

Author: Theresa Lopez

Title: Occurrences of Racial Segregation within Residential Programs at the University of Illinois–Urbana Champaign

About the Author: I am currently a Freshman here at the University of Illinois– Urbana Champaign in the Division of General Studies, and I intend to transfer into the College of Media within the next year to pursue a major in Advertising.

As a resident of one of the University Residence Halls, I have been a spectator to many of these occurrences of racial segregation within the University Residence Halls. In addition to being a spectator to these occurrences of racial divide within the University Residence Halls, I have learned through this [EUI](#) course ways to observe these occurrences.

Keywords: segregation University Residence Halls living–learning communities residential programs student groups

Abstract: -ABSTRACT-

Because issues of race are important at the U of I, it is key to illustrate the racial issues concerning the University Residence Halls because this is where many Illini sleep, eat, study and engage in social activities. I decided to conduct research on the occurrences of racial segregation within residential programs of FAR/PAR and Six Pack Residence Halls. This research paper provides and even analyzes students' perspectives about the effectiveness of social programs that take place within these University Residence Halls. It also shows the positive and negative implications that this racial segregation could have on these students living in the University Residence halls of FAR/PAR and Six Pack, as well as possible personal and institutionalized reasons for this racial segregation within these Residence Halls.

-RESEARCH METHODS-

I used a variety of ethnographic tools to conduct research. I mainly collected my data from interviews of students that live within the halls of FAR/PAR and the Six Pack Residence Halls because students are the ones that are most affected by the racial divides of social programs. In addition to student interviews, I also looked for background information (via the University Housing website) on each residential program located within FAR/PAR and the Six Pack Residence Halls. From this information, I concluded that there existed a racial gap between the housing programs of these

dormitories because I noticed that the purpose of the communities and groups at the Six Pack Residence Halls focused more on making leaders out of their residents, and the communities and groups at FAR/PAR focused more on unifying racially defined programs. I also wanted to know if any other Universities like U of I upheld notions of “separate, but equal,” so I searched all of the housing websites of all of the Universities in the Big 10. This is where I found that Michigan State University is the only other University in the Big 10 to practice the “separate, but equal” model. In addition to the Big 10 housing websites, I also found that the IDEALS website also proved to be helpful to my research. From the IDEALS articles that I found I searched the works cited list of many of the articles that I had chosen. I then found these articles and used this information to help solidify my argument.

Initial Exercises:

Question: Does the University segregate residential programs within the University Residence Halls of the Six Pack and FAR/PAR?

Although there is no definite explanation for why this racial divide exists, this paper provides various occurrences of when segregation is practiced here at the University, as well as reasons to why this state of separation could be beneficial or harmful to Illini living within the University Residence Halls.

Plan: America the “melting pot?” America, the fruit salad? America, the lasagna? What is this business all about? All of these “edible” metaphors are ways of describing the diverse nature of the great U.S. of A. What is diversity and what is segregation? As a freshman at the University of Illinois, I encounter diversity on a day to day basis. Even though I encounter diversity on a day to day basis within the bathrooms, dining halls, and public buses, there is still a noticeable separation between races. I hope to illustrate, through my research at the University of Illinois, the racial segregation occurring in residential programs within the University Residence Halls of FAR/PAR and the Six Pack. I also hope to illustrate the reason why this separation exists and if it is a good or bad idea.

Data:

Discuss: I found that segregation within residential programs at the University of Illinois– Urbana Champaign can be both good and bad for Illini living within the University Residence Halls of FAR/PAR and the Six Pack. I also found that this segregation could either be a personal or institutional idea.

EUI Links:

Reflect: Although I might have not been exactly thrilled to have to write a ten page research paper; in the end, I found it to be a great learning experience. I first found it difficult to interview people because I didn't know exactly what to say to my interviewees or how I could possibly analyze the information they were giving. Also, I found it difficult to categorize information, analyze the information, and then organize it into a paper. By research report four, I was still at a loss for how to actually properly analyze all of the information presented. But then, I started to think about how it actually affected race at the university and I was able to write my entire report.

I didn't really like the topic of the course because I never had really liked to talk about race because in high school courses we were always forced to accept the schools views on a policy, whereas in college it is completely different. Through this course, I was able to learn while holding my personal views and presenting factual information in a research paper that could possibly make a difference in the ways that the University of Illinois– Urbana Champaign conducts housing placement.

Since the big topic of this course was race at the university, I learned that there are multiple reasons for why racial divides may exist on campus, and I also have learned that this can be both a good and a bad thing. I also found the final product of my research paper to be very rewarding.