-world experience (1996: 112) meaning *Da-sein* exists as in relationship to another. In other words, we do not exist without the other. In this paradigm shift to the ontological, we focus on who we are, not what we know. Because being-in-the-world belongs essentially to *Da-sein*, its being toward the world is essentially taking care (Heidegger 1996: 53). The care expressed is concern for the other and a way of being in relation, not a set of specific behaviors (Noddings 1992: 17). Ricoeur (1992: 3) suggests that identity is only in relationship to the other and we have a responsibility to the other. This responsibility can be viewed as concern.

Concern is a character-of-Being which Being-with cannot have as its own, even though Being-with, like concern, is a Being towards entities encountered within-the-world. But those entities towards which *Da-sein* as Being-with comports itself do not have the kind of Being which belongs to equipment ready-to-hand; they are themselves *Da-sein*. These entities are not objects of concern, but rather of solicitude....It can, as it were, take 'care' from the Other and put itself in his position in concern; it can leap in for him. This kind of solicitude takes over for the Other that with which he is to concern himself (Heidegger 1996: 157-159).

It is this solicitude of older students within the theme houses which helps the new students feel welcome and that they belong. This care emanates from one to the other in a

self-perpetuating cycle. A caring relation is essentially a connection or encounter between two human beings and it should be noted that caring for ideas and objects is different from caring for people and other living things, as a relationship must be present (Noddings, 1992: 20). Within the theme house, relationships can be formed independent of the uncertainty of racism. When a community knows its purpose for being together—the boundaries between self and other, who's outside and who's inside, get weaker and weaker (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers 1998: 16).

In order not to forget the past, communities are involved in retelling their stories and in doing so the narratives of those who've shaped the community bring meaning to it (Bellah et al. 1996: 153). Wenger (2002: 86) believes the negotiation of meaning (being-in-the-world) is fundamentally a temporal process and one must therefore understand practice in its temporal dimension. This development of practice takes time and from this perspective, communities of practice can be understood as *shared histories of learning*. As noted previously, human existence is always—and necessarily—actualized within the lived heritage of a specific tradition (Wenger 2002: 74) or *culture*, and therefore we can't always control our conditions and situations which influence the way we come to know the world. Marx (1948) writes, “human beings make their own history but not under conditions of their own choosing,” but Heidegger's concept of “thrownness” helps us understand that we are born into a world which already exists, a world in which *Da-sein* is thrown into its There:

The being which is essentially constituted by being-in-the-world is itself always “there.” The existential spatiality of *Da-sein* which determines its “place” for it is in this way is itself based upon being-in-the world. The over there is the determinateness of something encountered within the world (Heidegger 1996: 125).

Knowing is a mode of *Da-sein* which is founded in being-in-the-world. Thus, being-in-the-world, as a fundamental constitution, requires a prior interpretation. In other words, our

place in the world is determined by Heidegger's concept of thrownness, that when we come into the world we are in *the always already*. The thrownness of this being into its there; it is thrown in such a way that it is the there as being-in-the-world. Beings of the character of *Da-sein* are their there in such a way that they find themselves in their thrownness, whether explicitly or not (Heidegger 1996:127). Herda (1999) helps us understand this as when we encounter the world, we do so as something that has already been lived in and acted upon. In our own encounter, we act upon it, and the process by which we act on it develops out of our own understanding. This orients us to the world both as it exists and as it has the potential to become.

The thrownness of blacks in the Americas is a lifeworld heritage of slavery—for Latinos it is one of a colonized people over centuries of wars and battles with Spain and eventually the United States. For both, there is an expectation of forgiveness for the legacy bestowed upon them. However, regardless of their future successes, they will always be the descendants of slaves and colonized. This legacy and the reality of racism and discrimination as an unfulfilled and unredeemed claim of emancipation prevent many from truly achieving their ownmost possibility of being. As a result of this horizon and understanding of being-in-the-world the concept of one's freedom to choose, whether it be place or association becomes one of liberating entitlement. Freire (2002: 98-99) writes that humans exist in a world which they are constantly re-creating and in transformation of, and because we are conscious beings, we exist in a dialectical relationship between the determination of limits and our own freedom. Ultimately, one's *Da-sein* is the possibility of being free for its ownmost potentiality of being (Heidegger 1996: 135).

The limiting of choice, by not providing a diversity of options of where one can choose to live can relate to being pressured into a world of assimilation into the mainstream and majority culture. Theories of assimilation are criticized for treating immigrant individuals as the passive objects of the "host" environment, rather than as active agents who can creatively adapt and negotiate their ethnic identities (Song 2003: 8). It should be noted that the presence of ethnic theme housing does not force students to live there, but merely provides students with greater choice of where they may choose to live and exist. This choice, conceived independent of coercion therefore makes authentic social integration possible. Otherwise, the lack of ethnic theme housing perpetuates the contrived idea of social integration through limiting one's choices and pursuits and assumes a one-size-fits-all position with regard to student housing:

Unifying the free choice of each with that of all others, that is, social integration, is possible only on the basis of normatively valid rules that would deserve their addressees' uncoerced, which is to say rationally motivated, recognition from the moral point of view—in accordance with a universal law of freedom. (Rehg 2001: 29).

Moreover, within the theme house the older students often serve as mentors for the new students, helping them navigate through the bureaucracy of the university and assist them in making connections necessary for their support and retention. This relates to Heidegger's concept of care and solicitude in which the other *leaps ahead* of him, not in order to take "care" away from him, but to first to give it back to him as such (Heidegger 1996: 114). In other words, this concern releases *authentic Fürsorge*, attentively leaping ahead of the other in order from there to give him back care, that is, himself, his very own *Da-sein* and not take it away.

Heidegger (1996: 118) posits that the subject character of one's own Da-sein is to be defined in terms of certain ways to be. Within the majority culture, as suggested earlier, there is an expectation of assimilation as the way to be, but as Song (2003: 8) suggests, there is no uniform linear process by which successive generations of immigrant groups are integrated into the wider society. In what is taken care of in the surrounding world, the others are encountered as what they are; they are what they do. Habermas (2001: 156) believes that an identity can be secured only by means of interpersonal relationships; it stands and falls with the 'recognition' it finds—be it at the cross-cultural or international level or at the interpersonal level among friends and family, and so on.

Through reification we then understand and influence changes within our own communities. Therefore, in applying Ricoeur's "Kingdom of the As If"—that is, moving from the "is" toward the "ought"—requires a paradigm shift from actions, assumptions, and values (e.g., study of communities), and moving toward understanding who we are, the nature of community, and the possibility of community (e.g., study of the essence of communities). If the purpose of the community should change, the nature of the relationships within that community changes—once again recalling a constant need for negotiated meaning, which involves the interaction of two constituent processes: participation and reification, or giving form to our experience (Wenger 2002: 52-59), consequently affirming ourselves through the group, and being fulfilled by it (Tillich 1952: 91-99).

Chavira and Phinney (1991) suggest that embracing one's ethnic identity may be associated with higher self-esteem and the ability to deal with discrimination. A fulfilled self-esteem enables one's productivity to move from potentiality to actuality in such a way

that everything actualized has potentialities for further actualization, the basic structure of progress (Tillich 1952: 105). This support provides fertile ground for Heidegger's concept of achieving one's ownmost possibility of being, and the development of self. Without self, there can be no agency, hence, no morality or soul (Kerr 1996: 37). We now understand the idea of existence as potentiality of being.

Communicative Rationality, Competence and Action

Habermas believes that social actions can be distinguished according to whether the participants adopt either a success-oriented attitude or one oriented to reaching understanding. Reaching understanding [*Verständigung*] is considered to be a process of reaching agreement [*Einigung*] among speaking and acting subjects (Habermas 1984: 286-287) that terminates in the inter-subjective mutuality of reciprocal understanding, shared knowledge, mutual trust and accord with another. This process of reaching agreement is action, of which Habermas considers action as *communicative* or *strategic*.

Agreement is based on recognition of the corresponding validity claims of comprehensibility, truth, truthfulness, and rightness (Habermas 1979: 3). If all four claims are present, one is acting *communicatively*. Acting independent of any one of the four validity claims renders the action *strategic*. Given the lack of trust and differing values, understanding and agreement would be difficult to achieve. The processes of reaching understanding aim at an agreement that meets the conditions of rationally motivated assent [*Zustimmung*] to the content of an utterance. A communicatively achieved agreement has a rational basis; it cannot be imposed by either party, whether instrumentally through intervention in the situation directly or strategically through influencing the decisions of opponents. Agreement can indeed be objectively obtained by force; but what comes to pass

manifestly through outside influence or the use of violence cannot count subjectively as agreement. Agreement rests on common convictions or shared values. (Habermas 1984: 287).

Habermas refers to interactions as communicative “when the participants coordinate their plans of action consensually, with the agreement reached at any point being evaluated in terms of the inter-subjective recognition of validity claims. In cases where agreement is reached through explicit linguistic processes, the actors make three different claims to validity in their speech acts as they come to an agreement with one another about something” (Habermas 1999: 58). Four validity claims must be satisfied in order to act communicatively. They are comprehension, truth, trust, and shared values. These validity claims are addressed sequentially. Comprehension includes the ability to be understood—that there is a mutually discernable means for communication. Truth involves the concept of honesty and the exchange of correct information. Trust incorporates the sincerity of the relational exchange. Though the four validity claims are met sequentially, truth and trust are interchangeable. The fourth validity claim of shared values incorporates the same beliefs, intents, and goals. If all validity claims cannot be redeemed, one is acting strategically (Habermas 1999).

In strategic action one actor seeks to influence the behavior of another by means of threat or sanction or the prospect of gratification in order to cause the interaction to continue as the first actor desires, in communicative action one actor seeks to rationally motivate another by relying on the illocutionary binding/bonding effect [*Bindungseffekt*] of the offer contained in his speech act. The fact that a speaker can rationally motivate a hearer to accept such an offer is due not to the validity of what he says but to the speaker’s guarantee that he

will, if necessary, make efforts to redeem the claim that the hearer has accepted. It is this guarantee that effects the coordination between speaker and hearer. In the case of claims to truth or rightness, the speaker can redeem his guarantee discursively, that is, by adducing reasons; in the case of claims to truthfulness he does so through consistent behavior. (A person can convince someone that he means what he says only through his actions, not by giving reasons.)...In so doing, he creates a binding/bonding effect between speaker and hearer that makes the continuation of their interaction possible (Habermas 1999: 59).

Transformation of the Public Sphere

Habermas (1989) refers to events and occasions ‘public’ when they are open to all, in contrast to closed or exclusive affairs—as we speak of public places or public houses. But as in the expression of ‘public building,’ the term need not refer to general accessibility; the building does not even have to be open to public traffic. ‘Public buildings’ simply house state institutions and as such are ‘public’. Theme houses are public in the sense they are open to any and all who choose to live within them. Habermas (1989) believes that the public sphere provided the training ground for a critical public reflection still preoccupied with itself—a process of self-clarification of private people focusing on the genuine experiences of their novel privateness. What these spaces allow is the critical dialogue to occur about the houses—both within and outside of them.

Research Guidelines

Research Sites

The research sites include the African American and Latino Theme Houses at Cornell University, and the University of California at Berkeley. These sites were chosen mostly as a result of ease of access, but also my own intimate familiarity with both sites. I am currently

employed by UC Berkeley and prior to that I worked at Cornell University. Detailed descriptions of the research sites may be found in Chapter Two of this paper.

Identification of Participants

I utilized my contacts at both Berkeley and Cornell to conduct my conversations (See Appendices A-E). I identified staff and administrators affiliated with these programs and worked with them to identify individuals to engage in research conversation. I contacted a number of individuals, however, due to scheduling conflicts and being unable to obtain signed IRB releases, I was able to use narratives from the following conversation partners:

Susan Murphy, Vice President, Student and Academic Services, Cornell University

Don King, Director, Community Development/Campus Life, Cornell University

Ken Glover, Residence Hall Director, Cornell University

Victoria López-Herrera, Residence Hall Director, Cornell University

Daisy Torres- Student, Cornell University

Leah Orta- Student, Cornell University

Christian Gist- Student, Cornell University

Brittany Barbee- Student, Cornell University

Bianca Baldrige- Student, University of California, Berkeley

Daniel Carrillo, Student, University of California, Berkeley

Data Collection

Data included text through journaling, transcribed conversation, document analysis, observation and my own personal experiences. I gathered data through conversations conducted on site at both institutions. I also explored and examined historical data through departmental records, publications, and brochures. I believe that data that might measure academic success such as graduation rates and grade point averages of those students residing in the theme housing and those who do not might have been useful data. However, access to this data would be difficult to collect and require more time, so I did not pursue this option. From a critical hermeneutic orientation, I rely primarily on conversations which were

transcribed to explore emerging themes and develop a deeper understanding of the issues at hand.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was understood from a critical hermeneutic orientation in terms of the three research categories, specifically, Habermas' Collective Identity, Communicative Rationality, Competency, and Action, and Transformation of the Public Sphere. Data were developed from journaling from personal experience and transcribed conversations. These texts were examined and analyzed, and from within emerged a number of relevant themes related to and independent of the three research categories. As Herda (1999: 98) writes, "In data analysis the researcher appropriates a proposed world from the text. When we expose ourselves to a text, we come away from it different that we were before....Implications in such research is often two-fold: the researcher sees the world differently than before the research, and implications are manifest for looking at the everyday problems differently."

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in the fall of 2003 with Shannell Thomas (See Appendix F), a resident director at UC Berkeley who has overall responsibility for a community of approximately 500 residents in two high rise buildings, and the residential component of the African American Theme Program. Prior to her arrival in the summer of 2002, she worked at Penn State as a residential coordinator. Originally from Trinidad, Shannell grew up in England and moved with her parents to Florida when she was 13.

Shannell views herself as a highly spiritual person, though she does not necessarily view herself as religious. She is the mother of a seven year old daughter named Alexis, who Shannell believes is an old soul beyond her years. Shannell is very conscious of her identity,

and although she identifies as Afro Caribbean, she has had to accept being referred to as African American because instead of getting to know her, individuals will refer to her by what they see. She has invested a great deal of effort in not only the African American Theme Program but the entire black community at UC Berkeley. She is highly visible on campus and participates in organizations on campus and serves as a mentor to many students by putting an approachable name on the face of the administration. Additionally, she participates in minority outreach and recruitment efforts to influence junior and high school students to attend college, and more specifically, consider UC Berkeley. The pilot study helped formulate the questions for this proposal.

Language

All conversations were conducted in English and transcribed text is in English.

Timeline

Conversations occurred from April 2004 through July 2005. As I worked full-time in addition to being a full-time graduate student, I conducted the majority of conversations in New York during late June and early July during a slower work period. Conversations involving individuals at UC Berkeley occurred as time permitted according to my work schedule and around any courses. Conversations were transcribed following these meetings. Data collection continued through 2005, library research took place in 2006, and transcription of data and writing took place in 2006 and 2007.

Background of Researcher

I initially became familiar with the concept of ethnicity-based theme housing in the fall of 1994 as a Residence Hall Director at Cornell University. Prior to that time, I was familiar with interest-based housing and learning communities, but had no knowledge of

identity based ethnic housing. After working with the staff and students of these programs I grew to understand the potential of these communities. During my time at Cornell, these communities were subject to much criticism and in the midst of a lawsuit calling for the elimination of these ethnic based theme programs, claiming that they were segregating a campus already limited in diversity. For the proponents of the theme programs, the larger issue was the freedom of choice and association. The critics viewed these programs as separatist and a vehicle to indoctrinate students into a particular mindset. I grew to understand these communities to be crucial for students, mostly from homogeneous neighborhoods in New York City to acclimate to the college environment on Cornell's predominantly white campus in the middle of white, rural upstate New York.

In the fall of 2000, I left Cornell and accepted a position with the University of California at Berkeley. Here, I worked with the staffs of the African American Theme Program, Casa Magdalena Mora, and the Asian Pacific American Theme Program. Though the structure and expectations of these communities differ in many respects, I believe that there are some parallels between the various ethnic theme programs. I witnessed similar challenges at Berkeley that some of the students at Cornell were experiencing. I believe that the decline of underrepresented students post Proposition 209 makes these programs a potentially important contributor to the recruitment, retention, and academic success of black and Latino students.

Summary

Ethnicity-based theme housing provides a supportive environment for the students who reside there. They are often linked academically to an ethnic studies program and focused on providing an environment for residents interested in learning more about a

particular culture. As a result, these residential programs often attract students from those particular communities and ethnic backgrounds and are often better able to address their needs and issues. Their existence on college campuses has given rise to a number of debates, with critics purporting that they do little else but provide another means of segregation, however, the argument of self-segregation is overshadowed by the need for students to identify with others. This is especially important at predominantly white institutions in which underrepresented students are distributed throughout student housing, resulting in isolation.

As enrollment of minorities continues to increase, the concept of ethnic theme housing should be considered. If the ethnic theme housing programs are purposeful and intentional, they can provide marginalized groups with the academic support and sense of belonging that are critical to their success. In addition to creating a sense of shared purpose, these programs can serve as a means to bring academic life into the residential community. Ultimately, we should look to theme houses as another possibility in ensuring the retention and academic success of underrepresented minorities. Their existence merely provides an additional choice for students to choose how they will live out their college experience. Chapter Five includes the narratives of the ten conversation partners, including that of a university vice president, a director, professional staff, student staff, and students

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION

Introduction

This chapter presents the conversations and narratives of those familiar with theme programs at both Cornell and UC Berkeley. Narratives from Cornell include upper level administrators, staff, and students. The two narratives from UC Berkeley include the two student Theme Program Advisors of both programs.

Understanding Cornell University

It was a homecoming of sorts. The view before me included familiar lush greenery, beautiful Fall Creek Gorge, and in the distance, Cayuga Lake. It was a hot, humid, and overcast day, but the mist as I walked across the Fall Creek Bridge from North Campus made my walk refreshingly cool. I had forgotten how beautiful this campus was and the number of times I crossed that same bridge. The awe of the campus brought back many fond memories of the place I had once called home. For six years I called Ithaca home. Melancholy had overcome me because I truly missed this place, this campus. It was at that moment I realized that as much as I missed Cornell and Ithaca, that I was no longer a member of that community. It was no longer home. It was no longer my home.

Susan Murphy

As I made my way toward Day Hall, the university administration building in which I had set foot in a number of times before, I found myself nervous with anticipation. My conversation partner was to be Susan Murphy, who is the vice president of Student and Academic Services at Cornell. She is a proud Cornellian who was once my vice president. She attended Cornell as an undergrad and later earned her Ph.D. there.

Though I was never a direct report of hers, she had made an impression on me as a mentor that would remain with me throughout my professional career. The first real connection I had with Susan was when I was a Residence Hall Director at Cornell. In the spring of 1995, one of my students had passed away due to Meningococcal Meningitis. From what was initially thought of as the flu to his eventual passing took place over the course of three days. I did everything I could to make sure that everyone in my residential community was provided with factual information and notified. I made sure that the resident's roommate was coping well. As it turned out, the surviving roommate's parents were Susan's classmates. As a result, Susan was made aware of all the effort and time that I put into that situation and she wrote me a letter thanking me for the concern that I showed and how I handled the situation. I thought to myself, "She was the Vice President. She was my boss', boss', boss. Susan made me feel like I mattered at Cornell. She made me feel like I belonged and even in her position recognized the work I did." She was truly a great role model to me. As I made my way up the stairs to her office and was met by some friendly, familiar faces, the receptionist informed me that Susan would be back from a meeting shortly.

When Susan arrived, she greeted me with the same warm and professional demeanor that I remembered. I thought it interesting that she was the Vice President of an Ivy League school, and yet so grounded. She invited me into her office and we began our conversation. After catching up a little, I asked Susan about her experiences with theme programs and she shared with me she was mostly familiar with the programs at Cornell, but was aware early on of programs at Wesleyan, and at Stanford where she obtained her master's degree. She shared with me that Risley Residential College was created her sophomore year at Cornell,

and Ujamaa was created her senior year. She admits to me that she wasn't particularly conversant about the program houses as a student. When Susan returned in 1978 working in admissions, she understood that she needed to be more knowledgeable about them because she was talking about them as part of her admissions responsibilities.

I asked her if she felt that the program houses had any impact on Cornell's recruitment and admissions and she believes that students focus on the general reputation, the academic reputation, sense of community of the University, and so to the extent that the presence or absence of program houses contributes to the sense of community and general reputation as perceived by whomever, then they may have an impact on the application process, "they may also have a significant impact on students finding a sense of home or a sense of community while they are a student of color in a predominantly white institution and being able to ground themselves, so they can do the best they can personally and academically." When I asked Susan if she felt the program houses were truly valued and celebrated at Cornell, she responded that "they were by policy and by concept." She shared that as evidenced by the Residential Communities report and the President's attendance at their programs, the theme houses were indeed valued. She added, "We've defended them in court—both Ujamaa and the Latino Living Center. We've defended them against attacks from the OCR (Office for Civil Rights)."

It was apparently clear that if the theme programs were not valued, they would not be institutionally supported. Susan conveyed to me that as a result of being investigated by the Office for Civil Rights, Cornell was obliged "to formalize what mostly in practice what we were doing. There's some things that I think were not being attended to quite as consciously as they could have been, that the inquiry and the stipulations from OCR forced us to do to

make sure that information about them—was being shared not just with the Latino Community and not just with the African American Community, but with the entire community. The program was not just focused narrowly in the invitation to students to come to programs that were just going to Latino listserv, but would go more broadly.”

During our conversation I developed a new understanding and appreciation of Susan’s role as Vice President of Student and Academic Services. In the mid-1990’s when I was an Assistant Director of Community Development, I was actively involved in a number of committees that explored and debated the future of residential life at Cornell. I served on a steering committee comprised of faculty, staff, students and administrators as part of the president’s Residential Initiative which called for moving all freshmen to North Campus, and as a result questioned the future of program houses and whether freshmen would be allowed to live within them. The campus climate at the time was tension-filled as many on campus fell on either side of the theme program debate: Are the program houses valued on campus, or do they serve as indoctrination centers that should be abolished? It was during this conversation that Susan shared with me the challenges of being a vice-president who was obligated on one hand to serve the wishes and implement the policies of the president who initially did not want freshmen to live in the program houses, and on the other hand advocate on behalf of her students and in doing so, disclose her position on the matter. At that time, at least in public, Susan skillfully demonstrated her political savvy as being impartial and supportive of the students and process. During this conversation Susan shared with me that she in fact did value the program houses. I asked her if there was a specific moment in which she experienced a different understanding of them. She shared that there wasn’t and that she believed in the goal of program houses and said, “No, I think that I believed in them before.

I've had to defend positions that my boss has that were different than my own when Hunter was articulating his desire not to have freshmen (in program houses) and if I was going to be his Vice President I needed to be out there and indicate why that could work. That would probably be the most challenging time, but then privately I was having a huge debate with him about my belief that it was going in the wrong direction, but I'm his vice president so I don't have the flexibility to be able to say publicly 'this is what the president's announcing, but I disagree with him' if I want to be a vice president. I could do that, but I could lose my position to do that." I asked her if working with the program houses had impacted her professional views and she responded, "Well I think professionally because the concept is a controversial one, it has challenged me to really explore the motivation behind them, the success or lack thereof when they are in existence and then able to integrate them into my own belief system. Personally more just as an exposure in some depth into the sense that I had to engage with those communities or the staff and students involved with them."

I asked Susan what has happened since I left Cornell in 2000 and she shared that the issue has been de-politicized than it was through the 90's and through President Rawling's first year. She believes that individuals feel less under attack to the extent funding has been put in place in some areas—and the University has some money into Ujamaa though they'd like to see a lot more. The administration has challenged the Ujamaa staff to define a program that justifies it, just as the administration challenged JAM (Just About Music program house) to define that program. Susan shares that they've put a lot of money and resources into the Latino Living Center and completely renovated Comstock Hall, the building in which the Latino Living Center is housed. Susan states that the numbers seem to have held up very well, though early on there was a low year or two in Ujamaa, which has

gone away in the last few years. She added that Ken Glover was really challenged after the numbers were pretty low the first year of the Residential Initiative and since then they've filled quite well. Susan shared with me that she would argue that Ujamaa shouldn't just be African American students. She believes,

The success is going to be on the African and African American Diaspora, that would be most intriguing to students of that descent, I suspect, but I think in Cornell's philosophy, we wouldn't be completely succeeding if it was 100% African American...I mean it would make us very vulnerable to attack. But also don't think it would succeed because in that sense it would allow that culture in a way to totally isolate itself and I think one of the positive influences is that Ujamaa, LLC, and Akwe: Kon have is when you have whites or international students or students not of that dominant culture of that house in an environment where that culture is the dominant culture and see how that works and that has it's role because the residents go to Unity Hour or Café Con Leche and so it's primary mission is for students who have an interest in that area and that culture. I'd be disappointed if it was 100% of students of that descent.

Further, when asked what how the Residential Initiative and program houses contributed to the intellectual engagement of the academic community, she stated,

The policies that the board endorsed in 1996 which came out of the Residential Communities Committee Report and derived from it, the board's policy commits us to creating what we said then, supportive residential communities that contribute to an intellectually engaged and socially responsible campus environment. So from the board's policy on down, we're saying we're not just about building dormitories to house people, but to create a residential community that contributes to what we're about and there's a lot more language that outlines that in context and then the particular points that are enumerated in the policy speaks with the linkage with faculty as well as guaranteed housing to Freshmen, Sophomores, and Transfers than some thing that would be more traditionally just residential. The advantage of all living together is that with study groups, it's much easier to find your study partners then go all the way to West Campus or Collegetown, from Risley to the Townhouses, it's not all that far on the Cornell campus. So again that ability to create academic community in addition to social and residential community all in the same place, I think allows the students to lead a more integrated life—in essence what they're here to do and no so artificially separate here's where I live, here's where I party, here's where I exercise, here's where I study. I can do any and all of it in my first year, but I'm not constrained, I'm not ghettoized or have to be there.

We discussed the role Ujamaa might play in retaining students and she said that the retention of students was more demonstratively through Akwe:Kon than any other (program house).

We could point to some very distinct retention—pre-Akwe:Kon and post-Akwe:Kon. I think it's a little harder to do that with Ujamaa just because of the coincidence of the creation of the COSEP program, the strength of the pre-Freshman program the strength of OMEA which historically served the African American community predominantly. To be able to tease out Ujamaa as a distinct feature of retention would have been harder, so I think there it was a more conceptual belief and my own philosophy that choice has underscored our whole housing system since women were permitted to live in the residence halls or not live in the residence halls because that's why I came. So the fact that we were not obliging all African American students to be there, but for some students for whom that was going to provide the home base from which they would be successful just seemed to me to be the kind of institution we were. On the other hand, I know, certainly in some generations of students there's been a real political push to the African American students that if they didn't live in Ujamaa they had to justify themselves. I think that's equally unfortunate as saying to students no, you wouldn't have that option and sometimes that forces you to have some tough conversations within the community about being open what's happening under the table.

Susan and I discuss that some of the concerns of program houses and self-segregation came from alumni who were concerned about housing and the creation of the Latino Living Center and housing 37 students in a community of 600. We discuss that alumni still have a problem with Ujamaa and Susan adds that there are some alumni who are “appalled to discover that with all the hype of the Residential Initiative that ‘oh my gosh, freshmen can be in Ujamaa.’” But that goes to the whole study that Beverly Tatum has done about why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?” I raise my concern that people question the black folk all living together, but don't question the Greek system and the lack of diversity within them. Susan shares that she does explicitly and notes, “it's exactly the example I cite, I mean you get upset with 3 tables of African American students in the back left corner of the Ivy Room in my day, the DUs were here, the Chi This, were there, the Kappas were there,

but if you're white, you don't see that because they all look like you. If you're not white you do see it. And if you're white you see all the black kids sitting together. It's the same issue."

We move the conversation to the issue of choice and free association, of which the debate over program houses became a central issue. Susan shares that the policy that the board passed in 1996 explicitly pointed to the first year students. This policy, Susan shares,

underscored the value of choice ...and states that at that point when we wanted to put more of a policy statement was when we had the students who were on a hunger strike, because of the preference that Hunter had at the time about not having Freshmen in program houses—how do we break this political log jam and that's when we separated the policy from the practice and took all the practice and said we were going to spend another year talking about that because here are some underlying policies that we really don't disagree with and the wording around the...around choice—how you might define choice perhaps differently because of trying to sort of morph them into a successful career that would enable them to take advantage of the full breadth of the institution then gave us some wiggle room and took us a year to figure out, and it was under that rubric that Hunter envisioned having all Freshmen go to North Campus. So we took the choice away from them in terms of being able to choose West or Collegetown, but when I said well what about program houses he said, well if they have Freshmen, they have to live on North and you've got to figure out a reasonable balance between upperclass and Freshmen, but that allowed us to preserve that choice to live on campus or not, that was preserved. If they did live on campus, yes they had to go to North Campus, but then they could choose single gender, mixed gender, theme house, not theme house.

Don King

In the winter of the 1994-95 academic year, the associate director of Community Development resigned from her position due to personal reasons. Her departure left a void of leadership within Community Development, but left great opportunity for the person who would fill this position. In the spring of 1995, Don King the former Vice President for Student Affairs at Alfred University was hired to lead the functional area of Community Development. He would be my boss. It was he who recognized the passion, skills, and talents that I had and promoted me from being a Residence Hall Director to that of Assistant Director.

I chose my former supervisor as a conversation partner to lend some understanding to this topic because he is perhaps the most sincere and charismatic leader I've ever worked for and more importantly I worked for him during that critical time in the mid-1990's when the program houses at Cornell were debated. When I worked for Don, he was usually in the office by 7am and would often be there on many evenings long after the office had been closed. I was motivated to work hard for him not only because was he an excellent role model and that I bought into his vision, but he that he took the time to understand mine. We had a collective vision. I knew I had his support and therefore, it was easy to lend him mine. Comprehension, truth, trust, and shared values were present in every conversation, but it was grounded in something much deeper—care and concern in the form of support.

I advised a number of groups on campus—some of them for underrepresented students—which were not directly related to my job, and more often than not, he and his wife attended and supported my students' programs. Most importantly, he was a mentor worthy of respect. He was an understanding boss, and yet he was decisive and able to make those difficult decisions leaders are compelled to make. Since I would be in New York for a friend's wedding, I was able to spend some time with my former supervisor and discuss the theme programs at Cornell.

During my conversation with Don, I shared with him the challenge at Berkeley that year: 212 black students were admitted to the freshman class, 98 black students enrolled, and of that 76 students were athletes. I asked Don how theme houses could help attract, recruit, enroll, and retain underrepresented students at predominantly white institutions. I shared with him that in speaking with Ken and Victoria that their positions came from two slightly different understandings—Victoria didn't feel that the program houses related to recruitment,

but felt that they related to retention, while Ken also felt that program houses did serve to recruit students because it showed that the university was open to providing a safe space for those people looking for a place of refuge. Essentially, their shared understanding was that the more resources made available for students may serve to help recruit and get more people to apply. With a higher applicant pool the accepted pool may be greater and the overall yield would increase. Don shared that he was taken aback by what was happening at Berkeley post Proposition 209 and what I had shared with him and believes that the declining trend of African American students “would be very tough to reverse.”

Don believes, Cornell has the opportunity to attract students and the program houses are but one of several examples. Don shares that at Cornell there are a lot of things being done by COSEP, OMEA, and scholarships that are intentionally focused on recruiting. Don believes the greatest ambassadors are current students who recruit other students—consciously or unconsciously based on their experience. He states, “The program house is one place that we can accentuate a positive part of what is being offered, and an acknowledgement to the outside that these communities add value to the student experience. We acknowledge that these residential communities are important in recruiting and retaining students.”

Don and I discussed the Residential Initiative, which essentially moved all the freshman students to North Campus and upperclass students to West Campus which was predominantly freshmen at the time. Essentially, the end result was that if any program houses wanted to have freshmen live in them, those program houses would be located and relocated on North Campus. He reminds me of the compromise that was developed of at least 25% of the residents in a program house had to be first year students in it so they

weren't isolated, and 50 % would be upperclass students. Don recalls the arduous conversations with each of the houses to determine what they wanted to do, "which meant that within a two year period of time we moved five houses to accomplish our goal"—Just About Music (JAM), the Latino Living Center (LLC), the Multicultural Living Learning Unit (McLLU) from West Campus to North Campus; and the Language House and the Transfer Center from North Campus to West Campus. I asked Don to share with me his experiences with the theme programs and he shared that he believed that the overriding issue was primarily from alums and trustees about this notion that "program houses do create segregation, do not assimilate students, don't give other students the opportunity to have that type of exposure."

Don shared that he believes through faculty and particularly students and during lots of dialogue and discussion, Cornell administrators started looking at it from a strength rather than a liability. He notes that program houses, irrespective of whether or not they're ethnic or another type of theme housing aren't for every student—"just like Ujamaa is not for all black students or the Latino Living Center is not for all Latinas and Latinos." We discuss that this is not unlike the students who are athletes or who decide to join a particular organization, to have the opportunity to receive the type of support mechanism in the identity that they need in order to feel that they belong and a certain sense of identity. Don said, "I had mixed feelings when I first came here because I experienced a lot of hostility and wondered whether or not the hostility was generated because of what the program houses represented."

I asked Don if he felt that hostility was directed at him or the general sense of climate on campus, and he responded:

Right, because there was a lack of trust, there was no respect, it was the “we”-“they” mentality and as I gained more experience in my position and learned more about the houses and talked with students particularly, I gained a greater appreciation for what program houses offered students that needed or wanted or had an interest in a particular affiliation. And so I became a strong advocate, not only for the ethnic houses but the other program houses because I turned it around and said to people ‘there’s a richness within this type of residential program that many institutions don’t have’. We talk about the number of students that are in program houses it’s a relatively small number in comparison to other students that are within traditional residence halls, so why not allow students who have that kind of need and sense of purpose in feeling that would give them something, some added value to their educational experience, but also give them confidence, allow them to gain confidence and feel a sense of worth. Why not allow them to have that opportunity? So through a lot of dialogue, a lot of discussion we were able to turn things around to get people to look at this as a strength and then to think about how they could contribute to the whole rather than being isolated. So much effort has been taking place over several years as to not feel as though they’re the ones that have to educate the masses, but how do you do it in a collaborative way and feeling that everybody has responsibility.

Don believes that the fact that the program houses—the ethnic houses—are linked in a very positive and demonstrative way within Campus Life/Community Development because they out front. A Latino Living Center and Ujamaa are part of the total program and part of the discussions. As Don states, “You can’t exclude them when discussions come out about policy and program, because they have to be taken into account, whereas, if we didn’t have these special programs they (black and Latino students) could be lost even more-so. If these students were randomly assigned throughout the other residence halls they wouldn’t have the same kind of political identity.”

The Latino Voices at Cornell

Daisy Torres

Daisy was a recent graduate of Cornell, born and raised in Port Chester, New York. Born of Peruvian parents, Daisy was a first-generation Sociology major who was the first in her family to graduate from college. Daisy lived in the Latino Living Center (LLC) her freshman year and then moved to Akwe:kon for a semester of her sophomore year. Daisy

first became interested in the LLC when she was at Cornell for the COSEP pre-freshman summer program. Daisy chose Cornell because as a New York resident attending a statutory college was very affordable, however, she wasn't aware that when she applied to the College of Arts and Sciences, an endowed college, that it would be much more expensive. She shares that she applied to colleges on her own and didn't have any help and said the guidance counselors weren't very encouraging and would tell her "Cornell is your dream school so don't put too much hope into that school." She also applied to various schools like SUNY Binghamton, Tufts, Loyola Maryland, and NYU. Ultimately it came down to NYU and Cornell, but Daisy eventually chose Cornell because she wanted to get away from home and Cornell was five hours away. At the time she applied, she shared that she wasn't looking at the population or diversity. When she got accepted into Cornell, she shares that she had to navigate the information and decide on her own—no one told her about the differences between a statutory and endowed college. She didn't find out the difference until her sophomore year. She took a number of development sociology courses in the Ag School, which is a state school and attempted to transfer into the Ag school, but noted that she would have been behind in her studies so just stayed in the College of Arts and Science.

Daisy was originally assigned to live in a traditional residence hall and lived there for two months before moving to the LLC for the rest of the academic year. Daisy shared with me her story of the problems she encountered with her roommates in the traditional residence hall in which she encountered a number of incidents such as when she was taking a Japanese course and listening to tapes for class. She received complaints from other suitemates who complained that her tapes were very loud, but "they would play hard rock music or punk music and made it difficult to study." Daisy didn't complain because she loves both those

genres of music, but when she would play any music that was in Spanish, they'd complain again. They wouldn't make the requests in a friendly tone of voice, but more like "oh would you turn that down—can you turn down that crap." Other examples of her experience within the traditional residence hall related to not being included in various things her suitemates would do, such as everyone asking each other what they got on their SATs, but not asking her. Daisy admits that there could be many reasons why they didn't ask her to join them, but she felt marginalized nonetheless. She also shared that everyone else got invited to different things as a suite or as a floor except Daisy and another resident. For Daisy, it got to the point where returning to her room got so uncomfortable that she spent most of my time with friends in Donlon (traditional residence hall) or the Latino Living Center that she met through COSEP. Eventually the LLC had an empty space and Daisy felt that she might as well just move there since she spent most of her time there.

For Daisy, the main draw to the LLC was the upperclassmen. Daisy felt that the LLC was a really good experience because there was a mixture of upperclassmen and people she met through COSEP. The different programs the LLC had like *Café con Leche* or just hanging out with people learning about new stuff made it feel like home away from home. In the LLC the other students gave her books to borrow or told her what classes to take.

I asked Daisy what life was like growing up in Port Chester, New York. She shared with me that where she lived, the majority were Latino and black. She wasn't able to go out much, so she either went to school, work, or had friends come to her house. She said, "I was always around family or friends. At home we predominantly spoke Spanish because both my parents had a small grasp of English—but it was just better to practice in Spanish. That's what I grew up with, but the high school I went to was predominantly white. So we used to

commute there, and not use Spanish. At that school there were only five Latinas in a class of 95—or spoke Spanish and Latina.” I asked her what that was like, and she responded “I went to the high school and I’d just predominantly hang out with those girls—like Latina wasn’t how we defined ourselves. My parents are Peruvian, but I wouldn’t necessarily say I was American. I didn’t know about the term Latina, and I heard Hispanic, but to me it sounded like Spanish. Like when people asked, ‘Are you Spanish?’ I’d say yeah, I’m like Spanish. And then I came to college and just learning the different terms—here I learned to identify with different vocabulary.” I then asked her “What made you begin to identify that way?” She informed me that she learned that it was an identity, a term that was out there, because back home, people don’t use that.

Leah Orta and Christian Gist

One of the more lively conversations I had with the Cornell students was with Leah and Christian who discussed their experiences at the Latino Living Center. While attempting to identify conversation partners, Leah and Christian requested that they meet me together. Leah was a recent pre-med graduate from San Juan, Puerto Rico with a Bachelor of Science from the College of Human Ecology. That summer Leah was working with the pre-freshmen summer program in the Office of Minority Educational Affairs as a Public Health Assistant for the College of Human Ecology. Upon returning to Puerto Rico at the end of summer, she planned to work on a Master’s degree in Public Health at the University of Puerto Rico. Eventually she wants to go to medical school in the United States. When I asked her where she’d like to go, she said laughingly, “I just need one med school.”

Leah shared that she became spoiled being at Cornell with all the resources available to her, but with pride she stated that she looks forward to “go back home to use those

resources that I have to make a difference. That is something that I would like to do.”

When I asked Leah how she identifies, she stated that she identifies herself as Puerto Rican, not as American. When I asked her what she meant, she further stated, “I’m a US citizen, but I don’t consider myself American at all.”

Christian Gist was a rising sophomore in the College of Arts and Sciences working toward a BA. That summer he conducted research in the college of Human Ecology for one of the professors and also worked as a Program Assistant (PA) for the Pre-Freshman Summer Program, working with the 13-17 age group. Christian states that he is from New York City, and jokes with Leah that he “didn’t have an exciting island adventure like living in Puerto Rico.” Leah reminded him that much of New York City was on Manhattan Island. We laughed. Christian shares that he did not have a not fantastic or really interesting story because he’s native to the United States. He was born here, but was raised as a child in Colombia by his mother’s family and then returned to the United States at age 11. I asked Christian how he identified himself. Laughing and animated, Christian stated, “Um I have an issue, I identify with every part. Or that depends—like for my scholarship application, I applied to every little bit of ethnicity that I had. I applied to black and Hispanic, so when it comes down to it, I just say that I’m black, Puerto Rican and Colombian.” I asked both of them if this depended on who they might be talking with. Leah shared, “when I’m in a setting where it’s more like mainstream versus minority, then I identify with the Latino group. Where I think within Latinos, when Latinos ask me where are you from, or what are you, then I would say Puerto Rican.” For Christian he left it up to how others see him and stated, “I just identify with what people see. People see me they don’t see a white person, they don’t see a mixed person, they jump to the conclusion of being black. I’m like, it’s

okay, I'm black. People see me as black, I'm black, but I'm a Latino like mixture of black, so I just go along with whatever."

For Christian, home in Brooklyn had the reputation of Little Africa, because as he shared, "basically every black person in NYC comes from Brooklyn." Christian noted that his high school was predominantly black and that the only white person at his school was "not like American white, she was white, white, white, straight from the old continent. She was from Turkey. That was the only white person that went to my school. Everybody else was Caribbean from the Caribbean and the Latino people that you could count on with your hands—which were five, including myself, but I'm from both sides, so it wasn't a problem. That's how diverse my high school was. Junior high school was the same thing, predominantly black—I lived in a predominantly black neighborhood, so there wasn't that much diversity. Like pretty much on the street, pretty much the only people I got to see out on the street are the people I saw whenever I had to like go to school or go to the corner store or go shopping." Christian shared that his experience growing up was fairly segregated,

...you could see where that predominantly neighborhoods are, like my neighborhood was predominantly black, people say that Manhattan is predominantly white, that's everything from like 70th something and below because when you get to Harlem that's predominantly black and Latino because of the Harlem thing. Little Dominican Republic in Washington Heights...I'm not going to try to sound like some racist or race and crime, but that's how we like know certain areas of New York City. The Bronx is predominantly Hispanic and that Staten Island is coolest, but I hear pretty much that it's predominantly mixed and Queens is predominantly white as well, but there's like certain black people around there. That's as much diversity I had before I got here. When I came here from Colombia, it was shocking, because the US, New York City that's when I first saw the difference between black and white. Because in Colombia, I didn't see that, I mean my uncle...now I know that my uncle was white, but he was Hispanic white. And like, I saw him and I saw myself as the same type of person. Different skin colors, but I never asked "why am I so dark"? and once I came here and people started using those labels of black and white. Now comparing NYC to Cornell, pretty much I see, not the same thing, because Cornell is predominantly a white school, just like NYC is predominantly white. And then you have your little posses of Hispanic and black people all other ethnicities as well. And

that's pretty much a small comparison to NYC except for the fact that here I don't see that much mingling between the races rather than...pretty much no, it's the same thing because the same people that mingle here are the same (groups) that mingle in NYC, at least in my opinion.

I asked Christian what are the races that mingled at Cornell. He shared that blacks and Latinos in the dorms, like in his high school and junior high school, interacted with others mainly from their same racial background. Moreover, Christian shared that he knew "very few people here that mix with white people, but we're not reluctant to mix with white people." He states that he spends most of his time at the LLC, Ujamaa or at Donlon, which he shares is predominantly white. He shared that he "was like the only...one of the only few people of color in the room except my other two friends, but we pretty much got along with everybody. You feel comfortable with people of your own color and ethnicity, that's who you tend to hang around with, to feel more comfortable with somebody that you could talk to. I mean we might have dinner with like one person of another color, but we would never develop that type of relationship with that person. I don't know why, but it's something you're automatically drawn to." He shared that the issue of race in Colombia is very different. In Colombia, the view according to Christian is that "we're all human beings, let's look at ourselves as human beings, not people here like, hey, you're black or you're white. We're human beings who just happen to be black. We're human beings who happen to be black hanging out with people who happen to be black, white, whatever."

Leah shared that "in Puerto Rico, everyone's Puerto Rican" and explains that when she was in high school, everyone was Puerto Rican regardless of how dark their skin was. Racial identity and the color of one's skin became an issue when she came to the continental U.S. She shares about a rough transition to Cornell as she stated,

because coming from a place where everybody looked like me and everybody was like me and even if you're darker than me like you and I, we still have an understanding that we're Puerto Rican, you know, and all of a sudden it's like, wow, we have all these different divisions and all these different labels and all these different sorts of people and you have to try to make a compromise between what you know already from that kind of people, you know like what they show you in the media and what you actually see. You know the reality of it and make a compromise so you can actually have a concept of what different groups of people are like. You know, because we're all human, but we are different within our own cultures—which is why culture exists.

She continues and shares that despite the umbrella term of Latino, there is a diversity within Groups that often gets overlooked. Ethnic and cultural identity becomes very complex within the United States because we don't all share the same identity or understanding of it. For some of us our identity isn't merely choosing one aspect of who we are, but claiming all of who we are. She states when she came here

experiencing within the Latino community so much diversity because it's not just saying Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Cuban, Colombian, Mexican, it's also saying you're half Puerto Rican, half Dominican, or you're quarter Puerto Rican, quarter Dominican, quarter Scandinavian, something like that and it's just taking in all that diversity within the Latino community and then also the diversity outside the Latino community, diversity within the African American community. You have people who are African American because they're American. They're American with a darker color skin, then you have Africans that are actually from Africa and just moved to the states, then you have people who are darker skin who are black, but they're from the Caribbean, you know?

She speaks of the challenges confronting all the diversity and the realization of no longer being in the majority while acknowledging that identity is more than just ethnic identity.

Just confronting all that diversity and on top of that, then also dealing with the fact that I'm no longer the majority, I'm the minority now. And make these ties and relationships with people outside my community and people within my community, which within itself is really hard, so that's just ethnically speaking, not even to mention other types of diversity like economic diversity and sexual orientation diversity, which is there is none in Puerto Rico. And all of a sudden, woo hoo, we're here, we're queer, it's just a lot to take in. It becomes very overwhelming. Definitely that first year was overwhelming. I graduated like two weeks ago and that's when I was finally getting the hang of this Cornell joint, and it can be very, very overwhelming to see all these different kinds of people getting together.

I asked Leah what some of the things she had to get used to and she mentioned language barriers was one of them and added “the LLC is like it’s own little world within Cornell and I think that’s why I liked it because to me the LLC was a place to go back to and see like, Wow, I’m really not that far away from home.” Christian agrees and adds,

Yeah, it’s like you basically see your own house and everything. Even though I was raised in a mostly Hispanic house, then I was introduced to this and then I come here and the LLC actually encompasses everything like from your own back home—that’s where you will see your little place with rice and beans, you will see it there. You see people saying your own Hispanic lingo, saying this, saying that you will hear it there. You start watching baseball because of the people who watch baseball. So the LLC is that place away from home that makes you feel at home, just like I’ve been to Uj and Uj is just the same place away from home that makes it feel like home. Because you see black people who cook black traditional food. You see your cornbread, you see your collard greens, you see your jerk chicken, you see your fried chicken, you see everything. Come to the LLC you see your rice and beans you see your Hispanic foods, you see Goya you see everything... Yeah and you smell it and since we have at the LLC a person on certain weeks who just cooks something for a selected few in the house, a traditional meal for people in the house, so you know, it makes you feel at home. Although you might be at Cornell, which is very different, very shocking if you live in LLC or Uj you always look forward to that because that would be the closest thing to home until you actually get home.

I asked Christian and Leah what they thought the racial climate was like on campus and Leah notes that during her freshman year she and her friends went to a white fraternity party and when they walked in, the stares indicated the feeling of “everybody looking at us—‘what are you doing here’?” A similar incident occurred the following year in Collegetown. Nothing was said, but “it’s just the way they look at you. They don’t really say anything to you.” She indicated that she wanted to say “B*tch, what’s wrong with you? I worked just as hard to get here as you did.” She recognizes that there is a right for people throwing a party to have “a right to omission,” meaning that they have a right to associate with the people they want to, although the feelings of tension and discomfort on campus are there just the same.

She shares that the year prior there was an affirmative action debate and people from the Cornell Review had banners that said “Show your SAT scores” and other posters that displayed messages to the effect of “you’re here to fill a quota.” Leah believes this is from ignorance, but it makes her angry. She mentions that she has met white and Asians that have tried to get to know her and others that just stay away, but for the most part “people want to learn (about differences).”

I asked what role language plays in the house, and what language do people speak. Initially both said simultaneously, “Spanish,” then both laugh and said, “Spanglish.” Leah notes “You may not know how to say anything in Spanish, but you definitely know how to say *plátano*. You know what *Goya* is.” Both agree that language is central to identity and the tie that transcends culture. Leah states that “the language unites us.” There are things about latin language that you can’t describe or you can’t transcribe or you can’t translate to English” and continues with language “not only keeps us united, but keeps us passionate, and keeps us passionate about our culture and who we are and keeps our identity in check”

I ask them what their Cornell experience would have been like without the LLC and Leah says:

I think that I would have been a completely different person had I not lived in the LLC. It just opened my eyes about who I was and who I wanted to be. It opened doors to other places, and other options. I wouldn’t have met a lot of the people who are very important and crucial to me right now. I would have either assimilated and I wouldn’t be proud of who I am as a Latina woman, as a Latina lesbian. I wouldn’t be so fervent, and passionate about making a difference in other people’s lives—people like me that are coming in from an underrepresented point of view. There’s just so many experiences I think I would have missed out on because the LLC is what introduced me to it. I wouldn’t change it for the world. If there’s anything about my four years at Cornell that I would keep the same it was living at the LLC.

Christian shares, “The Latino Living Center made it seem like home for everything that was going on in there—‘yeah, that’s right that happened in my house too’.”

Victoria López-Herrera

Victoria was the Residence Hall Director for the Latino Living Center and at the time of this conversation was completing her 3rd year of the position and had just accepted a position as Assistant Director of Residential Life at New School in NYC. We discussed that Victoria arrived at Cornell a full year after I had left. Victoria shares with me that she first became familiar with ethnic theme housing through discussions about learning communities in graduate school and while attending professional conferences. After she graduated with a bachelor's degree, a friend in the field of student affairs who works at the University of Rochester shared with her the posting for the RHD of the Latino Living Center at Cornell. She stated that the position “intrigued me because of my interest in Latino culture and wanting to serve Latino students based on my own experience as an undergrad and it combined both of my loves.”

I asked Victoria why she thought the Latino Living Center was important to her students, and she said, “Whenever they come in August for the year and think ‘oh yeah, this is going to be like summer’ and they walk into a classroom and they’re the only person of color and then they have to speak for all people of color—then the questions come like ‘Why are you living in the Latino Living Center?’ and the issues of self-segregation.” She shares that the residents of the house constitute a family. Due to the close-knit relationships, they are able to better discuss the expectations each have of one another and what the rules are. The returning students work with the staff to define the expectations of the house with the new residents.

Victoria shares with me that in the past three years, she only had five discipline issues—anecdotally very low by general residence hall standards. Victoria expresses that

this is due to residents viewing the Latino Living Center as their home, contributing to the expectations of standards or cleanliness, guests, and neighbors looking out for each other. She says the message conveyed to residents is “This is your home. If you let someone in your home who defaces our property, who steals things, who throws up in the hallway because they’re drunk, guess who is going to be cleaning it up.” What creates this community of respect says Victoria, is “that they choose to live here. They apply to live here. They’ve thought about why they want to live in the Latino Living Center.” It is this power of free choice and commitment as evidenced in the essay they write as part of their application to live in the house that serves as a covenant of sorts and as a foundation for community. Selection of residents—both new and returning—is done by a committee comprised of residents. This further contributes to the concept of self empowerment and each having a say in shaping one’s own destiny. The students and staff work together to provide the support to the residential community so that all are academically successful. Returning students serve as “big brothers and big sisters to first year students” in a community in which everyone knows each other. This concept of family is supported by weekly dinners, house meetings every other week, and traditional programs every Friday night. Due to the layout of the building’s floor plan, doors are kept open to the suites so everyone visits one another and hangs out.

Living in the house provides the residents to gain some life skills and to learn, not unlike a traditional residence hall, but as Victoria states, “because the opportunity for developing deeper relationships, people care about each other more. Everyone knows everybody in this building.” Returning students take it upon themselves to share with Victoria and the RAs if other residents aren’t doing their work or if they’re partying too

much. Over the LLC listserv, residents will offer themselves to help tutor other residents in courses they've taken, share notes, and pull together study groups. Identity plays into this dynamic because the familial atmosphere brought together by the common bond of Latino culture—not necessarily “I'm Latino, you're Latino, let's hang out together, but ingrained into who you are as a Latino and where you come from.”

Victoria and I discuss the concepts of communicative rationality and the role a shared identity might have in shaping shared values. She shares that the LLC works toward providing a safe space so those types of deeper conversations can take place, whether that encompasses the intersections of identity—a black Latino, a Gay Latino and discovering how people come out and be open about those things. Victoria shares an example of a resident coming to terms with her black and Mexican identity and the in-depth conversations that took place within the community, and that she's not certain that the same type of conversations would happen in a traditional residence hall. She believes this for two main reasons: the safe and open space created by the LLC due to the shared identity, and that in a traditional residence hall it is doubtful that those types of questions are being asked, limiting the possibility for depth of conversation.

I asked Victoria to share some experiences of her students and what she thought it was like to be on this predominantly white campus. She shared that the majority of her students come from New York City, so a lot of the residents come from the Bronx, Colombia Heights, and Manhattan, which are heavily populated areas by Puerto Ricans and Dominicans. Other residents come from the Southwest—California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas—and others come from Florida. All very heavily Latino populated areas. When

students first get to Cornell, many think according to Victoria, “Why do I want to live in the Latino Living Center, I’ve been living with Latinos my whole life. They’re all around me. Some students choose not to live in the house because of that—then realize after living at Cornell for a semester or even longer that they are the only person on my floor that’s Latino, I’m the only person in my class that’s Latino. I can’t go to the *bodega* down the street. People look at me when I put on my music, whatever it is. I talk on the phone with my mother in Spanish and my roommate is looking at me thinking I’m talking about her. The students that initially choose to live in the LLC see this dynamic just as clearly that they’re the only one in their classroom, and that’s society, that’s what’s going to happen, but they can come home and feel comfortable—which I think helps and contributes to retention because there is a place for them to come home to, whereas other students are feeling isolated.”

Victoria shares her own experiences as a Mexican American, Hispanic, Latina, Chicana and that her mother ingrained in Victoria that she was Hispanic, and not Mexican because “Mexicans were the people across the river.” She shares that within Texas there is that dynamic—“the Mexicans were the ones who had just come across who are picking our cotton and working on the roads, even though my mother picked cotton, even though my father was a migrant worker they somehow see themselves differently and that bothered them and so therefore, they made sure that I saw myself as Hispanic.” It wasn’t until later in college that Victoria learned more about the history with Mexico and Latinos in general that she embraced the idea that she was Latina, Mexican American, and Chicana and claiming and owning all those identities. Her experience in the Latino Living Center has helped her learn more about herself.

The African American Voices at Cornell

Ken Glover

Ujamaa Residential College, also known as Low Rise #10 was a familiar place to me as I had oversight over North Campus, of which Ujamaa is a part, a few years earlier. In the Unit 1 Lounge, one can't help but notice a mural of hands in chains with the phrase *A Luta Continua*. My conversation partner was Ken Glover, a former direct report and the Residence Hall Director of Ujamaa, who when I was there, had been there over 10 years. It was now four years later. Ken shared with me that the mural and phrase was painted by former residents of Ujamaa to visibly show the community's support of the African liberation movements in Southern Africa. The phrase *A Luta Continua*, as Ken conveyed, originates in Mozambique and is Portuguese for "the struggle continues." This phrase emerged within the context of an African liberation movement that was called FRELIMO, an anti-colonial army that was struggling against Portuguese Colonialism in Mozambique. He suggests that I look for a film that is called "The Struggle Continues" for more information.

Painted on the wall as you enter the Unit 2 lounge is a remarkable mural of a Black Mount Rushmore of sorts (See Figure 2.4). The mural depicts four Black leaders who helped shape the African American experience. Ken shared with me that the mural was also painted by Black students who lived in Ujamaa. One could hear the pride in his voice as he mentioned that he and the staff have also put pictures and African art in every lounge, unit, and Ujamaa's stairwells to help students learn detailed information about African, African American, and Caribbean history. We returned to the lobby and sat down on the block furniture that was strangely familiar and asked Ken to tell me how he came to know Ujamaa. Ken shared with me that he came to Cornell as a graduate student in the Africana Studies and

Research Center. When he selected Cornell he was looking for housing and read the information for on-campus housing and noticed Ujamaa as a residential community. After reading the description, he felt that the description of that particular house was compatible with what he wanted to study and felt that never having been to Ithaca, New York that Ujamaa would provide him with the most support as a living environment while he went to graduate school.

As a graduate student, Ken lived in Ujamaa and participated in its programs. Ken shares with me that Katrina Hauser-Gordon was the Director 1982-83 and while she was here he got a chance to know her and in his second year (1983-84) Joseph Scantleberry became the Director and Ken became the Assistant Hall Director while Joseph was working on his degree. Through that job, Ken became very familiar with Ujamaa. Additionally, during the summer, Ken worked as a summer custodian and was able to understand Ujamaa from the facilities side. His varied experiences gave him a broad view of Ujamaa. Ken stated that prior to coming to Cornell, he had never been to a college where someone would live on campus. As an undergrad, Ken attended City College (City University of New York) and commuted to school. Since CUNY didn't have dormitories, he had never encountered the concept of an RA, residence hall, or Residence Hall Director. So coming to Cornell he was very pleased at what he saw as the potential—that the university had made a commitment to help black and other interested students that wanted to learn more about the African experience. Seeing what the RAs did and then being given the opportunity as a student to be an Assistant Hall Director—that also helped expose Ken to the opportunities that existed in residential life.

When Ken moved to Ithaca, he conveyed that it was complete culture shock. He was used to being in a community where he wasn't in the minority twenty-four hours a day. So coming to Ithaca, he wondered where the institutions of support for him were. As a student, he began to work with the Southside Community Center and understood that to be a place of support. Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC), Calvary Baptist Church, Africana Studies and Research Center, the Office of Minority Educational Affairs all became places of support—meaning that coming as a graduate student, and then working at Cornell and developing relationships through these institutions, Black churches, community centers, finding out that there was a Black caterer—all of those things influenced Ken to stay. Ken shared that having come from a more diverse place like New York City then being in a predominantly white community like Ithaca, he could find support within these smaller institutions. Ken shared his lifelong passion for working with young people and that he also worked at the Southside Community Center as a program director. Ken shared his experiences of helping primarily black and Latino youth go to college or through recreational or leadership programs.

What Ken values about Ujamaa and being a residence hall director is having the freedom, the opportunity, and the space to not only educate black people, but also have an impact on what white students learn about black people—about African culture, to work with other communities around developing an accurate understanding of what is the African experience. The African experience, Ken adds, refers to the experience of Black people in the Caribbean, Africa, the United States and other places. In being able to work at Cornell, Ken expresses gratitude in being able to learn about other cultures—about Native Americans because of Akwe:Kon and attending their programs in his own development as a

professional. He spoke of going to the Latino Living Center, the International Living Center, to attend programs sponsored by Balch (Women's), to visit the Asian American Resource Center and the Asian American Studies Program—so all of these things have shaped and nurtured Ken's abilities to be able to not only deal with Ujamaa's residents but to help Ujamaa's residents learn about other cultures. Ken shares that growing up in Harlem there were no Native Americans that he could see, although there were Black people who might be part Native American. The Asian Americans he knew, he didn't really know anything about them personally, but coming to Cornell, Ken had the opportunity to systematically learn and to see the diversity. Ken mentioned that in Harlem, he knew about white people mostly though the Jewish people in his community. He shares that he went to school with White students, so he had some understanding of them. Ken was familiar with Blacks from Africa and the Caribbean, but wouldn't have really had the opportunity to meet people who were Chinese, Japanese, Taiwanese, Korean, Shinnecock, Mohawk, Indian from India on an individual basis. So the program houses provided the opportunity for particular groups to meet other groups. Being at Cornell—at Ujamaa enabled Ken to learn about differences in a way that probably would not have happened if the program houses did not exist. The theme houses challenged him to learn. Prior to attending programs at the various houses Ken shared that he would read about the different cultures so he could better participate in the discussions and the programs.

Brittany Barbee

Brittany is a rising junior who is from Victorville, CA in the High Desert. She decided to attend Cornell because of the pre-med program and an excellent financial aid package. Brittany also thought about attending UCLA, Berkeley, and USC, but in the end

chose Cornell. When I asked Brittany what her transition was like coming from California to Ithaca, New York, she shared that the people were really different. Ithaca is a very liberal city, but as far as the University, a lot of people come from New York City and have a totally different way of viewing “pretty much everything.” The language differences sometimes make it hard to understand. She shares with me a recent conversation she had in Ujamaa about the way people from New York greet people or the way they talk to people is really different from what Brittany is used to and says “it’s not like they’re being mean to me, but that’s just the way they are.” Brittany shares when she first arrived at Cornell, it seemed like the approach of people was more direct in the way people greeted people. When I asked her more specifically what she meant, she admitted that it was probably the language, the specific words they used.

Victorville, as Brittany shared, was mostly Caucasian and Latino and fairly diverse. In her freshman year, Brittany lived in JAM (Just About Music) Program House. She initially chose to live in JAM because it seemed more interesting and enabled her pursue her interest in music and a space to play the Violin with others who shared a passion for music. She eventually left JAM because outside of the shared interest in music, as she shared, “really didn’t feel comfortable living in the house.” She chose to live in Ujamaa for her second year for the resources. She shared with me that she didn’t initially choose to live in Ujamaa because when she attended the Pre-Freshman Summer Program she was told living in Ujamaa was a bad idea because it would be tough to have a private life. Brittany chose to live in Ujamaa for her second year because she didn’t want to live on West Campus, so among the program houses on North, she thought that it would be a good way for her to meet more students and learn more about black culture. Brittany feels that she learned a lot living

in Ujamaa and wishes she had live there her freshman year because the things that she had learned would have benefited her earlier in her Cornell experience. Brittany shares the experiences of having a group of friends and being the only black person in the group and having to always answer questions that she did not feel comfortable answering or know the answer to.

Earlier in the conversation Brittany mentioned differences in communication and I asked her whether that was among other African Americans, or was that California versus New York? Brittany believes the difference was more rural versus urban—like people coming from New York City. Brittany’s biggest adjustment coming to Cornell was being around a different type of diversity. She shared that in Victorville the Latino population was all Mexican, here it’s within groups, for example, the black population at Cornell draws from black people from all over—people from the Caribbean, people from Africa. As a result, Brittany met people from a lot of different places.

Brittany planned to live off campus the following year mostly because of cost. Brittany felt that she connected well with others in Ujamaa because the conversations between residents in Ujamaa were more interesting like residents from the Caribbean not claiming they were black and Jamaicans claiming they weren’t black, but Jamaican.

Understanding UC Berkeley

A Latino Voice at Berkeley

Daniel Carrillo

At the time of our conversation Daniel just graduated from Berkeley a few days earlier. Though I had worked with Daniel for a few years, I really didn't have the chance to sit down with him to know his story. Daniel lived in Casa Magdalena Mora (Casa) in his junior year, and served as the Theme Program Advisor (TPA) in Casa for his 4th and 5th years. Originally from Los Angeles, Daniel transferred to UC Berkeley from East LA College. When I asked Daniel how he found out about Casa Magdalena Mora, he told me that he found out about Casa on the Berkeley housing website. Daniel shared with me that he felt a connection to the house and Magdalena Mora as a person and stated, "It never occurred to me what an activist would look like at a university setting."

Daniel identifies himself as Xicano and shares with me that Xicano is a Nahuatl word inferring a meaning that "we are a people of this earth." He mentions many activists might spell it with an "X" because in the Nahuatl language the sound 'ch' is spelled with an X. Daniel identifies as indigenous and traces his background to the rituals of indigenous people in western Mexico. Earlier in our conversation Daniel used the term Latino and I asked him if people in the house viewed themselves as Latino or more specifically by their or their parents' national origin. He tells me that within the house, there are residents who identify themselves as Hispanic, Latin, Latino, Chicano with a Ch, Xicano with an X, Mexican American, and some folks that have a problem with American, so it's very diverse, and interesting because it's different depending on the year. Conversations around these identities are able to happen in the house because when they arrived to the Berkeley campus,

for some of them it was the first time they heard all these labels. They may have read about them, but they didn't necessarily define themselves that way. Many have heard the term Hispanic because that's what they use in the media, but a lot of the discussions in Casa and the Chicano/Latino Agenda focus on these issues of identity.

Daniel claimed that although Casa is a space for Latinos, it is a space that could create leaders out of what Magdalena did. With passion, he stated that he really wanted to continue giving and really have a living space for Chicano/Latino students, or others like him and get everyone involved. When I asked Daniel why that was so that important for him when he got here, he responded "That's why I came here, to continue to do that stuff (educate others toward activism) and why I continue to do that and school." Daniel had planned on attending Cal State LA, but one of his counselors persuaded him to attend Berkeley. He laughs and stated that he thought Berkeley was overseas. The counselor shared with Daniel Berkeley's rich history of free speech and activism—he didn't know that much of the activism started at Berkeley. Daniel stated that his involvement here is fueled by that history.

Living in *La Casa*, Daniel states, is a safe space. In his first year Daniel encountered individuals who made what he perceived to be racist, verbal attacks and faculty and advisors who were unwilling or unprepared to deal with mediating the tension and felt that there was no staff or faculty to go to so it was the other residents and TPA at Casa who supported Daniel and encouraged him to speak to specific individuals in the offices such as EOP. One of the incidents was on Piedmont Street, a few blocks away. While Daniel walked up the street, two white students in a car stopped and yelled "Beaner go back to your country" and sped off. Daniel stated, "Not knowing what Berkeley was, and then realizing that this is a

premier institution and then seeing all the stuff against affirmative action targeted at minorities saying you're not supposed to be here, as a student, you're feeling that weight. So even my peers are feeling like, 'I don't belong here', and more importantly the more recent immigrants coming in, are feeling like 'I should go back home'" pushing people to assimilate. This hostility as Daniel shares, contributes to the feeling why some students don't feel like they belong and that "I should go back home, I should go to Cal State LA where there are more Latinos, instead of a place where there's only like 8% undergrad."

I ask Daniel what a safe space means to him and he shares that it means not having to hear those words and that others don't have the same experiences. He shares that in conversations with other Latinos he's often heard "Yeah I kind of felt that way" or "I can't believe that happened to you." The concept of the safe space is getting that support while being away from home. He mentions that there were no other Latino transfers his first year, so his transition was difficult. More importantly, Daniel shares, that in *la Casa* "I can be myself." I then asked Daniel if his experience would be different if he had lived in a traditional residence hall. He shares that in Casa, his neighbors also attended some of the same classes and due to the types of classes he was taking, his community, and political ideas, he didn't necessarily see the same type of experience for him in a traditional residence hall. He mentions a hypothetical situation in which he would be placed with a roommate whose only interaction with another Latino might be the person who "came to clean the yard." I ask Daniel to tell me more of his experience and what it is like to be Latino or Chicano at Berkeley. He shares that as a student of color there has been a lot of doubt. The experience on Piedmont and working in Lupe Gallegos' office (Director of Chicana/Latino Student Development) and hearing the harassing phone calls that attacked the Latino

community and seeing the Cal Patriot (conservative student newspaper) attacking the community. Daniel shares that the Cal Patriot accused MEChA of being an extreme organization, and when the issue of driver's licenses for undocumented workers came up, there was a mock driver's license with a Mexican with a beard under a sombrero perpetuating other stereotypical images. More specifically, Daniel states were articles and editorials attacking Casa Magdalena Mora and Casa Joaquin (off campus student cooperative) of being segregationist, and extremist. Daniel mentions that many of the dining and custodial workers on campus are Latino and finds the low wages and the University's dealing with low income students unfriendly, disrespectful, and demeaning. Again, the resulting experience according to Daniel is a feeling of "Damn, do we fit? And is the only way to fit is to leave our community behind? That's how it felt a lot of times. This university doesn't respect me, doesn't respect my parents, and my community." Daniel mentions that it was because of his experience in Casa that he was able to meet staff from across campus, which helps, but also realizes that many involved staff are overextended because they're providing time and support that aren't necessarily directly related to their jobs.

Daniel shared that many residents eventually leave the house having made four or five good friends in the house, and many often come back after they've left to visit—this, he points out doesn't happen on other floors because they don't have the same type of community. He shares when residents go home for the weekend, they might bring food back for everyone on the floor that their mother may have packed for them. Many residents go on road trips together since they're from the same area. Much of this feeling of community is inherent in the structure the Casa provides through retreats, and seminar, reinforcing that as

Daniel states, “we’re here together” and the “choice to be in a community.” The community support becomes central to understanding the Casa as a hub for Latinos on campus and a place of support for even those who don’t live in the house. He mentions that many of the programs and community events are open and allow affiliated groups to meet within the house, which in turn, lend to the larger community spirit of the house and the feeling of home.

An African American Voice at UC Berkeley

Bianca Baldrige

Bianca was the Theme Program Advisor for the African American Theme Program and had been in that position for 2 years. Bianca had just graduated and at the time of our conversation, and I had known her for almost three years. Although we hadn’t had many deep conversations, I looked forward to our conversation because she was always friendly and always had a smile on her face. Bianca also served as a staff member on the Summer Bridge staff so she was always around the office. Bianca is originally South Central LA and just graduated from UC Berkeley with a bachelor’s in American Studies with an emphasis on Educational Social Change. Bianca plans on teaching for a while but eventually would like to work for a non-profit agency for black people and somehow involve that with a charter school in either LA or the Bay Area. Bianca stated that she’d wait and see where she was after her master’s and where she would go for her Ph.D.

Bianca notes that the community growing up in South Central LA, was predominantly black and Latino. There were a few areas in her neighborhood that were Caribbean, working or middle class, but Bianca’s block tended to be fairly diverse. We laughed that it was probably just her block. She shares that one lady on the corner was a

Filipina woman married to a Caribbean man, next door were Muslims. There were a lot of elderly black families, so now the people Bianca grew up with are old and their kids are taking over their parents' houses. Bianca felt the community on her block was always good. People took care of and looked out for each other. They had block parties and there were "happy black people all the time" and a lot of kids running around." She conveyed that the older kids would pass on information to the younger ones, such as not to be outside beyond a certain time, or not to go beyond two blocks of the neighborhood. Everyone became aware of what the rules of the community were and not to be involved in the things that might bring trouble—though it was "always easy to get involved in nonsense, but my family protected me from that." When I asked how they protected her from that, because it was all around, Bianca spoke of the tight knit family she has, "It is all around me, well, I come from a minister's family. My grandfather is the pastor of our church and it was a family church, so they lived three blocks away. My mother always drove them to the events, so it was always my mom, my pastor and grandfather and me and my family. I was never into all of that because I was going to leave at some point, so I didn't get into all of that. My brother had to be sheltered a little bit more. He is a year and a half older." She has a half-sister who grew up in a different house.

Bianca knew that she always wanted to go to school. She self identifies as a nerd and because she liked school she always knew that she would eventually go to college. Because she was a nerd, she was always the smart kid in class and teachers were always giving her opportunities to do things—encouraging her to attend events and submit applications for various things. She knew that college was the next step, but didn't really know about UC Berkeley. All she knew was USC and UCLA, she said, "but I didn't know anything about

Berkeley. I heard about Harvard, Princeton, and Yale only on TV, but never knew anyone that went there.” She mentions that where she is from in LA, it’s UCLA and USC. I asked Bianca how she ended up at Berkeley. She mentioned that as a junior high school student she was involved in the California Association of Student Councils (CASC), a statewide program based in Oakland. Through that she met people from Irvine, Piedmont, and all these white, very rich places and it was there she found out that a student could get above a 4.0, because they had no AP courses at her school. That’s when she began to hear about Berkeley and Stanford. She was in the 7th grade.

Bianca shared with me the UC System’s 4% Plan—right after Proposition 209 went into law and affirmative action had been dismantled. Essentially the Plan was if a student was in the top 4% of their class, they automatically got into a UC. If you weren’t accepted into Berkeley or UCLA, they’d automatically send you to Riverside. We laugh, and I add that because UC Riverside is more diverse, that’s where more people of color want to go. She agreed. She applied to Berkeley, UCLA and UC San Diego and recalled receiving a call from someone at UC Santa Cruz asking for her to apply. Of the three UC schools to which she applied, she only got into Berkeley. She didn’t really recognize the prestige of Berkeley until she arrived. She was also admitted into Howard University, but in the end, it came down to money and being close to home.

Bianca first heard about the African American Theme Program through a brochure she received in the mail. Bianca was at first hesitant to live in the theme program because the amount of additional work and expectations, however, she decided to live in the program at the last moment when others from the CASC program also applied. She describes her decision to live in the house as a desire to be “comfortable” because she’d be a minority in

the school with no AP courses, in a different part of the state. She didn't want to have to explain to anyone. She recalls calling Evette Castillo, the former Assistant Director of Academic Services to ask her if she could still apply. She did, and got in. She shares that it was initially great. She attended CalSO (Cal Student Orientation) and hated it because there were only 8 black people there and she claims that she could name all of them. One of the best parts of attending CalSO was that she met the other 8 black students. Out of the eight, five of them wanted to be on the Afro Floor. She said, "I grew up watching the show A Different World and thought this is going to be fun. I'm still friends with my freshman year roommate. I would have been miserable if I would have lived anywhere else. I mean I would have learned how to adapt because I had to in high school, but I didn't want to. Our community was great. Our TPA wasn't that great, but we just started doing things on our own. It was exactly what I would have gotten had I gone to Howard in terms of being in a black environment—staying up late talking, talking about our experiences in class, talking about or RA getting in trouble." She laughs.

Bianca's motivation for becoming a TPA began early in her experiences in high school and leadership and attending conferences. Upon coming to Berkeley it was through her previous leadership experiences she felt that the environment was not working to its full potential because the TPA wasn't working to his full potential and wasn't involved that much, and Bianca thought, "I could do this."

I asked her what being in an all black environment did for her self-esteem and how she developed in her identity. She said, "Let's just say I walked into Cal in a perm and walked out cutting my hair and going natural because we live in an environment with black people who are diverse in some ways—but not as much as an HBCU because Berkeley feeds

in a lot from LA black people and Bay Area black people are either from Oakland or the suburbs before you come into Cal so there's not much variety in that. Then you have the Nigerians, Ethiopians. Just seeing yourself in other people—seems like women go through so many self-esteem issues in terms of image. People wouldn't go to class if their hair was not straightened and flowing. 'Are you serious? Put on a beanie and let's go.' I just saw a lot of self hatred." I asked her where she thought this self hatred came from. She believes that a lot of the self-hatred comes from images, media and always being the white norm, but a lot of it comes from within the community. Bianca recalls her mother holding her nose when she was two to make her nose "more narrow." She remembers always having big hair and her mother saying, "Ooh, you need a perm." She stated, "That stuff sticks with you. When you're in college and you're learning about yourself in a new environment and you see a girl walk by and she's a size 2 and she has her hair permed and a bunch of make-up and you see the guys all the guys in the Greek organizations hollering at her, it just sticks with you, and I just saw that." She stressed again that the messages she always received was her hair had to be "straight and flowy." She said, "Freshman year was a trip, just relating to other black women."

Bianca spoke about the seminar led by Anya Booker. She viewed it as an opportunity for her to learn how to discuss issues and felt she grew a lot from it because there were times when she was very quiet and not say anything. Through the class she learned that she has a passion for issues affecting the black community and talking about issues like interracial dating, music, and standards of beauty. These issues were not only discussed in class, but they would go back to the floor to talk about them. These experiences, Bianca shares, taught her a lot about herself and challenged her to think differently about all the things she thought

she believed. I asked her what meaning the African American Theme Program (AATP) had for the black community at Berkeley and she semi-jokingly responds, “Everything.” She then continues with “It’s huge. Honestly, looking back on my freshman year and looking back on the two years when I was TPA, I would think that a lot of students wouldn’t have made it if they hadn’t had that community. It’s hard. Coming into a classroom and being the only black person and having to come back to a roommate who doesn’t understand—or even incidents that happened in the residence hall such as the lounge or bathroom being vandalized non-residents on the floor smoking marijuana on the floor to make it seem like it was a resident that was violating policy. Bianca views the AATP as a great alternative to the traditional residence halls. Bianca shares that the black community doesn’t have space on campus and the Afro Floor has become the place to have meetings—a home and a hub for other students on campus. She mentioned that although cliques within the black community develop, all the older students always came back to the floor.

I shared with Bianca that when Shannell taught the seminar I was able to speak to AATP residents and asked them what it was like to be black on the Berkeley campus. One young woman stated that in some of her classes students would get together for study groups and no one would pick her to participate, or one young man walking down Telegraph Avenue and never being offered the leaflets to attend one of the white fraternity parties. I recalled that although he wouldn’t have attended, he shared that it just showed that as a black man he wasn’t welcome and didn’t belong. I asked Bianca if she knew of other incidents. She shared with me that there were many, such as rude and insensitive instructors and GSIs not taking the time to explain complex assignments or a low grade for students of color and the experience was particularly difficult for those in the sciences trying to find a lab partner. We

talk about the experience as being a double edge sword—either being invisible, or being the one who stands out. Bianca shared a story about when she responded to an incident, her residents saw she was visibly upset, followed her outside to address a situation. The residents had pajamas, a chemistry book, and backpacks and because of their identity were called gang bangers. We laugh. She continues with saying a number of black students are asked if they're athletes. While not necessarily meant to be offensive, the inference is that if you're black and at this school, you must be an athlete.

Some of her new understandings as a result of living on the Afro Floor included who's black and who's not and what makes someone blacker than someone else—such as issues with hair and skin color. You don't need a natural to be black. She says that it is the self-hatred piece that she doesn't like.

Summary

This chapter presented the narratives and personal experiences of the ten research partners from both campuses. The following chapter will analyze the narratives using the concepts of Collective Identity, Communicative Rationality, Competency and Action, and Transformation of the Public Sphere.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter analyzes the narrative data utilizing the concepts of Collective Identity, Communicative Rationality, Competency and Action, and Transformation of the Public Sphere. The narrative data, as Bernstein (1983: 162) suggests reflects a genuine dialogue or conversation in which what is understood between the hearer and speaker guides the movement of the dialogue. It is this concept of movement and fluidity of the conversation itself which is distinctive about hermeneutical understanding and research. This understanding, according to Ricoeur (1998: 56) is “not concerned with grasping a fact but with apprehending a possibility of being.” I relate this possibility of understanding to Collective Identity as the *who*; Communicative Rationality, Competency and Action as the *how*, and Transformation of the Public Sphere as the *where* and *what* oriented toward the future.

Collective Identity

Kearney writes (2002:139-140), “the power of empathy with living things other than ourselves—is a major test not just of poetic imagination but of ethical sensitivity....that catharsis affords a singular mix of pity and fear whereby we experience the suffering of other beings as if we were them. And it is precisely this double-take of difference and identity—experiencing oneself as another and the other as oneself—that provokes a reversal of our natural attitude to things and opens us to novel ways of seeing and being.” As readers and hearers of the stories, we understand identities through narrative as being defined internally such as Christian’s choosing to claim with pride every aspect of his identity when he states,

“I identify with every part... I just say that I’m black, Puerto Rican and Colombian.” Or it evokes pain when defined by others as in Daniel’s experience of hearing “Beaner go back to your country.” As Daniel continues, one cannot help but feel moved knowing the questions in ones mind that begin to emerge: “I don’t belong here,” “I should go back home,” and “Do I fit in?” According to Habermas (1994: 132), “Cultures survive only if they draw the strength to transform themselves from criticism and secession.” For Daniel and others, the transformation occurs through overcoming the struggle of adversity while remaining engaged.

Leah shares her story of walking into predominantly white parties and receiving unwelcome stares indicating the sense of “everybody looking at us” and therefore them seeming to ask, “What are you doing here?” She indicates that nothing is generally said, but realizes the feeling of discomfort and acknowledges the unfriendly environment among peers in which she is not welcome. She understands herself as an outsider—a Latina among whites with a “proclivity to demonize alterity as a menace to our collective identity” (Kearney 2003: 65). When presented with such situations, she indicates that she would like to say “B*tch, what’s wrong with you? I worked just as hard to get here as you did.” This questioning of whether a student feels as if they belong on campus was present at both Cornell and Berkeley—how the students choose to respond is one of the things they have under their control and are expected to manage because as Altbach (1999) and others found, many universities, even where racial incidents have been started by white students it is the reaction of underrepresented students that often engender administrative sanctions.

For some students, the cumulative impact of these incidents might elicit a feeling of anger, for others, the experiences may lead them to fear for their safety. As such, the theme

programs provide a safe haven from this hostility. In Daniel's case, it was his fellow residents within *La Casa* who eventually referred him to specific staff on campus which provided the response he sought, and in turn, receiving the support he needed.

Unfortunately, some university staff may see this issue as Daniel's problem alone, and as Altbach and others state, "peripheral to the academic enterprise." Habermas (1994: 108) acknowledges for Daniel a "struggle for recognition" and an unredeemed expectation of respect:

This struggle over the interpretation and satisfaction of historically unredeemed claims is a struggle for legitimate rights in which collective actors are once again involved, combating a lack of respect for their dignity. In this "struggle for recognition" collective experience of violated integrity are articulated...

The collective group may experience what Bell (1997) defines as "internalized oppression" that Bianca witnessed, which emerges from an abject self-image which she believes develops from messages produced by a media absent of racial representation and a white standard of beauty. This standard, so ingrained in us at an early age, Bianca recalls her mother holding her nose when she was two to make her nose "more narrow" and the messages she received of her hair having to be "straight and flowy" contributed to her identity formation. Able to move beyond it, but not to forget it, she states, "That stuff sticks with you."

Victoria's narrative also conveys a degree of shame when her mother, a Mexican American living in Texas referred to Mexicans as "the people across the river" and painfully recalls hearing her mother say, "'the Mexicans were the ones who had just come across who are picking our cotton and working on the roads', even though my mother picked cotton, even though my father was a migrant worker they somehow see themselves differently and that bothered them and so therefore, they made sure that I saw myself as Hispanic." For

Victoria's mother is a horizon of internalized oppression or what Freire (2002) might refer to as a colonized mentality. For Victoria, there is a reclamation of identity and pride that came only through support and the acquisition of knowledge. This knowledge acquisition is an act of emancipation.

In these stories, the theme is one of overcoming adversity and an underlying theme of struggle—not only from the outside, but within. Dealing with this struggle and overcoming adversity becomes a distraction to the pursuit of the academic endeavor, such as Daniel's attempt to find assistance reporting a bias related incident or Bianca's examples of unresponsive and casually indifferent instructors and difficulty finding study groups. Undoubtedly, these experiences impede one's ability to truly excel, especially at academically rigorous institutions such as Berkeley and Cornell. Theme programs provide direct support with others who may be experiencing the same challenges, and feelings of isolation. With so few underrepresented minorities, many are left in isolation as they experience college—theme programs facilitate finding others with whom they may have a greater chance to find things in common so they may focus on their education.

From the fact that persons can only be individuated through socialization it follows that moral concern is owed equally to persons both as irreplaceable individuals and as members of the community, and hence it connects justice with solidarity (Habermas 1998 40).

This shared struggle of identity and negotiation of meaning as Habermas suggests have a continuity that extends beyond the life-historical perspectives of their members. Reflection cannot speak from nowhere, for it must always begin by interpreting the cultural products of a specific tradition (Ricoeur 1998: 18). The shared and collective identity within the community fulfills the first validity claim of comprehension—the nuances of culture need no further explanation. Spanish language, food and music become the domains truth and

trust. Leah notes, “You may not know how to say anything in Spanish, but you definitely know how to say *plátano*. You know what *Goya* is.” Both Leah and Christian indicate that language is central to identity and the tie that transcends culture. Leah states that “the language unites us. There are things about the Spanish language that you can’t describe, or you can’t transcribe, or you can’t translate to English” and continues with language “not only keeps us united, but keeps us passionate, and keeps us passionate about our culture and who we are and keeps our identity in check.” In many respects, language serves as a collective identity for those who speak Spanish—those who grew up with the language being spoken in their homes and were raised on *plátano* and *Goya*. Collective identity (Habermas 1979) is not only the basis for community, it is the community. Conversely for every community there is a collective identity.

For those living in the theme house, the feeling of home and safety moves beyond that of living with people who look like them. All the houses report a connection with the former residents beyond living in the house. The physical space and permanence of the house represents a safe haven. Bianca, Daniel, and Leah all reported that former residents regularly return to visit the physical space of their respective theme house as well as get to know the current residents. It is not likely that this happens the same way in traditional residence halls inasmuch as the theme programs serve as hubs and gathering centers for the larger ethnic community—helping to network residents with not only other students, but staff within the larger campus community.

The essence of community may be focused on the ethnic food, music, and common language as noted in Leah’s, Christian’s, and Daniel’s narratives, but evokes feelings of comfort and belonging nonetheless. As Susan Murphy acknowledges, program houses may

have “a significant impact on students finding a sense of home or a sense of community while they are a student of color in a predominantly white institution and being able to ground themselves, so they can do the best they can personally and academically.” If we as administrators understand this concept as it relates to the populations we serve, are we doing all we can ensure the success of underrepresented students? If the institutions that have these theme program houses report that they are valued and successful, why do we continue to insist on doing things the way we have always done and assume this one-size-fits-all mentality? In light of declining numbers of certain groups at our top universities, how can we ensure that those who are admitted absent of affirmative action policies post-Proposition 209 are successful both personally and academically?

Even though there is some sense of shared culture and ethnicity, we must understand that even within the theme houses there is diversity. One challenge might be seen as the fluidity and choosing of ethnic identity as suggested by Song (2003). Much of a defining of who we are seems to become more important based on our education and our own experiences. As Daisy shared, her parents are Peruvian, so she wouldn't necessarily say she was American. She acknowledges that she didn't know about the term Latina, and heard Hispanic, and embraced it because it sounded like Spanish, so when people asked, 'Are you Spanish?' she'd say “yeah, I'm like Spanish.” When she came to college she learned to identify herself with different vocabulary and learned about herself as a result of living in the theme house.

While the most visible aspect to focus on is the concept of skin color, as Christian shares, it wasn't until he came to the United States did skin color become such a divisive issue. It wasn't until he came to New York City that he saw the difference between black

and white. As Herda (1999: 25) writes, “The prejudice or bias becomes a necessary part of the act of interpretation, because we bring our background and being to the act.” In Colombia, he didn’t see color as a concern. He didn’t see his uncle as white, but then acknowledges his uncle as “Hispanic white.” Christian saw himself and his uncle as the same, and though they differed in skin tone, Christian never asked “Why am I so dark?” It was when he came to the United States that Christian realized that people used labels of black and white—and making determinations about him because of it. Leah frames this phenomenon a little differently and in sharing her experience of high school “everybody was Puerto Rican, you had your different shades...but it didn’t change the fact that we were all Puerto Rican.” For her, the shift of a collective identity went from an understanding that even though others were darker, all were Puerto Rican to that of a broader pan-Latino paradigm. What emerged for Leah was to those outside the Latino community Leah was Latina. To those on the inside, her identity and collective identity becomes more specifically Puerto Rican. Within the larger campus community the need for connection and a pan-Latino collective identity becomes increasingly more important. Habermas (1994: 118) writes:

The challenge becomes all the more painful the more the tendencies to self-assertion take on a fundamentalist and separatist character, whether because experiences of impotence lead the minority struggling for recognition to take a regressive position or because the minority in question has to use mass mobilization to awaken consciousness in order to articulate a newly constructed identity.

As Don stated, “If these students were randomly assigned throughout the other residence halls they wouldn’t have the same kind of political identity.” This political and collective identity translates in the form of political clout which compels us to see the forest through the trees and consider the collective group identity in addition to each person’s

individual identity. Ken acknowledges that as a result of the various theme houses and group identities on campus, he's had to learn more about the experiences of others to better serve his residents, indicating this pursuit of his understanding of other groups would not necessarily occur absent of the collective identities on campus.

Communicative Rationality, Competency and Action

Central to understanding the essence of theme housing one must consider the different lived experiences of the hearer and the speaker. Vast differences exist in how the positions understand each other dependent upon their present horizon, intents, and actions. Communicative action is “generalized, abstracted, and freed from all limits—the practice of deliberation is extended to an inclusive community that does not in principle exclude any subject capable of speech and action who can make relevant contributions” (Habermas 1998: 41). Some living outside the theme communities, such as Joseph Sabia view the programs as “indoctrination centers where ethnic studies professors—mostly from the Africana department—brainwash minorities into believing that white supremacy is the dominant American ideology”; others residing within and outside of the houses view them as supportive communities. On one side, those who view the programs as separatist indoctrination centers run by pseudo academics, on the other side political activists claiming space, finding voice, and taking care of their own. The tension between the two positions is further exacerbated by the absence of trust, divergent truths, and values that are not shared as Don reflected upon the debates at the time of the Residential Initiative, “there was a lack of trust, there was no respect, it was the “we”-“they” mentality.” For the minority student, they are expected to engage in a communicative manner while responding to comments such as, “oh would you turn that down—can you turn down that crap,” or “Beaner go back to your

country.” These types of attacks do not provide opportunity for meaningful dialogue and perpetuates the “we” versus “they” mentality. The resulting debate occurs not on an intellectual level, but begins to erode and gnaw away at the very core of who we are. Unable to engage in meaningful conversation, which Gadamer (2002: 385) refers to as “a process of coming to an understanding,” we fail to discover a shared horizon for understanding the other position, both sides retreat back to their spaces—for some, if they’re lucky, back to their theme house—for the privileged critics, the claim for home is every other space within the larger campus community.

On the campus level, the inability to find a common ground and shared values has resulted in years of strategic action upon action of student protests, hunger strikes, sit ins, critical editorials, departmental posturing, and marketing of programs. Absent of truth, trust, and shared values, the founding of Ujamaa itself, was strategic with the armed takeover of Willard Straight Hall. As suggested previously by Bañuelos (2006), to challenge perceived exclusion of the larger institutional structures, the underrepresented have a need for collectively creating “counter-spaces of cultural citizenship.” In doing so, the claiming of residential space and choosing to live within is liberating and strategic—understood as a redemptive action for the unfulfilled promise of emancipation for the former colonized and enslaved. The legacy of some houses are an example of the racial unrest of the 1960’s, of which, the divisions on both sides of the program house debate remain today.

At Berkeley, all six theme programs are contained under the general umbrella of academic theme programs. To avoid the critics of affirmative action and its policies, there is no distinction made regarding our ethnic theme programs being different from that of Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) or the Global Environment Theme House

(GETH). While WiSE might also be viewed as retention-based, by policy, the defining of Casa Magdalena Mora and the African American Theme Program as academic programs is effectively strategic. If UC Berkeley was a private institution and not a public institution, perhaps a bolder stance such as Stanford's could be made in distinguishing between programs that serve underrepresented students. Such a statement would certainly make public a commitment of the university to prospective students and the various groups on campus which might address as in Daniel's case—help the marginalized feel welcomed at this university.

Susan's recount of needing to exercise discretion in carrying out the president's decision was both political and strategic. Privately she debated with the president that that she felt not allowing freshmen to live in the program houses "was going in the wrong direction," but as his vice president, publicly Susan had to represent and promote the idea of all of the Residential Initiative. Not doing so could have serious consequences on her success under this administration as she states, "I don't have the flexibility to be able to say publicly 'this is what the president's announcing, but I disagree with him' if I want to be a vice president. I could do that, but I could lose my position to do that." In this instance open dialogue and a strategic approach was warranted for reasons including self-preservation.

Communicative rationality is an aspect of learning associated with critique, recognizing our mistakes, and choosing another way of thinking about or doing something (Herda 1999: 67). Freire (2002) suggests that the only effective instrument is a humanizing pedagogy in which the revolutionary leadership establishes a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed and proposes a participatory approach which takes the people's

historicity as their starting point. He believes that the movement of inquiry be directed towards humanization.

The pursuit of full humanity, however, cannot be carried out in isolation or individualism, but only in fellowship and solidarity; therefore it cannot unfold in the antagonistic relations between oppressors and oppressed. No one can be authentically human while he prevents others from being so (2002: 85).

An exercise of communicative rationality would be President Rawlings' openness to change his position on a major and controversial issue which he himself—at least publicly—initiated. As Susan indicated, President Rawlings initially wanted to restrict freshmen from living in program houses and through countless dialogues with the campus community, both public and private, he agreed to a compromise. It should be noted however, that this reversal of position took place following protests, sit-ins, and hunger strikes. The program house debate forced a dialogue to occur, and mutual agreements to be made, for as Don stated with regard to the program house residents and staff, “You can't exclude them when discussions come out about policy and program, because they have to be taken into account, whereas, if we didn't have these special programs they could be lost even more-so. If these students were randomly assigned throughout the other residence halls they wouldn't have the same kind of political identity.”

Transformation of the Public Sphere

We call events and occasions 'public' when they are open to all, in contrast to closed or exclusive affairs—as we speak of public places or public houses. But as in the expression of 'public building,' the term need not refer to general accessibility; the building does not even have to be open to public traffic (Habermas 1991: 1-2). The theme houses are public and not closed spaces. They are open to anyone who chooses to study about the themes within them. Habermas (1994: 128) writes,

If a well-functioning public sphere with open communication structures that permit and promote discussions oriented to self-understanding can develop in such multicultural societies against the background of a liberal culture and on the basis of voluntary associations, then the democratic process of actualizing equal individual rights will also extend to guaranteeing different ethnic groups and their cultural forms of life equal rights to coexistence.

One might say that Cornell's public sphere was transformed in 1996 with the adoption of the Residential Initiative that called for moving all freshmen to North Campus so that they may have a "common experience" to facilitate their transition from high school to the university. However, as affirmed in the Residential Initiative, program houses had been facilitating the transition of new students since their founding. Some students like Daisy, Leah and Daniel are first generation students. Some students come from homogeneous neighborhoods like Bianca, Daisy, Leah, Christian and Daniel. Most of the conversation partners reported that their theme programs helped them acclimate to life at college where they are no longer the majority.

Within the theme house there is greater concern and responsibility to take care of the new residents, with returning residents acting with *authentic Fürsorge*, leaping ahead of and taking care to hand back authentically (Heidegger 1996). Leah believes that she would have been a completely different person if she had not lived in the Latino Living Center. It opened her eyes about who she was and who she wanted to be. What the LLC did was open doors to other places, and other options. Without the LLC Leah shares,

I wouldn't have met a lot of the people who are very important and crucial to me right now. I would have either assimilated and I wouldn't be proud of who I am as a Latina woman, as a Latina lesbian. I wouldn't be so fervent, and passionate about making a difference in other people's lives—people like me that are coming in from an underrepresented point of view.

Similarly, older residents of the other programs participate in recruitment and retention of new students—they are able to give back to the community by sharing advice about courses,

and mentoring younger students. This solicitude would not occur to the same degree in an all freshman residence hall due to the lack of returning students serving as role models and assisting the staff provide an overall experience.

The theme houses provide the fellowship and support among others who not only understand, but share their issues and arrive to campus with shared cultural understandings. As Ricoeur (2000: xiii) notes, “The self only constitutes its identity through a relational structure.” This fertile ground of comprehension and shared truth housed in a shared culture, enables the community to develop deeper levels of trust and conversation from which they may act upon *communicatively*. Additionally, the theme programs provide purpose. In other words, these communities clarify expectations of the programs and provide needed structure to students—many of whom are first generation college students devoid of academic role models. The structure provides accountability and others who concern themselves with making sure that the students are going to class and receiving the assistance they need.

In his first year Daniel encountered individuals who made what he perceived to be racist, verbal attacks and faculty and advisors who were unwilling or unprepared to deal with mediating the tension and felt that there was no staff or faculty to go to so it was the other residents and TPA at Casa who supported Daniel and encouraged him to speak to specific individuals in the offices such as EOP. The campus community or system in this case was broken and in need of transformation, the individuals charged to help and support were either unwilling or unable to understand his needs, and therefore failed to act.

In the process of understanding, a real fusing of horizons occurs—which means that as the historical horizon is projected, it is simultaneously superseded. To bring about this fusion in a regulated way is the task of what we called historically effected consciousness (Gadamer 2002: 306-307).

The experiences in the theme house, Bianca shares, taught her a lot about herself and challenged her to think differently about all the things she thought she believed—she was open to new understandings. New understandings lend themselves to better decision-making when we act. These actions have the potential and promise to be transformative. Through the class Bianca learned that she had a passion for issues affecting the black community and enjoyed talking about issues such as interracial dating, music, images and standards of beauty. These issues were not only discussed in class, but the conversations would continue back in the community into the early hours in the morning. Through conversation and hearing the stories of others the world is revealed to us. These conversations emanate from the house and are shared with others, raising awareness and ones own understanding.

For administrators, their understandings and formulation of policies transform the public sphere of the campus. These new horizons emerge from conversations, communicative action, and informed praxis. Don shares that as he gained more experience in his position he learned more about the houses and through conversation with students, he “gained a greater appreciation for what program houses offered students that needed or wanted or had an interest in a particular affiliation.” He indicates that it was as a result of this new understanding that he became a strong advocate for the program houses because he believes:

There’s a richness within this type of residential program that many institutions don’t have. We talk about the number of students that are in program houses it’s a relatively small number in comparison to other students that are within traditional residence halls, so why not allow students who have that kind of need and sense of purpose in feeling that would give them something, some added value to their educational experience, but also give them confidence, allow them to gain confidence and feel a sense of worth. Why not allow them to have that opportunity?

So through a lot of dialogue, a lot of discussion Don believes, Cornell was able to turn things around to get people to look at the houses as a strength, and then to think about how they could contribute to the whole rather than being isolated. Don shares that so much effort has been taking place over several years to not feel as though the residents aren't necessarily the ones that have to educate the masses, the challenge being "how do you do it in a collaborative way and feeling that everybody has responsibility." These challenges compel us to work to understand and remain engaged with those we serve and with whom we work.

Susan shared that because the concept of theme housing is a controversial one, professionally the program house debate challenged her to really explore the motivation behind the program houses and their residents "and then be able to integrate them into my own belief system," resulting in what Gadamer (2002) refers to as a fusion of horizons. "Personally," she continues, "more just as an exposure in some depth into the sense that I had to engage with those communities or the staff and students involved with them."

What Ken values about Ujamaa and being a residence hall director is having the freedom, the opportunity, and the space to not only educate black people, but also have an impact on what white students learn about black people—about African culture, to work with other communities around developing an accurate understanding of what is the African experience. These conversations between the different backgrounds must occur if we expect change to occur. Herda (1999: 7) writes that "language is a critical medium for any meaningful social change to take place." The challenge is how to create and sustain a dialogue between different identities to occur and incorporate this into the existing structure. The goal isn't to limit how people should live and with whom, but to create structures in

which while providing safe, secure environments, opportunities for engagement between and among the different ethnicities can take place.

Susan and I discussed the paradox of why many individuals raise concerns over the black folks living in Ujamaa and the Latinos living in the LLC and yet no one seems to question or view the predominantly white Greek system or single-gender housing as separatist or self-segregationist. Susan shares, “it’s exactly the example I cite, I mean you get upset with three tables of African American students in the back left corner of the Ivy Room. In my day, the DUs were here, the Chi This, were there, the Kappas were there, but if you’re white, you don’t see that because they all look like you. If you’re not white you do see it. And if you’re white you see all the black kids sitting together. It’s the same issue.”

It is precisely this double-standard that is often overlooked:

Throughout history, patterns of privilege have been justified by elaborate facades. Dominant classes seeking a stable social order have consistently nurtured and underwritten these ideological facades and, insofar as their power permitted, blocked the emergence of alternatives. This is what we mean by “legitimation”: the fostering of a generalized consciousness among individuals which prevents the formation of the social bonds and critical understanding whereby existing social conditions might be transformed (Bowles & Gintis 1976: 104)

As Freire writes (2002: 83), “people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation.” This change is possible through praxis. Herda (1999: 7) believes, “When I change, the rest of the world changes.” There is no question that the theme programs are transformative—in which Bianca sums this transformation and the revealing and emergence of *ipse* (Ricoeur 1992): “I walked into Cal in a perm and walked out cutting my hair and going natural.”

Summary

This chapter provided an analysis of the data according to the research categories of Collective Identity, Communicative Rationality, Competency and Action, and Transformation of the Public Sphere. Additional themes that emerged in the analysis of data included transition, isolation, fear and safety, struggle, community, purpose, solicitude, and place. The following chapter provides a summary of the research, the implications of the research, further research ideas, personal reflection and conclusion.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Ethnicity-based theme housing at Berkeley and Cornell provide supportive environments for the students who reside there. Academically linked to an ethnic studies department through a seminar or faculty, these programs provide a supportive environment for residents interested in learning more about a particular culture or ethnicity. Moreover, ethnic theme housing provides students with greater choice of where they may choose to live and exist. This choice, conceived independent of coercion and intentionally structured with opportunities between groups for sustained dialogue makes authentic social integration and the multicultural campus possible. The lack of ethnic theme housing perpetuates the contrived idea of social integration through limiting one's choices and assumes a one-size-fits-all position with regard to student housing irrespective student developmental and social need.

These programs are not without their critics, however. On one side of the issue are those who view the programs as separatist indoctrination centers run by pseudo academics. On the other side political activists claiming space, finding voice, and taking care of their own. The data are analyzed using the research categories of Collective Identity as the *who*; Communicative Rationality, Competency and Action as the *how*, and Transformation of the Public Sphere as the *where* and *what* oriented toward the future. Emergent themes from the analysis of data included transition, isolation, fear and safety, struggle, community, purpose, solicitude, and place. The goal that reveals itself isn't to limit how people should live and with whom, but to create the structures in which opportunities for engagement between and

among the different ethnicities—and theme houses—can take place within a safe environment. The challenge is how to create and sustain this dialogue between different identities and incorporate value into the existing structure. The narrative data, which reflected that the experience of underrepresented students on predominantly white campuses calls us to examine the following themes:

- Transition- some students are first generation and come from homogeneous neighborhoods—theme programs help acclimate them to life at college where they are no longer the majority.
- Isolation- with so few underrepresented minorities, many are left in isolation as they experience college—theme programs facilitate finding others with whom they can find things in common so they may focus on their education.
- Fear and Safety- theme programs provide a safe space on campuses sometimes perceived as hostile.
- Struggle- overcoming adversity becomes a distraction to the pursuit of the academic endeavor. Theme programs provide direct support with others who may be experiencing the same challenges.
- Community- fellowship and support among others who not only understand, but share their issues and arrive with shared cultural understandings.
- Purpose- expectations of the programs provide structure to students—many of whom are first generation college students without academic role models.
- Solicitude- many residents participate in recruitment and retention of new students and many provide advice about courses, mentor younger students.
- Place- provides a place of permanence throughout their college experience

Implications

The implications of this paper represent an application of critical hermeneutics to higher education, and more specifically student affairs. This understanding provides a context which opens staff and administrators up to new horizons and new possibilities to better serve their students. For administrators, their understandings and formulation of policies transform the public sphere of the campus. These new horizons emerge from conversations, communicative action, and informed praxis. Critical hermeneutic research is as Herda (1999: 9) describes, not “a revolutionary position; rather it is a position to which one is summoned,” similarly for the student affairs practitioner as an agent of change, the work is beyond that of a job, but instead a calling.

This understanding of how students are shaped by their environment and experiences will assist the practitioner in policy formation and program offerings if we truly wish to consider the successful matriculation of all our students. How we understand not only their needs, but who they are, requires critical inquiry, communicative competency, and a contextual interpretation of what is revealed—“Critical hermeneutics means passing judgment on that interpretation and speaking out on its legitimacy” (Herda 1999:3). This legitimacy—redeemed in the form of action—results in policy and program development. These policies then, have implications for transforming a campus, but more specifically, admissions recruitment, orientation programs, and residential life.

The implications for integrated curriculum within the context of a living-learning environment should be further considered. The potential for developing a community of learners living together and attending the same related courses would provide opportunities for conversation and exploration both inside and outside of the classroom. This structure

may encourage greater faculty involvement and interaction. Indeed, many first-year students would benefit from the additional support of being with others who are taking the same courses, as well as the potential for a community with a structured academic program.

The implications for admissions recruitment might include programs geared toward black and Latino students using the theme houses for hosting weekends so the prospective students may experience the racial climate of a campus within a safe environment, as is done at both Cornell and Berkeley; formalizing a mentor program for incoming students of color and matching them with current theme program residents since much of this is done informally; and the creation of a house alumni association as many former residents continue their association with the houses after they leave. The houses represent a recognition and value of a collective identity, and may influence one's decision to attend a particular college because of it. If an institution is able to provide an environment that is welcoming to underrepresented students, the result may mean more applicants from those specific groups, which may increase the admissions rate, and thus impacting the overall yield of enrolled students. In light of anti-affirmative action policy, there may be unrealized opportunity through programs.

For orientation programs, the implications might include using the houses as a meeting place for the new students of particular communities during orientation week. Involving faculty and college representatives during orientation and throughout the year would further promote the idea of the living learning community engaging each other on more meaningful issues such as the concepts of race, ethnicity, social justice and their intersections with other identities. Specific programs focused on both the social and

academic needs of the student transition using identity and identity models as a consideration might aid the student in their transition.

For residential life programs the challenge in the creation of these communities might be how to ensure that the specific theme communities remain engaged with one another and not serve as insular places of retreat. These spaces should be seen as places to assist in transition and that the opportunity for cultural immersion does not come at the cost of educating oneself about difference and understanding people from other backgrounds. With this in mind, the theme houses can and should be seen as viable communities aimed at providing students with the freedom of choice, freedom of association, and the power to understand on a critical level who they are and who they want to be.

Further Research Ideas

Further research ideas might include additional conversation partners who could provide additional insight to the dynamic at UC Berkeley such as those who deliver services directly to underrepresented students. Additionally, I believe some rich conversations—as I experienced with Leah and Christian—could occur with multiple people present. There was an exchange between the conversation partners independent of myself, in which deeper understanding occurred. These groups might include group conversations of various combinations such as involving multiple residents of Casa Magdalena Mora, the African American Theme Program, the Latino Living Center, and Ujamaa Residential College Community. Conversations on how to develop sustained dialogue focusing on inter-group understanding should be explored. Other conversations might include the broader ethnic populations on campus, or student participants from Cornell and Berkeley engaged in conversations together. Conversations with former resident alumni might be result in

interesting data on their understanding the houses may have had on their college experience and may have contributed to who they are.

Personal Reflection

Upon reflecting on my personal experiences of the theme houses at both Cornell and Berkeley—and having spoken to a number of students not a part of this study—I believe these communities to be central to the overall experience and success of the students residing within. As Don King mentioned, “there’s a richness within this type of residential program that many institutions don’t have.” I believe that these communities not only provide better social and academic support for the students residing within, but call to mind a home away from home.

If we as administrators are serious about the successful matriculation of underrepresented and at times disadvantaged students, why are some of us so opposed to the idea of “all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria” *and living in Ujamaa*? As Susan recalled white fraternities and sororities sitting together in the Ivy Room, “If you’re white you don’t see that because they all look like you. If you’re not white you do see it. And if you’re white you see all the black kids sitting together. It’s the same issue.” This double standard exists, and yet no one cries segregation. This to me seems to be the more important unanswered question.

Conclusion

If our universities assume any role in educating and shaping our leaders of tomorrow, do we have any responsibility to ensure that students are provided with environments in which they may be successful? The narrative data show that for those who resided within them, the programs provide a unique supportive environment in which the students are able

to be successful and matriculate. Of the six students participating in this study, four of them were recent graduates from these two highly selective and world renowned universities. All of the students reported that the theme programs in which they lived were critical to their success.

What the theme programs accomplish is the expansion of the horizon of choice from which the students can choose, which includes a choice of safety free from racial bias, and the choice of community of which to be part. Acting upon this choice is in itself emancipatory from which the student is able to freely choose where to live, with whom he or she will associate, and how the student chooses to live during their college experience. Through exercising this choice as a conscious one, the action is based on initial reflection and as Freire might suggest—a transformational act. The act is transformational in the sense that it shows staff and administrators that there is a demand for such a community, and more importantly in the sense that students will surely experience their four years differently than if they chose to be randomly assigned to any ordinary dormitory. College is difficult enough for students, let alone having to deal with the struggle of experiencing sometimes hostile living environments. Theme programs provide underrepresented students a supportive living experience and a home away from home so they may better focus on their studies. As such, the essence of the houses should be further explored if we wish to better serve all our students. Until we achieve authentic representative diversity on the college campus and the unfulfilled promises redeemed, *a la luta continua*.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Altbach, P., Lomotey, K., and Kyle, S.
1999 Race in higher education: The continuing crisis in American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, political, and economic challenges. Philip Altbach, Robert Berdahl, and Patricia Gumpert (Eds.). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Anderson, M.
1999 The fiction of “Diversity without Oppression”: Race, ethnicity, identity, and power. In *Critical ethnicity*. Robert Tai and Mary Kenyatta (Eds.). Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Astin, A.
1993 *What Matters in College: Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Ballard, A.
1994 Academia’s record of benign neglect. *Change*. pp.39 (Adapted from Ballard, A. [1973]. *The education of black folk: The Afro-American struggle for knowledge in white America*. New York: Harper and Row.)
- Bañuelos, L.
2006 Here they go again with the race stuff. *In Chicana/Latina education in everyday life*. Dolores Delgado Bernal, C. Alejandra Elenes, Francisca E. Godinez, and Sofia Villenas (Eds.). State University of New York Press.
- Barash, J.
1999 The politics of memory: Reflections on practical wisdom and political identity. *In Questioning ethics: Contemporary debates in philosophy*. Richard Kearney and Mark Dooley (Eds.). New York: Routledge.
- Barnard, A. and Spencer, J. (Eds.)
2002 *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. New York: Routledge.
- Bateson, M.
1994 *Peripheral visions: Learning along the way*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Bell, L.
1997 Theoretical foundations for social justice education. *In Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*. Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin (Eds.). New York, Routledge.

- Bellah, R., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W., Swidler, A., and Tipton, S.
1996 *Habits of the heart*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bernstein, R.
1983 *Beyond objectivism and relativism: Science hermeneutics and praxis*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Bocian, M.
1997 *Housing on college campuses: Self-segregation, integration, and other alternatives. A communitarian report*. Battle Creek, MI, The Kellogg Foundation.
- Bowles, S. and Gintis, H.
1976 *Schooling in capitalist America: Educational reform and the contradictions of economic life*. New York: Basic Books.
- Cajete, G.
1994 *The mythic foundation of American Indian education In Look to the Mountain: An ecology of indigenous education*. Durango, CO, Kivaki Press.
- Canclini, N.
1993 *Transformation of modernity: Popular culture in Mexico (3rd Ed.)*. Austin, University of Texas Press.
- Castellanos, J. and Jones, L.
2003 *Latina/o undergraduate experiences in American higher education In The majority in the minority: Expanding the representation of Latina/o faculty, administrators, and students in higher education*. Jeanett Castellanos and Lee Jones, (Eds.). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Chapa, J.
2005 *Affirmative action and percent plans as alternatives for increasing successful participation of minorities in higher education*. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*. 4(3), pp. 181-196.
- Chavira, V. and Phinney, J.
1991 *Adolescents' ethnic identity, self-esteem, and strategies for dealing with ethnicity and minority status*. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 13, 226-7.
- Cockrell, C.
2008 *Unpacking 'diversity': Student accounts of encounters across boundaries*. http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2008/01/24_ucues3.shtml

Cornell University

- 2007 Facts about Cornell
<http://www.cornell.edu/about/facts/stats.cfm>
- 1995 Residential communities final report (Unpublished document). Cornell University.
- Cross, W.
1971 Discovering the black referent: The psychology of Black liberation *In* Beyond black or white: An alternate America. Vernon Dixon and Badi Foster (Eds.). Little, Brown, and Company.
- Cruz, C.
2006 Toward an epistemology of a brown body *In* Chicana/Latina education in everyday life. Dolores Delgado Bernal, C. Alejandra Elenes, Francisca E. Godinez, and Sofia Villenas (Eds.). State University of New York Press.
- Dewey, J.
1916 Democracy and education. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Etzioni, A.
1996 The golden rule: Community and morality in a democratic society. New York: Basic Books.
1994 The spirit of community: The reinvention of American society. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Fanon, F.
1967 Black skin, white masks. Charles Markmann. (Trans.). New York: Grove Press.
- Feagin, J., Vera, H., and Imani, N.
1996 The agony of education: Black students at white colleges and universities. New York: Routledge.
- Ferdman, B. and Gallegos, P.
2001 Racial identity development and Latinos in the United States *In* New Perspectives on Racial Identity Development. Charmaine L. Wijeyesingh and Bailey Jackson III. New York: New York University Press.
- Fleming, J.
1981 Special needs of blacks and other minorities *In* The modern American college. Arthur Chickering and Associates (Eds.) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

- Freire, P.
2002 *Pedagogy of the oppressed (30th Anniversary Edition)*. New York: Continuum.
- Gabelnick, F., MacGregor, J., Matthews, R., and Smith, B.
1990 *Learning communities: Creating connections among students* *In* *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gadamer, H.
2002 *Truth and method. (2nd Revised Ed.)*. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (Trans.). New York: Continuum. (Original 1975)

1976 *Philosophical hermeneutics*. David Linge (Trans.). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Geertz, C.
1983 *Local knowledge: Further essays in interpretive anthropology*. New York: Basic Books.

1973 *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Godinez, E.
2006 *I Am (original poem)* *In* *Chicana/Latina education in everyday life*. Dolores Delgado Bernal, C. Alejandra Elenes, Francisca E. Godinez, and Sofia Villenas (Eds.). State University of New York Press.
- Habermas, J.
2001 *Between facts and norms (4th Printing)*. William Rehg (Trans.). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Original 1996)

1999 *Moral consciousness and communicative action (6th Printing)*. Christian Lenhardt and Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Trans.). Cambridge, MA, MIT Press. (Original 1983)

1998 *The inclusion of the other*. Ciaran Cronin and Pablo De Greiff (Eds.). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

1994 *Struggles for recognition in the democratic constitutional state. In* *Multiculturalism: Examining the politics of recognition*. Amy Gutmann (Ed.). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

1991 *The structural transformation of the public sphere*. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Trans.). Cambridge, MA, MIT Press. (Original 1989)

1984 *The theory of communicative action, volume 1*. Thomas McCarthy (Trans.). Boston, Beacon Press. (Original 1976)

- 1979 Communication and the evolution of society. Thomas McCarthy (Trans.). Boston, Beacon Press. (Original 1976)
- Haro, R, Rodríguez, G., and Gonzales L.
 1994 Latino persistence in higher education: A 1994 survey of University of California and California State University Chicano/Latino students. San Francisco: Latino Issues Forum.
- Hayes-Bautista, D. E. and Chapa, J.
 1987 Latino terminology: conceptual bases for standardized terminology. *In* American Journal of Public Health, (77)1 pp. 61-68
- Heidegger, M.
 1996 Being and time. Joan Stambaugh (Trans.). State University of New York. (Original 1953)
- Herda, E.
 1999 Research conversations and narrative: A critical hermeneutic orientation in participatory inquiry. Westport, CT, Praeger Publishers
- Hurtado, S.
 1994 The institutional climate for talented Latino students, *In* Research in Higher Education, 35(1), pp 21-41.
- Hurtado, S and Kamimura, M.
 2003 Latina/o retention in four-year institutions *In* The majority in the minority: Expanding the representation of Latina/o faculty, administrators and students in higher education. Jeanett Castellanos and Lee Jones (Eds.). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Inwood, M.
 2000 A Heidegger dictionary. Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Jones, L and Castellanos, J.
 2003 The majority in the minority: Expanding the representation of Latina/o faculty, administrators and students in higher education. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Kearney, R.
 2003 Strangers, gods, and monsters. New York: Routledge.
 2002 On stories. New York: Routledge.

- Kipling, R.
1899 *The white man's burden in Gunga Din and other favorite poems*. New York: Dover Publications.
- Lee, K.
1996 *Separate and unequal at Cornell in the American enterprise*.
http://www.taemag.com/issues/articleid.16297/article_detail.asp
- Leiris, M.
1951 *Race and culture in UNESCO Report*. Paris, UNESCO.
- Levi-Strauss, C.
1952 *Race and history in UNESCO Report*. Paris, UNESCO.
- López, J.
2005 *Race-related stress and sociocultural orientation among Latino students during their transition into a predominantly white, highly selective institution* *In Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 4(4), pp 354-365.
- Loury, G.
2002 *The anatomy of racial equality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lyons, J.
1990 *Examining the validity of basic assumptions* *In New futures for student affairs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Marx, K. and Engels, F.
1948 *The communist manifesto*. New York: International Publishers.
- Meyers, M., Afshar-Mohajer, R. and Sung, E.
2003 *The stigma of inclusion: Racial paternalism and separatism in higher education in Texas* *Education Review*.
<http://www.educationreview.homestead.com/2003stigma.html>
- Monroe, S.
1973 *Guest in a strange house*. *In Saturday Review of Education*. February, 1973 (1) pp 45-48.
- Noddings, N.
1992 *Caring* *In The challenge to care in schools*. New York: Teachers College Press. pp. 104-126.
- Powell, M.
1998 *Campus Climate and Students of Color* *in The Multicultural Campus: Strategies for Transformation of Higher Education*. Leonard A. Valverde and Louis A. Castenell, Jr., (eds.). Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.

Public Policy Institute of California

- 2001 Cause for Cheer, Concern in Study of Racial and Ethnic Attitudes.
<http://www.ppic.org/main/pressrelease.asp?i=315>
- 2000 Racial Tension No More Likely in Multi Ethnic Neighborhoods, Study Finds.
<http://www.ppic.org/main/pressrelease.asp?i=325>

Rehg, W. (Habermas)

- 2001 Translator's introduction *In Between facts and norms* (4th Printing).
William Rehg (Trans.). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Rhodes, F.

- 2001 *The creation of the future: The role of the American university*. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press.

Ricoeur, P.

- 2000 *The just*. David Pellauer (Trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- 1998 *Hermeneutics and the human sciences*. John Thompson (Ed. and Trans.). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. (Original 1981)
- 1992 *Oneself as another*. Kathleen Blamey (Trans.). Chicago, The University of Chicago Press.

Romero, M.

- 1997 Introduction *In Challenging fronteras: Structuring Latina and Latino lives in the U.S.* Mary Romero, Pierrette Hondagneu, and Vilma Ortiz. New York, Routledge. pp xiii-xvi.

Rose, P.

- 1981 *They and we: Racial and ethnic relations in the United States* (3rd Ed.). New York, Random House.

Sabar, A.

- 2001 Climbing the ladder: Hispanic or Latino. Providence Journal. Providence, RI January 28, 2001 pp. A-14

Sabia, J.

- 2002 Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever in
FrontPageMagazine.com
<http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=5033>

Serequeberhan, T.

- 2000 *Our heritage: The past in the present of African-American and African existence*. Lanham, MD, Rowman & Littlefield.

- Smith, A.
1986 The Ethnic Origins of Nations. Oxford: Blackwell
- Song, M.
2003 Choosing ethnic identity. Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Stanford University
Unknown The value of ethnic theme houses (unpublished document). Stanford University Office of Residential Education.
- Stark, D. and Griffin, J.
2001 Facing you, facing me: Race, class, and gender among UC Berkeley student leaders. Berkeley, Stiles Hall.
- Stewart, J.
1983 Interpretive listening: An alternative to empathy *In* Communication Education, Volume 32.
- Tatum, B. D.
1999 Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? And other conversations about race (2nd Ed.). New York: Basic Books.
- Thompson, C. and Carter, R.
1997 Racial identity theory: Applications to individual, group, and organizational interventions. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Tillich, P.
1952 Courage and participation: The courage to be as a part. *In* The courage to be. New Haven, Yale University Press.
- Tinto, V.
1993 Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition (2nd ed.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

1988 Stages of student departure: Reflections on the longitudinal character of student leaving. *In* Journal of Higher Education 59(4), pp. 603-617.

1975 Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research *In* Review of Educational Research. 63. pp 603-617.
- Treviño, F.
1986 Standardized terminology for Hispanic populations. *In* American Journal of Public Health, 77, pp. 69-71.

United States Census Bureau

- 2001 Profiles of General Demographic Characteristics, 2001 Census
<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/dp1/2kh00.pdf>

University of California—Office of the President

- 2003 Undergraduate Access to the University of California After the Elimination of Race-Conscious Policies
http://www.ucop.edu/sas/publish/aa_final2.pdf

University of California, Berkeley

- 2007 Brief History of the University¹
<http://www.berkeley.edu/about/history/>

Resource Guide: A reference guide for new Berkeley students. Office of Student Development/New Student Services.²

http://resource.berkeley.edu/r_html/r01_04.html

About the College of Letters and Science³

<http://ls.berkeley.edu/?q=about-college>

Casa Magdalena Mora Theme Program

<http://www.housing.berkeley.edu/theme/casa.html>

- 2002 African American Theme Program brochure. University of California Residential Student Service Programs.

Casa Magdalena Mora Theme Program brochure. University of California Residential Student Service Programs.

Van den Berghe, P.

- 1978 Race and ethnicity *In* *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1 (4), pp. 401-411.

Weber, M.

- 1978 *Economy and society*, volume 1. Guenther Ross and Claus Wittich. (Eds). Berkeley: University of California Press. (Original 1914).

Wenger, E.

- 2002 *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wheatley, M. and Kellner-Rogers, M

- 1998 The paradox and promise of community in the community of the future. Hesselbein, et al. (Eds) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers. pp. 9-18.

Tables

- Table 1.2 Common Data Set 2006-07 University of California, Berkeley- Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Category as of October 15, 2006
<http://cds.vcbf.berkeley.edu>
- Table 2.1 Common Data Set 2007-08 Cornell University- Institutional Enrollment as of October 15, 2007
<http://dpb.cornell.edu/documents/1000395.pdf>
- Table 2.2 Common Data Set 2007-08 Cornell University- Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Category as of October 15, 2007
<http://dpb.cornell.edu/documents/1000395.pdf>
- Table 2.3 Common Data Set 2006-07 University of California, Berkeley- Institutional Enrollment as of October 15, 2006
<http://cds.vcbf.berkeley.edu>
- Table 2.4 UC Berkeley New Freshman Registrants by Ethnicity, Fall 1995 - Fall 2006
<https://osr2.berkeley.edu/newfroshtrend.html>
- Table 2.5 UCUES- Student Life and Development-Personal Growth and Development
- Table 2.6 UCUES- Core-Academic and Personal Development-Deeper understanding through conversations
- Table 2.7 UCUES- Core-Academic and Personal Development-Gained appreciation for diversity
- Table 2.8 UCUES- Student Services Module-Campus Climate
- Table 3.2 Population, Income, Education, and UC Eligibility by Ethnicity
http://www.ucop.edu/sas/publish/aa_final2.pdf

Figures

- Figure 2.2 Map of Cornell University
<http://www.cornell.edu/maps/large.cfm>
- Figure 2.2 Ujamaa Residential College
<http://www.campuslife.cornell.edu/campuslife/housing/undergraduate/ujamaa.cfm>

- Figure 2.3 Willard Straight Hall Takeover
<http://instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/courses/dsoc375/studentproj/Website/bottom.html>
- Figure 2.5 Comstock Hall/Latino Living Center
<http://www.campuslife.cornell.edu/campuslife/housing/undergraduate/latino-living-center.cfm>
- Figure 2.6 Map of University of California, Berkeley Campus
http://www.berkeley.edu/map/maps/large_map.html
- Figure 2.7 Christian Hall/African American Theme Program
http://content.answers.com/main/content/wp/en-commons/thumb/5/53/300px-Christian-Unit_1.jpg

Appendix A

Letter of Invitation and Research Questions

Date

Participant's Name and Title
Company or Organization
Address

Dear Mr./Ms.:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in an exploration of my dissertation topic. As you know my research seeks to better understand the experiences of underrepresented students residing in ethnicity-based theme housing. I am inviting students, staff, faculty, and administrators to participate in this study to share their understandings of how these programs may contribute to the recruitment and retention of underrepresented students on predominantly White college campuses. By engaging in such conversations and observing experiences, I hope to contribute to the limited existing research on ethnic theme housing and provide college administrators with a broader understanding of ways resident students may achieve personal and academic success.

In addition to the opportunity to share ideas, I am seeking your permission to record and transcribe our conversations. In doing so, our conversations will act as data for the analysis of the context I have described. Once transcribed, I will provide you a copy of our conversations so you may review it to add or delete any section at that time. When I have received your approval, I will use our conversation to support my analysis of the data. Please note that the data provided through our conversations including your name and position, will not be held confidential, but will be handled respectfully and in a professional manner.

Below you will find a series of proposed questions. These questions are primarily for use as guidelines to direct our conversation. They also indicate my specific interest in your area of expertise. The most important point to remember is that I am looking to hear stories from your personal experiences with ethnic theme housing and how the students residing within might benefit. My hope is that our conversation provides an opportunity for us to each gain a better understanding of the value of these residential programs.

Reflecting upon your experiences, please consider the following questions:

- Where and under what conditions did you first become familiar with ethnicity- based theme housing? What was your initial understanding of these unique living environments?
- Due to the perception of self-segregation, ethnic theme houses are often faced with opposition and run contrary to the spirit of community on the college campus. What is the official position of ethnicity-based theme housing within your housing

department? Is this consistent with that of the University administration? Trustees?
What is the climate on campus for ethnic theme housing among students?

- To what extent does the residential experience contribute to and link with the educational mission of the university? As agents of educational institutions, college administrators have often promoted the issue of freedom with responsibility as a fundamental value. What implication does this have for our residential communities?
- How can the living arrangements and programs contribute to the creation of community on the college campus? What are the guiding principles that determine the variety of residential options on your campus?
- Do you believe that ethnic theme housing influences recruitment, retention, and the overall experience of underrepresented students?

Thank you for your willingness to meet and participate in this study. I look forward to our conversation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Ocampo
Researcher, Doctoral Student
University of San Francisco
School of Education
Organization and Leadership, Pacific Leadership International Program

dro2@berkeley.edu

Appendix B Letter of Confirmation

Date
Participant Name and Title
Company or Organization
Address

Dear Mr. or Ms.:

Thank you so much for allowing me the opportunity to have a conversation with you about your ideas, experiences, and viewpoints on ethnicity-based theme housing at Cornell University/UC Berkeley. I am confirming our meeting on _____.
Please let me know if something requires you to reschedule our arranged place, time, or date.

With your permission, I will record our conversation, transcribe the tapes into a written text, and submit it for your review. After you review the text, I would like to discuss the conversation we had and any follow-up comments. Please remember that data for this research are not confidential.

The exchange of ideas in conversation is the format for my participatory research. It allows you to comment, add, or delete what is transcribed. This process will not only provide you the opportunity to correct anything expressed in our conversation, but allows for reflection. Only after your approval, will I look at the text of the conversation that we had, gather new ideas, possibly enlarging the area under investigation, and continue my research.

Once again, thank you for your time. I look forward to meeting with you and to our conversation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Ocampo
Researcher, Doctoral Student
University of San Francisco
School of Education
Organization and Leadership, Pacific Leadership International Program

dro2@berkeley.edu

Appendix C Follow-up Letter

Date
Participant Name and Title
Company or Organization
Address

Dear Mr. or Ms.:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me on _____. I appreciate your willingness to participate in my research project. I think our conversation will be a valuable part of my dissertation.

I have attached a copy of transcribed conversation. After reading through the transcripts, I will summarize our conversation as an exploration of the value of ethnicity-based theme housing at Cornell University and UC Berkeley. I will remind you that data from this research are not confidential, but will be handled respectfully and in a professional manner.

Please take a moment to review the attached transcript and add any changes or clarifying comments you feel are appropriate. I will contact you in two weeks to discuss any changes you might have made. As a reminder, I will be using the attached transcript as data in my analysis of the value of ethnic theme housing at Cornell University and UC Berkeley.

Again, thank you for your participation in my research.

Sincerely,

Daniel Ocampo
Researcher, Doctoral Student
University of San Francisco
School of Education
Organization and Leadership, Pacific Leadership International Program

dro2@berkeley.edu

Appendix D

Sample of Research Participants

Name	Title	Institution
Donald King	Director, Community Development	Cornell University
Ken Glover	Resident Director, Ujamaa Residential College	Cornell University
Susan Murphy, PhD.	Vice President, Student and Academic Services	Cornell University
Don Barr, PhD	Professor Emeritus, Policy and Management	Cornell University
James Turner, PhD	Professor, Africana Studies	Cornell University
Jane Mt. Pleasant	Professor, American Indian Program	
Jerlena Griffin	Executive Director, Office of Student Development	UC Berkeley
Lupe Gallegos	Coordinator, Latino Student Development	UC Berkeley
Nora Sandoval	Coordinator, Summer Bridge Program	UC Berkeley
Shannell Thomas	Resident Director, African American Theme Program	UC Berkeley
KN Henry	Resident Director	UC Berkeley
Seoyoung Kim	Resident Director	UC Berkeley
Bianca Baldrige	Theme Program Assistant	UC Berkeley
4-8 Participants	Current resident students	Cornell/UC Berkeley
Michael Meyers	Executive Director	New York Civil Rights Coalition

Appendix E

Consent to be a Research Participant

Purpose and Background

Mr. Daniel Ocampo, in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco, asked me to be a participant in his research that explores the value of ethnicity-based theme housing at Cornell University and the University of California at Berkeley.

Procedures

I agree, as a part of this study, to participate in conversations with him regarding issues community, identity, and race relations on the college campus. I agree that Mr. Ocampo may record the conversation on audio and/or videotape, which will be transcribed. A copy of the transcript will be returned to me for review, editing, and approval before its inclusion in the analysis. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time, may discontinue the conversation at any point, and may request any changes or deletions. My participation in this research project is voluntary, and any data I contribute to this study will not be confidential.

Risk and Discomforts

I understand that am free to decline to answer any questions or stop the conversation at any point or my participation at any time. I understand that I may request to remove my entire transcript from the study. I also understand that I may be identified and quoted in the dissertation or subsequent publications.

Benefits

I will receive no monetary compensation. The anticipated benefit of this conversation to me is the personal reflection about how ethnicity-based theme housing may contribute to the understanding of the possible recruitment and retention of underrepresented students on the college campus.

Alternatives

I have freely chosen to participate in this study.

Cost

There will be no cost to me as a result of participating in this study.

Questions

If I have any questions or comments about the study, I may contact Mr. Daniel Ocampo at

dro2@berkeley.edu. I may also contact his advisor, Dr. Ellen Herda, at the University of San Francisco [REDACTED]. Should I not want to address comments to either of them, I may contact the Office of Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, by calling (415) 422-6091 or by writing to the IRBPHS, Psychology Department, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080, United States.

Consent to Participate in Research

I have a copy of this consent letter to keep. I understand that my participation in the dissertation research conducted by Mr. Daniel Ocampo is voluntary. I understand and agree with the above procedures and conditions.

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Researcher's Name

Appendix F Pilot Study

Conversation #1 (10/17)

D: You and I have had interesting conversations about identity

S: One of the things I dealt with Alexis the first day I set foot here is trying to figure out how to identify myself, and having to be okay with being African American because that's not what I am. I think it's funny because I have a number of residents who identify as Latino, but look black, students who are African, actually students coming from Africa, and not "African American" and having conversations with them that they've gotten to a place too. Probably the more time they've spent at Berkeley, they've had to learn to identify themselves externally, by how other people identify them. I think you come to the understanding that it's just not worth the battle, not for every single person. When people call you African American, and you're from Panama, what does that mean? You leave that one alone, you know?

D: So when you say externally, that's not you're defining yourself, but someone is defining it for you?

S: Yeah, and it's not feeling like it's even worth the battle anymore...okay, fine, yeah, because it just takes too long to contradict people all the time. And I consider that a sensitive issue, because I don't consider myself African, let alone African American. I do consider myself to be Afro Caribbean.

D: But you do have roots from Venezuela, you said?

S: yeah, my mom's from Venezuela.

D: So how'd your family get from Venezuela to England?

S: Actually they went from Venezuela to Trinidad, and then actually a neighboring island...and it was my mom's mom who's Venezuelan, and my dad's mom who's Spanish, and so my mom's mom moved to Trinidad and married my mom's father, so that's how they got there. But my mom and dad hadn't met before, they didn't meet in Trinidad, which is funny to me. They went to England.

D: So both independently moved from Trinidad to England?

S: Yeah, I thought it was comical. They left the small island and then they met each other.

D: Here in California or here in the United States

S: Here in the United States. Actually, California has been a lot more refreshing for me in terms of identity, because other places I've been in the United States, I just feel a lot more defined by my race. Whereas here, I feel more that my personality defines me. I mean I

grew up in the South...Florida, and one of the main things that I can say that I don't miss is that there were confederate flags on like every other car and that's just a struggle when growing up there, not wanting to be defined by your race and just seeing that people are racist and not being able to see past that. It's hard sometime...growing up. I feel constricted sometimes by my race.

D: So how else have things been different since you moved to California as it relates to your job, as it relates to the residents you have? You're in charge of the African American Theme Floor. How has that influenced how you identify yourself?

S: This is probably one of the first places I've been that I've been immersed as a staff member in the student community, and I think it's intriguing to me and very impactful as I watch the students develop. We struggle with issues of identity as well and feeling like on this campus they are the minority and how hard that is, but I still don't feel like because most students are from California they don't deal with some of the issues I've seen other students deal with in terms of coming from the south. They still have the struggle for some of that, and stronger identity, and that may just be as a result of just being here, in predominantly minority neighborhoods they come from.

D: What are some of the differences between the South and here?

S: I just feel for me blacks in the South, minorities in the South just seem a little...victimized. It's a lot more harder to come out of your shell. Hate is a lot more overt there, and I think here in Berkeley, people feel the need to be a lot more respectful just because that's where we are. And it's probably easier...actually, no, it's probably harder for them to deal with issues of race here because it's not something they're necessarily accustomed to, whereas in the south, issues of race...we're just like...we fight those kind of things...

D: And how's all that compare with your experience in Pennsylvania and the northeast?

S: Uggggh, what a monster. PA...I was so disillusioned when I got there, because I thought I was moving up north...that's wrong...it was worse than Florida.

D: Really?

S: Yeah, it was really, really bad. One of the things that's funny to me in Florida, regardless...like there's you know, a lot of rednecks and all that kind of stuff, but there's also a lot of mixed dating. There's a lot of white women dating black men in Florida. And I don't think about it until I go home, and realize...oh my god, this is worse than Berkeley...like there's a lot of it.

D: Now is it more the white women and minority men?

S: Um hmm...yeah.

D: Did you see many the other way?

S: Not a lot...People really uprise against that. I think that part of the issue is that white men in Florida definitely do have the advantage and for them to date a black woman would really...I feel like that they could actually get lynched there...it's just horrible. I feel like they have a lot more to risk and I really think white women have a tendency to be stronger when they need to, and it's kind of a power issue, because I don't know that they feel that they have as much to lose as a white man dating a black woman. Yeah, PA was definitely a painful experience. I guess I thought basically what I experienced in FL was limited to the South and going up to PA and realizing Philly is there and Pittsburgh is there and everything in between is such a mess like its just...Where I went to school, Penn State, there was a Klan compound 25 miles outside the university and a school 10 miles out that had the largest run student Klan in the nation.

D: What school is that?

S: Huntington

D: College?

S: High School...so they start breeding them early.

D: Wow

S: yeah, and I don't know if I'm upset being black, but there were definitely times when I was definitely afraid being there and that was one of the main reasons wanting to move out here. You know I worry about crime here, but I don't worry about crime against me because I'm black, so much. You know I feel like it's equal opportunity crime here. I'm gonna get killed just because I have money in my pocket you know...

D: But it's not because you're black...

S: yeah, and I feel like...as funny as it sounds, I really would rather not die just because of the color of my skin, you know what I mean? Let someone kill me because I have a bad attitude or something. And you were in...where did you live before Cornell?

D: SUNY Brockport, before that, BC. I think because I'm not Af. Am. But still a person of color, I don't know if it's a harder read, or I'm able to permeate more circles...not necessarily really get into the circles, but really hear what one racial background is saying about another because I'm not in that one...it is interesting hearing people talk about the other. In Midwest and NE, issues are black or white. If you're neither, it's about trying to find your space.

S: Do you feel you had to choose one over the other?

D: Or complete assimilation into the mainstream, or making a conscious choice not to be immersed in the mainstream. I made a conscious choice to be immersed in my job and school. The staff I worked with La Crosse and BC—I would not say we were diverse at all. The RDs you work with at Berkeley are much more diverse. It's more diverse all around. When I was in Boston, the only people of color were me and this woman Marjorie who was from the south. We would talk about the dynamics. People would go out of their way to be friendly with her and genuine about that, but there was a lot of ignorance--ignorance in not being exposed to a lot of black people. We'd have conversation about racial identity. Because she grew up in the south, racism was easier for her to deal with because you knew where it was coming from. If there were people who were racist, you knew who to stay away from, people didn't pretend to be your friend and then stab you in the back. Whereas in the Northeast, it's rude to be racist, so...

S: They do it quietly...

D: Quietly, behind the back. Not unlike some of the trust issues we've dealt with here. I don't know if it's so much along racial lines or just the way people are, but as we've talked about, with our staff it's been difficult developing trust. Like when we had our caucus discussion group last year, there was a Latino who put himself with the majority. It was very telling when it came to the individual conflicts this person would have with people of color and not really ever developing trust...

S: Um hmm...and other people of color not really trusting him either. I think what's funny in the Northeast, because it's so not correct to be racist, because by my definition there's people I'd consider racist, that could be a little harsh, I'm assuming by your standards you'd probably consider ignorant, so for me it's all one in the same at times. When we were doing staff development around race and identity and we did a series of exercises. By the time we got to the third one, there were a number of people who were extremely impatient. Feeling like this is not necessary...

D: This is with your staff?

S: No, this was with...our staff at Penn State, but this was professional staff.

D: Okay

S: And they were feeling like this is a waste of our time, that we shouldn't be dealing with these race issues because there wasn't anyone who was racist and when I think about it...you have no idea you don't know that you don't get it. You don't get it, and you don't know that you don't get it. It's just really hard for you to listen to this information, because to hear that you don't get it is very hard for me, and talking about our experiences as black women on a campus where 5% blacks and 3% of those are athletes, the people in the majority don't want to hear about our troubles and the issues that they caused, because they feel like racism doesn't exist anymore, like victimize yourself...when you continue to say this person is racist, it's you being a victim.

D: In my email signature, there's a quote. People can't forgive you for the harm they've done to you. I've never thought about that context before. That's another reason why I think it would be good for you to go to SJTI. A lot of people are facilitating workshops, but there's nothing that people have to go through or get certified in to now say they're qualified to do this work. So they get people who haven't examined their stuff, but are trying to educate others about issues of diversity and oppression and people with privilege who haven't worked through their own privilege. So it's interesting to see when people come in and based on their majority identity, not acknowledge the privilege they have.

S: You know Dan, but I do really want to go, but those types of sessions I have to be in a certain frame of mind, they take so much energy out of me, because sometimes the level of you just don't get it and the training for other people...it's painful for me to watch sometimes. There are things that I don't get, but these are the people who are educating, who are going to teach my children, and they can't comprehend, they have no idea, they just can't comprehend what I go through on a regular basis. One of the things, and we've already talked about this, in terms of being a black woman in charge of residence halls where the majority of students are white and Asian, and have not experienced black people in their capacity are now experiencing me. Now I'm on the Theme Program, I'm on the floor, consider...have told me that I'm racist with no basis for that at all. And I wonder what that says about a person of color in power. This is Berkeley, I'm not ready for this...the least of my worries now....

D: But that was also from another person of color.

S: Yep, it was from someone who was Asian, but who had grown up in a white community. I think he had very limited interaction with black people. I'm a very direct person, very honest and blunt and I think he misassociates that behavior and applies that to all black people, defining black people by me, by my standards, so I made a point of going up to the floor and telling them this is not a matter of race, this is who I am. So there are times Shannell will be in a good mood and Shannell will not be in a bad mood and I'm always gonna be black but I'm not going to define myself by that for you. So if you tell me that you think I'm racist, than come with something better than I'm hanging out on the floor and I'm not assigning fair judicial sanctions, which I was. I don't know, it's really disturbing, and I just want to say to them...I never see you with other people of your own culture, so how do you define your self? Are you racist against yourself? Because, it doesn't look to me you've taken the time to explore your own identity, let alone explore mine. It's always that definition when people come up to me and say, well you're black, what's this mean? It gets hard because I feel constantly that students are looking at me because I'm black and are thinking okay, all black people think this way...

D: So what?

S: It's just hairy, it drains me.

D: See, that's the thing with SJTI though, when you come away from it is at least the people there with you get it a little more. Are they perpetuating the issues? At least the people

come a little farther, there's that mirror turned back on them as opposed to them thinking they have everything together. How do you think the dynamics are with our professional staff?

S: I really do like our staff. I feel that more than any other staff that I've worked with that they're open to issues of identity and allowing...

D: You're talking this year, though, right?

S: yes, definitely, and allowing people to be who they are. That's just how I feel but that might not be how everyone feels. I feel that everyone on our staff has personality traits, but I just sense an openness, like I would be so comfortable sharing my thoughts and feelings about being a black woman on our staff. I don't think that people would disbelieve it...

D: Has that happened in the past?

S: Oh yeah, at Penn State, there were like 50 year old women who grew up when blacks weren't allowed to vote and when blacks weren't allowed to go to school, and then so in their eyes things are so much better now and they can't understand why we're complaining and some of the issues we go through. I do think that's funny, but you can't really dispel that either, because it is contextual...

D: It's their history, their understanding.

S: We have a diverse array of people on our staff and one of the things that I think is very helpful is actually to work with so many people who consider themselves to be LGBT because on some level I feel they can identify with me in terms of an external characteristic that's not under your control and it's something that people use to be prejudiced against you. I guess that's why I feel so comfortable with the staff, I just feel like people get it, and they may get it for different reasons than why I come to the table but for the most part, people can understand...

D: Because people can have other targeted identities? That its not like everybody's coming from that majority identity space.

S: And even the people I can think of that do come from that majority space I just feel like they're incredibly open. Can I say names?

D: yeah

S: okay...Cora and Monty...like I feel they're just always...come from a very open space. Yeah, I'm really happy with our professional staff. Not too much with our management staff, there's people who still don't get it up top there.

D: What do you mean?

S: I feel the person who shares my identity probably shares some of my same experiences. She's from down south as well, and so having moved out here, and she's experienced a lot, in terms of being in Africa and just doing other different types of travel. I do think that she gets it, but just puts it on the back burner.

D: You think she does?

J: I have no idea, but I haven't seen her be targeted, so in terms of what I experience from her I just kind of feel like she's...probably like okay, I'm not even gonna deal with you on that level and I'm gonna move on because I am the director.

D: And that's okay?

S: That's fine with me. I can see myself heading to that space too, and I've done it with students at times like, okay, I'm not going to deal with you in this space. You can be prejudiced if you want, but ultimately I'm the one with the power, so I'm gonna move on...and that's actually a lesson that you taught me. In terms of why get into a fight for power that you already have? It's just a waste of energy. By mere definition I'm defying people's thoughts about the capability of minorities.

D: You're at the premier public institution in the country and you have all this influence on all the students here within your communities. What more power could there be to influence them to influence the world with a different point of view.

S: Ultimately, I'm really happy here.

D: Are you really?

S: Yeah, I am, in terms of the types of people that are here. I thought that everything was going to be perfect and I wasn't going to experience any type of racism and I see my students experience racism and I've heard about it, and it just brought me back to reality that everywhere you go it's gonna happen...

D: But differently...

S: Differently, yeah...There have been some very overt racial issues, like when the Afro Theme House had some swastikas painted on it...We had some USC students visiting the other day walking down from the game, they were yelled at by the gentlemen at the fraternity house "niggers go home"

D: Did you report it?

S: No, it wasn't reported. I told some people... One of the things is she couldn't identify which fraternity house it was and she couldn't identify the people. It was difficult for me too. How do you defend an institution where some of the smartest people are so damn ignorant?

D: And some of it may have been okay in their minds because they were from USC.

S: Yeah, rivalry.

D: Do you see a lot of African American students intermingling with people from other backgrounds, or do they pretty much hang out by themselves.

S: I think the general consensus seems to be that on a regular basis, they're like one of two of them in their classes, and so their interaction within their classes, again they feel like they're the minority, so when they're out of class, they run to their comfort zones, which consist of the organizations that are black. One of the main entities on campus that I've noticed that all minority students seem to run back to is the Black Recruitment and Retention Center. A lot of my students are doing a lot of work to get other black students...first to come to college and then to come to Berkeley. They are going into junior high schools, talking about preparing themselves for college, that all of them can get there no matter where they're from and so they're doing a lot of community service within the black community to uplift. I know that there's an Identity model, but I can't think of it...

D: Cross...

S: but they're in immersion. They immerse themselves when they get here, try to establish themselves and set the path for other students to come up. So yeah, intermingling a lot, no.

D: What I've seen which is different than my previous institution, is when there are fewer people of color around, was that the people of color built more coalitions, whereas like here, because there's not necessarily more people, but more resources, people pretty much hang out with their own groups. What role do you think the theme program plays in terms of attracting students, retaining students, and their academic success?

S: I can touch on that now. Most of the students I interact with now are products of the theme program, and I know for a fact, that we filled the floor this year, whereas we had a hard time filling it last year. We actually had people we turned down from the floor this year as a result of kind of like a recruitment tactic that we used. The BRRC Office had what was called Black Senior Weekend last year and they asked us if they could house black students in the Theme Program. There were students all over campus who housed them, but the majority of students who came stayed in the theme program. The majority of students who stayed in the theme program and decided to come to Berkeley are in the theme program now. And if they're not in the theme program, they come to visit on a regular basis.

D: So it's a very central place for them

S: It is, it is, and not only that, I noticed that a lot of theme program alumni come back to the floor again and again. The funny thing is we were having a meeting, on my staff we have meetings in each person's room and this week it was Bianca's turn. She had the meeting in her room. At 9 o'clock on the dot, we got a knock on the door, some alumni came in, and we're like, hey, how you guys doing? Fine, we're in a meeting, shut the door. Two minutes

later, another knock on the door, another person, Hey, we're in a meeting can't talk right now. This happened like four times. I was telling my staff, welcome to the theme program. This is what happens on a regular basis. And they started laughing because it was funny to see. They weren't residents, that's the funny thing it was just people that were coming up to say hi to Bianca and like while on the floor go knocking door to door to say hi to the residents, so it's had a major impact in terms the community that we've built. And it is a place where other students feel comfortable to come in and hang out. We have meeting spaces on the floor for other black organizations. I just think it's central, and I feel like the reason that I'm so well known on campus is because of the theme program and because I'm just so willing. Black students call and just say okay we need space. And say okay fine, come into our lounge. It's just been helpful...

D: There's also Summer Bridge

S: Yeah definitely. Summer Bridge was a really good experience for me. And not only that, but it was good for me to see...to encourage white students who were required to be in Summer Bridge to interact and of course, vice versa, to start interacting getting comfortable with people who don't look like them. And minority students who grew up in LA and like never had any interaction with white students. They've had that experience and prepared them for what's to come. Summer Bridge was probably one of my best experiences regardless...just in my work experiences.

D: The comfort level of your staff and what they see and experience about community within the afro floor will I think shift some of their opinions...like I don't know if your non black students are comfortable on that floor, or your non black staff I should say...

S: My non black staff seems very comfortable. And I've actually been in the room a couple times when a few of them come down...and I've just been like...you can read people sometimes in terms of if they're feeling a little tense being there, and there's this one...I guess part of the issue is...and I picked her for this reason: her roommate last year was one of Bianca's good friends so when she comes on the floor...the roommate...

D: What's her identity?

S: She's not pure white, like I think she has a little bit of Slavic in her...she seems real comfortable. She stands outside and talks her head off...

D: How do residents perceive her?

S: they seem fine. Sometimes I think that white students perceive them the same way, because they feel like if they come on the floor, all the black students are going to turn their head and be like what are you doing here? And I wonder how much of their own baggage do they carry into that perception?

D: Probably a lot of it.

S: And I've talked to my black students and sometimes they say actually we do kind of get yeah, what are you doing here? But after the initial thing, this person's really cool...

D: If it was a regular thing, people would become more comfortable with it...

S: It wouldn't even be an issue...

D: the initial thing...

S: We tried it. In the beginning I really felt like the students would be comfortable and there are certain students I see a lot more than last year, at least five that walk on the Afro floor on a regular basis, that have nothing to say and they're just kind of walking by and say Hey... and I really like to see that because those are the people who are really pushing themselves to develop...

D: I know we've got to go, but when I was at Cornell and worked with Ujamaa, the politics shifted to more African American. Many of the students in Ujamma came from NYC and never interacted with white people, so Ujamaa was very central to them to ease into a more diverse environment in which they could live with people they were comfortable with and in their own time move beyond their circle.

S: Exactly, exactly...

D: Thanks

S: You're welcome.

