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Title: From the Crown to the Cornfields

About the

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Abstract: Perceptions and portrayals of minority groups in the mainstream US media have constructed a false reality about American minority groups. African, Latino, Asian, and Arab-American groups have been portrayed as criminals, deviants, and unruly members of American society in magazines, television, music, and other forms of entertainment. With the globalization of entertainment, and America's Anglo-targeted audiences, these perceptions of US minorities have extended far beyond the borders of the United States. In my research, I will examine how identity, race, and space impact the racial perceptions students have others on the University of Illinois campus. By engaging into the perceived notions and understandings of these particular groups, I hope to illustrate the effects of media portrayals of groups, and bring about discussion on these stereotyped issues.

To conduct this research, I will rely on several methods. I plan on having a group interview "chat" session, where all of my subjects will respond to the questions collectively. I would pose a question; let each subject respond, and respond to each other's comments, therefore transforming the interview into a conversation. The perceptions of members of the other groups in the media, perceptions of these groups on campus, interactions, and similar questions will be asked in these chat sessions. I can foresee that some of the responses will trigger sidebars and tangents, but I will limit these offshoots if they go off topic. Another research method would be exposure to the music of the other researched groups. By doing such, I can gauge the amount of interest, like and/or distaste for the type of music presented. A similar test will be used with film, my third research method. Finally, to capitalize on the interactions of these groups, I will interact with these groups socially to determine the homo/heterogeneity of their social circles. This will assist in measuring the acceptance of "outsiders" into their groups.

Several of the readings in class will be used as guides for the conducting of my research. In the Field: Participating, Observing, and Jotting Notes serves as an illuminating example of how

research should be conducted, and how involved and attentive an ethnographer should be in his/her research. Garcia's Ethnographic Responsibility and the Anthropological Endeavor: Beyond Identity Discourse highlights the bubble that I should be encapsulated in – the bubble that protects, and prevents, me from becoming too involved with my subjects. Cintrón's Mapping/Texting will allow me to use space and the use of that space as a way to gather more information as to where my subjects frequent and know exist. The timeline will consist of interviews conducted on Saturdays through the month of March, with social interaction and consolidation of notes throughout April. I will interview the African–American students on Saturday, February 28, the British students on Saturday, March 7, and the Latino–American students on Saturday, March 14. The social interaction dates will vary in that I may decide to join these respective groups at a campus bar at a date that is to be determined. However, I plan to use the month of April to consolidate my observations and produce my research project.

**Initial
Exercises:**

Question: I would like to discover the perceptions of US minorities in the English media, and explore how these images differ from experiences on the Illinois campus. I plan on accomplishing this by interviewing a group of English exchange students on the images, perceptions, preconceived notions, and stereotypes of US minorities, and examine how this differs from their interactions and experiences with minority students at Illinois. Conversely, I would gauge the sentiments of the African and Hispanic–American students on their notions of English people.