About the Author:

I am freshman at the University of Illinois. I am currently a premed student studying biology, however I’ve recently became very interesting in psychology. It is an interesting field in which explains the reason why we engage in certain behaviors. I am a person who loves to share new knowledge, I love taking in new information, interpreting and analyze it then sharing it. I live to understand the past, learn from it and use it to guide me through the present. Before this project I always questioned the motives of minorities surrounding themselves with those similar to them. I questioned why in this very state you can travel through a city and see where this imaginary line has been drawn dividing whites from minorities. There is an indirect segregation of minorities. I realize that people want to surround themselves with those who understand where they come from and the obstacles that the individuals had to overcome.

Keywords: segregation, race in the dorms, residential segregation

Abstract: This project focuses on the racial divide within the dorms of PAR/FAR and the Six Pack. It focuses on the lack of diversity of the two. FAR/PAR is the home of minorities, they have built their mini community surrounding themselves that look like them and who share the same struggles. The white individuals of the Six Pack have indirectly built a small community for themselves. These individuals have separated themselves in order to avoid feelings of uncomforted, anxiety, or misunderstanding. They separate themselves to avoid feeling unwanted, or isolated. If it’s a minority, someone of color they don’t want to be reminded of their lower status in society, they don’t want to be constantly reminded that they are different. Those in majority standing, those who are white surround themselves with those similar to them because they want to reduce the feeling of uncomforted as much as possible. They want to be able to say whatever comes to their minds; they don’t want to walk on eggshells. This project consisted of interviews questioning the reasons why these individuals chose their place of
residence, who and what influenced this choice and how they feel about living there. Surveys were given out to get an honest opinion from the individuals living in these two particular areas. Most of the minorities living at PAR/FAR report feeling content while the ones living at the Six Pack feel some form of isolation. It turns out that there is some connection between the place of residence where each individual grow up and the education they receive, this causes these individuals to separate and surround themselves with the individuals they are used to seeing.

**Initial Exercises:**

essay about race

“To make similar, cause to resemble. To take in and incorporate as one’s own, absorb. To absorb into the culture or mores of a population or group.” To assimilate.

Words so simple yet the steps and requirements taken to reach this significant peak of assimilation are anything but simple. Individuals of various backgrounds, cultures, and race must alter their character to fit in into the American culture. In the 18th century the idea of assimilation meant equality. Once the group of individuals assimilated, changed their natural ways of living to fit that of American society, they were of equal status of the dominant group. Assimilation means a chance or opportunity for the minority or the different to belong to the “popular” culture. These individuals with clear differences were fighting to become a part of the most respected and feared culture. In George M. Frederickson’s “Models of American Ethnic Relations: A Historical Perspective” he emphasizes the importance of assimilation. He explains the main purpose of this complex idea. “Policies aimed at the assimilation of ethic groups have usually assumed that there is a single and a stable American culture of European, and especially English, origin to which minorities are expected to conform as the price of admission to full and equal participation in the society and policy of the United
States.” (5) Although this idea of assimilation, this idea of equality, means stress relief and acceptance, fitting in comes at a great cost.

Individuals of these ethnic groups sacrifice their own beliefs hoping to be rewarded with an admission to the American society. One must let the most sacred morals go in hopes of just being accepting, in hopes of respect. Watching the video played in class emphasized this form of sell out. Individuals from India and Japan long to become a part of the popular, the “norm.” They manage to hold the jobs of the Americans; they tried to fit in as much as possible. These ethnic groups adapted by absorbing their surroundings from the language to the clothing, yet they were still not considered American. They were not accepting into the popular group. The whites knew who could be recruited and who could not. They knew who they wanted in their strict club. They wanted those who were closely related or similar in physical appearance. They followed a strict mental list of unspoken requirements and once one was not met the individual or group was automatically disregarded and remained outside the norm. “At times there have been serious disagreements within the dominant group about the eligibility of particular minorities for initiation into the American club.” (Fredrickson, 5)

Fredrickson compares this acceptance into the American society to a club because the requirements to be accepted were almost impossible to overcome. These ethnic groups believe in their minds that they have met the requirements of the “club” only to be hit in the heart with a denial.

African Americans knew all about the embarrassment and cruelty of this
denial. They were the primary group of color in which the American club was unreachable and unattainable. It would forever remain a dream, a figure of their imaginations. They didn’t fit the requirement of the physical similarity, color alone. “Before the 1940s, people of color, and especially African Americans were generally deemed ineligible for assimilation because of their innate inferiority to white ethnics.” (Fredrickson 6) All other groups passed at least one requirement seeing as they were not considered the inferiority of the white ethnics.

Even today as African Americans try to fit in the American club, they try to earn a comfortable position in the American society; they are still look down upon. African Americans are still ridiculed and constantly challenged to show how American and civilized they are. Their identity sometimes fades as they conform to fit the identity of the dominant, the white. The true individual doesn’t dare to surface unless hidden among their own. Assimilation for most African Americans is respect. It means the opportunity to be able to make a comfortable living. It is the opportunity to be counted, be apart America. Their ancestors are the ones who have slaved over this land yet in the 1940s and today they are one of the least respected groups. They are still the inferior in many situations.

Although being African American is a stress in its own, being black and from another foreign country adds a brick load of stress upon the individual or group. Ms. Ulysse is a Haitian woman who came to America and later brought her daughters to this country to provide them with the best opportunities. She had the color of skin against her as well as a language barrier keeping her further
away from the passage into American society. She knew that once she unlocked the gate to American success her family would be showered with all of America’s success just like the dominant culture or race. In her plan to assimilate into the American culture she never gave up her morals and beliefs from her Haitian background. She speaks her language frequently and strongly. She follows her traditional acts faithfully. Her most trying requirement for the induction of the American club was learning to speak English. As Dora Ulysse explains her mother only learned enough of American culture to function. She learned the necessary ways of this land. This was a similar act in the case of Kyle Policape’s father who arrived here in America at a very young age with his mother in order to make a difference for his family. He too had to learn English, but his main goal was to provide for his family. His main focus was to provide comfort and the only way to promise this comfort was through assimilation. He watched the dominant race and how they maneuvered their way to the top, he followed.

As I continued to talk to Dora Ulysse she explained how hard it is having a mother who wants to hold on to the prominent Haitian morals while raising a daughter used to the American culture. Dora uses the example of making eye contact. “I remember my mom yelling at me for looking her in the eye, but just previously I learned in class that all students showed their respect for the teacher by eye contact.” This is a sign of disrespect to look in the eyes of the parent. The parent is the dominant, powerful one and eye to eye contact diminishes this power. It lowers their superiority. Many children with immigrant or foreign parents experience this confusion during this assimilation process. They notice
subtle changes in the parents’ character but there are things that remain untouchable, yet these untouchables are sometimes the very things they experience and accept in the new culture. These children are torn between the pride of their parents and the stress, pressure of remaining within the American club.

With all this pressure to be in the American club sometimes the individual loses sight of the importance of their culture. They lose who they are and what their background means. They lose sight of their prominent morals in order to save embarrassment, or misunderstanding from the dominant race. They lose themselves to prevent awkward stares to remain in the norm. They refuse to stand out in what is considered the negative way. “Little or nothing in the culture of the groups being invited to join the American mainstream is pressured worthy of pressuring.” (Frederickson, 5) They give up everything to blend into the American mixture. They must blend in as much as possible because the color of their skin automatically promotes assumptions. “There is a lot of pressure not only for the foreign parents but their children as well,” says Kyle Policape. “We must sometimes explain why our parents act or dress a certain way if they have not accepted the normal way of doing things,” says Kyle Policape.

Even while those try their hardest to blend in and assimilate into this culture, their race, the color of their skin is recognized and acknowledge. People of color or various backgrounds are still the target of cruel jokes and stereotypes. With this stereotypes and assumptions, these individuals separate themselves and
form groups with those who understand their struggle. The government promotes and stresses an idea of assimilation when in the end the individuals are still categorized by race. “One of the first things we notice about people when we meet them…is their race. We utilize race to provide clues about who a person is.” (Winant, 13) By who a person is this refers to what race the person is, it determines how the person is categorized. Individuals are still put into separate groups instead of American. They have entered the American club, they fulfilled the requirements but they are not respected members. They are not of equal rank like the dominant group. Assimilation is nothing more than another strategy making those who are of difference more of an outsider. It’s another form of embarrassment and control.

Question: Currently I am interested in the racial segregation within the dorms. Since I live in PAR, across the street from FAR I’ve noticed that the dominated popularity here are colored or minority individuals such as Asians and Blacks. There are some Latinos or Hispanics but they do not make as much of an impact on the populations as the Blacks and Asians do. There are of course white students here as well but even though it may say that there are more white students then color, I am more likely to see an Asian person or Black 8 in the morning rather than a white one. As far as questions, they seem simple but it’s
the questions that I think about on a daily. I want to know “How did each individual choose where they were going to stay as far as dorms,” “Did they make a choice knowing they would see people of their same race,” “Did they choose to live in a specific dorm to avoid any feeling of discomfort or out of place,” “Have they built these circles of protection against those who do not understand their difference?” In getting information about this I will look at scrapbooks, little handouts and manuals for each dorm. I want to know did the handouts or manuals alter someone’s decision or influence in any way. I want to do interviews with a wide variety of individuals from various backgrounds. I want to find out if people choose to live in a dorm to avoid other races.

Plan: Research Plan

· Interview with students of PAR and FAR
· Interview with housing officials, staff
· Survey with students
· May visit archives for residential manuals, brochures, etc

As one of my research tactics I am going to interview with students of PAR and FAR asking them a series of questions like how they chose the dorm that they are living in. I want to find out how they went about choosing where they wanted to stay, what individuals they consulted with in order to make a decision, what status did the individual or individuals hold such as athletes or band, did their parents or guardians have say in the choosing of their dorms. I would ask questions such as did the dominant race have influence on the choice of dorms. Was race or ethnicity ever in the influence of choosing the dorms? Did they choose their place of residents thinking of comfort, would they feel comfortable more than half of the time? Did they choose a place to live knowing they would
be the dominant? This will help me get a great chunk of my paper out of the way. It will explain this segregation of the resident living. It will be the personal point of view in my paper because I am interviewing the people, and they are the ones who make up the population.

A second research tactic would be an interview with housing officials or university staff discussing the housing process. I want to know how they choose the priority order. I am wondering if the athletes get first choice, then music individuals, art majors, and so on. Do they look at who has financial aid? Does status have to do with it at all or is it just random. How do they work with individuals who are honor students, does GPA and ACT scores come into the factors influencing priority. This will help in the history; this is where it probably began. They may have indirectly influence the individual’s choice in living. They may have planted the deadly seed.

A third research tactic would be giving surveys with students asking of their experience at their specific dorm. I will be asking a range of questions such as how often do they feel uncomfortable or embarrass, how often they feel happy or content with the individuals surrounding them. Do they feel comfortable? I want to find out how often do they say “oh my goodness if I see another Asian, Black, or White person I am going to explode.” Does the language barrier if any create some form of discomfort? I am going to include race and year. I may ask how long they have lived in the specific dorm and if they will stay there next year. The surveys will tell me how people feel honestly about where they live. This is the
concrete facts in my paper; this will give me honesty, truth. There may be many who feel uncomfortable but feel they can not do anything.

This last research tactic is just a fall back if I am unable to get as much information as I am hoping. I will use some of the manuals, brochures I have found on the database for the archives. I want to get a sense of how they are trying to sell the specific dorms. I am to analyze them putting my twist and ideas into them. I am going to think as if I were making my decision to stay in the dorms again. This will just add to my figuring out how this all started, why there is a specific race dominating at PAR and FAR. The interview and survey will be given to any individuals living in the dorms.

**Data:**

**Research Report # 1 Survey**

I conducted a survey with the students of PAR and the FAR. I had 21 surveys 10 of which were women and the other 11 were men. Prior to going into conducted the survey I had my own ideas on what the results would be. I thought more than half of the results would support my idea that most of the students or residences that live here feel uncomfortable or out of place. My friends often make side comments under their breath about the different races that live here. My friend’s have often said that there are many Asians at PAR/FAR; they feel as if they dominate besides the black individuals. Sometimes the unknown languages
make my friends feel uncomfortable. I highly doubt my friends are racist I believe that when they make these comments they feel less like a minority and more like a majority. They feel less like the target race when they make fun or talk about other races.

For the survey I knew I wanted to do half of them for the residence of PAR and half in FAR to keep everything even and less biased as possible. I set out to get a missed amount of races. I didn’t want just black or white people filling out survey. Out of the 21, 7 were black, 5 were Asian, 2 were Hispanic or Latino/a, 6 were white, and 1 Indian. I didn’t purposely choose these individuals. I randomly went to each room. I wanted a pretty diverse set of opinions for this survey and I got a pretty good outcome. Even while going to the rooms of these people whether it was a White, Black, or Asian their roommate if present was a Black or Asian person.

I had six questions for this survey. They simply ask the race of the individual, which race they believed was dominant, if they ever felt uncomfortable, had they been exposed to diversity prior to the university, if they would stay in the particular dorm next year, and if they ever have negative thoughts about any race other than own. The results were quite interesting. 8 out of the 10 women who filled out the survey said that the dominating race is Black or African American, while the other 2 said it was a mix with Black, Asian and White. Out of the 11 boys, 6 of them said that the Whites dominate, 1 for Blacks, and 4 a mix of black, white, and Asian. These boys live in the same area as the
girls, how can the results differ so much? The men may have it set in their minds no matter what the numbers show the whites always rule. The men may also be going by what they see on their floor rather than the overall dorm or residence hall.

Interesting enough all the Black, Asian, and Hispanics circled yes for staying at PAR/FAR for next year. All the white individuals circled no. Two of the white individuals said that the dorms need to be more diverse because the real world is. She said that students should be exposed to diversity because it’s real. A couple black individuals replied, “I love it here.” Is it because they feel comfortable? According to my survey it is. The blacks and Asians circled 1 or never for feeling uncomfortable while living in their dorm. They love this mini community that they have created for themselves indirectly. They are surrounded by their comforts, they feel in charge.

Even though the whites that answered the survey didn’t feel uncomfortable as well they are choosing not to stay next year, why? It could because of the chance to get apartments; it could be location of friends, whatever the reason they are contributing to the segregation in the dorms. They say it needs to be more diverse yet they are not choosing not to stay.

**Annotated Bibliography**

Iverson discusses the idea of racial inequality is reproduced through educational policies. He mentions a theory know as the Critical Race Theory. It was first introduced in the 1970s for areas as law and court to promote the absence of race. This theory has been introduced the discipline of education. This theory is exposing the forms of racial inequality. Iverson is suggesting that universities are drafting diversity action plans as they are required to show that they are trying to promote a diverse campus. There many subtopic making it easier to break down the arguments. I will use this information in the idea that education influences the exposure of inequality and therefore results in the separation of races.

Myers, Joshua, Juan Pablo Herrera-Urizar. “Cultural Mapping of Dorms.” 2006 December 15:
http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/1837. 2008 March 27.

In this article the Arthur talked the segregation between PAR/ FAR and the Six Pack. He conducted many interviews just reading over them I noticed many of the minorities interviewed decided to stay in PAR/FAR because they knew someone of their race would be there. In this essay or report many of the students felt that the housing staff or officials had a lot to with the segregation in the dorms, on the other hand others felt that minorities need to stick together. It is safe to say that PAR/FAR= minorities and international students. Meyers suggested that PAR/FAR is the center of multiculturalism. It’s the center of
foreign languages and international difference. Not only does race influence the placement of living, this essay argues that social and economic differences also tie into the process of housing. Each point that is made is neatly organized in the essay. There are plenty of subtopics, over eight. I was able to obtain plenty of information. It will definitely be used in comparing responses to questions of why the individual chose their place of living. It will help with whether or not financial plays an important role in the decision.


Novak takes the idea of segregation in the dorms to another dimension. He decides to focus on the lack of wanted diversity. He talks about the affects of forcing diversity. Interacting with various cultures and races helps diminish the disgust of stereotypes. He argues if whether or not the university should just do random assignment, meaning the students would not have a say in where they want to say. I actually know people who attend school who do this. Some of my friends liked it, while others feel uncomfortable. He exposes that people feel this would definitely increase diversity there’s no question, however it would increase the feeling of difference. It increases depression and thoughts of not fitting in. forcing diversity decreases the idea of self-segregation, but individuals practice this for comfort, a feeling of at home in their own surrounding. This information will help tremendously when I’m discussing the need for diversity and what can be done to increase while keeping everyone somewhat comfortable. There is a fine line between theses two ideas. This is also providing plenty of information
organized very well with over 5 subtopics.


This source discussed the issue of university’s spending money on diversity programs. Some of the schools are being questioned for the budget of diversity. Schmidt exposes the anxiety of many colleges. They are becoming nervous about the idea of not spending enough on diversity program. This is an interesting idea. It was a pretty short article but it opened my eyes to another idea. The university could be feeding the fire of segregation in the dorms. I will use this as motivation to look into more info about the amount of money spent on diversity. There are very few subtopics, but useful.


This was an interesting article. Yeskel describes how the gap of social class causes a domino affect in the segregation of residential living. It causes a gap in education. Because there is so much a gap between the rich and the poor, this idea flows into the education system. The more money one has the better the
education opportunity the individual has. They will have the opportunity of the best teachers and the best environment. While the poor receive the opposite, once the individuals who struggle are given an opportunity to attend a high class school they will surrounds themselves with individuals who share the same struggles or issues. She states that education is an indicator of class. It begins to influence the idea of class from as early as kindergarten. This source will aid in supporting that minorities want to be surrounded by those who they can relate to. They are building a comfort zone with the residential segregation, self segregating. They are responding to the long struggle of class inequality and educational inequality.

Interview with three individuals

Questions Asked:

What were your three choices of living prior to coming to the University?
Who or what influenced this choice? Food, location, or people?
Do you think financial aid influences the priority for individual choosing their dorms?
Do you think the University knows of the racial segregation within the dorms? Do you think they are responsible?
Will you be living here next year? Why?

After asking these questions my eyes were opened even more to some interesting things. The first person I interviewed was a black male. He is a freshman. When asked about his top three choices of living he replied PAR, FAR, and the Six Pack. His friends were his biggest influence. He told me that the person who recommended PAR/FAR as a choice actually lives next door to him. He told him this was the area with “all the black.” This was the so called spot with all the cute black girls. Soul Night was where you could find soul food and a
party at dinner. People are dancing and just having a ball as if it is the club in my opinion. His other friend recommended the Six Pack if he was looking for party central. This is the area where they never sleep. This was the impression I got after talking to him. He obviously decided on PAR/FAR. Who doesn’t like cute black girls and soul food?

When asked why wasn’t location and food a priority in making a choice he responded that he was under the impression that all the dorms had good food because when he came to visit this school the tour guide took him to ISR. The food was great here according to him. As far as location he didn’t care as long as he was around his friends. He doesn’t think financial aid influences priority people can freely choose where they want to stay. As far as the university causing this racial segregation or the people themselves he feels a bit of both. The people, individuals decide where they are most comfortable. They decide where they feel wanted and free. He says there are many Asians in ISR, Whites in the Six Pack, and Blacks in PAR/FAR. Next year he will be living in FAR because there is air conditioning, but he will definitely recommend PAR for freshmen if they want a quiet environment at least in the basement its quiet. He continued with adding a girl should live in Busey because it’s cleaner and ISR if the person wants good food. This was very interesting to me; he recommends a number of places saying certain things as if it is dirtier at FAR.

Interviewing two girls had to be the most interesting. One of the girls top choices were ISR, Six Pack, and PAR. Her choices were completely random. She
is not staying in the same dorm next. She actually went crazy when I asked her the question. She said she would never stay in PAR even if she had to. When asked why she said its too small, too far, and she doesn’t fit in. when asked to elaborate she replied there are too many black people who have their own clicks. She feels threatened day in and day out, the people are too loud for her taste. She often feels afraid while in her own room. I had no idea she felt like this and she’s my roommate! She thinks the university knows about the racial segregation but they choose not to do anything about it. She said the only way they will change this problem is if something drastic occurs, if someone gets hurt. She would definitely not recommend living here unless the individual is loud, obnoxious, and black.

The third girl put PAR/FAR and the Six Pack as her choices because of family friends who attended here. They told her that she would meet a lot of freshmen at PAR/FAR and plenty of upper classmen at Six Pack. She commented on the diversity of PAR/FAR, saying there is a lot of everyone in the small area. She will not be staying in this location because the noise is unbearable. The people scare her and she feels uncomfortable daily. There were plenty of moments in which she wanted to go out in the hallway and say be quiet to the individuals on the floor but she was afraid of getting hurt. She also agreed with the idea that the University knows about the racial segregation but they are choosing to ignore this issue. She also stated that if someone gets hurt then they will acknowledge the problem.
After theses interviews I am curious to know exactly how much, what percent of the individuals living here feel so scared and intimidated by this environment. I wonder if they feel as if they are surrounded by hoodlums.

Survey on Race in the dorms

1. Race/Ethnicity
   - Black or African American
   - White
   - Hispanic/ Latino(a)
   - Indian
   - Asian
   - Caribbean
   - Other ________________________

2. Which race appears dominant in your dorm?
   - Black or African American
   - White
   - Hispanic/ Latino(a)
   - Indian
   - Asian
   - Caribbean
   - Other ________________________

3. Were you exposed to people of other races prior to your living in this dorm?
   - YES
   - NO

4. While living in this dorm over the past semester how often did you feel uncomfortable or out of place?
   - Never 1 2 3 4 5 Very Often

5. How often do you have negative thoughts of a specific race? Ex. their language may annoy you
   - Never 1 2 3 4 5 Very Often

6. Will you live in this dorm next year?
   - YES
   - NO

Additional Comments?
I have read and understood the above consent document and agree to participate. I AGREE I DISAGREE
I conducted another survey, but this time I went to the Six Pack. Just observing the setting, it seemed a little quieter than PAR/FAR, but this could be due to the time of day. I immediately noticed I saw more whites than blacks in the hallways. As I knocked on doors I got a lot of white participants. I passed out only 10 surveys asking the same questions I did for my first survey. In total I received six white individuals and only four black individuals. The white individuals who answered the survey replied never feeling uncomfortable and they would definitely stay in this dorm next year. With additional comments many of them wrote down that they love the Six Pack it has the best late night ever. They admitted to seeing a whiter dominated environment as well. The black individuals recorded a 1 or 2 for feeling uncomfortable while in the Six Pack. Two of them are choosing to come back to this dorm while the others are choosing not to stay here next year. The only reason I can come up with as to why the other two gentlemen may be coming back to this dorm would be they are on a specific team and the Six Pack is near IMPE which is a great gym where all the athletes go. Personally I wouldn’t stay in the Six Pack because of the way it is structured. It’s like a confusing maze, I don’t like it. Apart from the surveys a friend of mine who is black use to tell us of all his unfriendly encounters with the whites of the Six Pack. He never stayed there the first semester, he was always at FAR. He used to tell us they would make ridiculing comments about blacks. At one point he admits to seeing something on the wall saying something about blacks not belonging in the Six Pack.

With addition to the survey I also interview another individual about
living in the dorms at FAR/PAR. Her top choices were in fact FAR, PAR, and ISR. She allowed her roommate to make all the decisions so her choices were influenced by the thoughts of her roommate who received this information from previous freshmen living at FAR. She was also greatly influenced by her cousin who is a junior here. She told her to stay in FAR/PAR because all the black people are here. She feels that the university is aware of the racial segregation within the dorms but they are not promoting it. The university is just choosing to make individuals happy. They don’t want to have any complaints of feeling overly anxious or depressed. They are allowing individuals to choose where to live in order to promote happiness and less stress. They are allowing the minorities to build their own mini communities.

She touched upon the specialty dinners at both the Six Pack and FAR. There is something called Fat Don’s at the Six Pack and Soul Ingredient at FAR. At Soul Night there is a DJ, music playing and people dancing. Almost no white people choose to sit on the side where there is loud music playing. I overheard a few individuals say that it is pretty nasty to be juiking while eating. I agree. As far as Fat Don’s the atmosphere is completely different. It’s loud but the noise is of people not music and there is no juiking or grinding going on.
Discuss: Introduction

“Congratulations! You’ve been admitted to the University of Illinois. Simple words yet they mean much more than an acceptance to college. Behind these words hide complex ideas, hides an open door to opportunity of new experiences and extreme anxiety. They hide the possibility of feelings of isolation, being casted out of the norm. Although the in depth meaning of the words are hidden the university tries to shift the individual to other important responsibilities. The university is so kind in trying to rid the newly college bound student of their anxiety and nervousness. They provide a checklist of the things prominent, a checklist to eliminate the unnecessary stresses. Checklist: Submit Acceptance Form, Claim and set NET ID, Registration, Placement Exams, Complete Housing Contract, Complete Financial Aid Application, Immunization Forms, and Final Transcripts.

This checklist lacks the most prominent tool for freshmen undergrads to successfully survive the first year away from their natural surroundings. It lacks the tool needed to survive, the tool aiding in dealing with diversity. They lack the knowledge needed to embrace the cultures of those different from the individual. Because the first year of college is the year of exploration, adaptation, and new experiences, this tool is greatly needed. It’s essential. If the person is not use to various individuals of races, ethnicities, religious beliefs, sexual preferences, and so on they are in for a severe shock. For some individuals finding themselves subtly enters the scene, but for others their knowledge of various races either
surfaces for the very first time, increases, or decreases. The fuel to the fire of this knowledge of different races builds and comes to life in the dorms.

**Residential Life**

The residential life is the birth place of diversity issues. It becomes the bold eyes to surface the increase or lack of diversity. Freshmen have the choice to live in six different public dorms. They have the opportunity to pick from Florida Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue Residence, Allen, Busey-Evans, Illinois Street, and the Six Pack. Each one gives a different aspect of diversity within the dorms. The two most controversial are the Six Pack and Pennsylvania and Florida Avenue Residence. For most PAR/FAR is considered the dorms of multicultural, the minorities, and the Six Pack is considered predominantly white. I conducted research exploring the diversity or lack of in each dorm. The information discovered has developed many interesting themes. Connections are made between class, economic status, educational opportunities and the affect in an individual’s choice of residential living. It has been proven that the dominating race at PAR/FAR are minorities including African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, and so forth. While on the other hand the Six Pack consists of White, Caucasians.

**Racial Make Up**

I conducted a survey with the students of PAR, FAR, and Six Pack. Twenty one surveys with FAR/PAR and ten at the Six Pack. The results were quite interesting. Prior to conducting the survey I went in with a bias as to the results I would end up with. From my perspective I was under the impression that
the race seen to be the most dominant in PAR/FAR would be African Americans and Asians. I’ve seen more Asians and Blacks while living in PAR then any other race. I thought more than half of the individuals living in both FAR/PAR would respond feeling uncomfortable if they were not apart of the dominant race group. I know personally prior to my living I thought I had been pretty exposed to the sensitive idea of diversity, but after living here I found myself saying “Wow there are a lot of Asians here, or the blacks have made their community here.” In high school I didn’t like to limit my surroundings with those who were my race, I loved variety and difference. I thought I would be just as open for difference in college. I thought I could handle the world of diversity, culture difference. I was somewhat wrong. Living in PAR was extremely hard at times, not just for me but for others as well. My friends have also felt as if the Asians were pretty dominant within the dorms of FAR/PAR if not the dominant race. They often feel uncomfortable mainly because of the language barrier. A language barrier is one of the many concepts that draw an invincible, thick line between cultures, or individuals. The words of my friends and my perspective were the driving force into the survey.

For the survey I asked ten individuals in PAR and eleven in FAR with an equal amount of women and men. Out of the twenty one people seven were black, five were Asians, two Hispanic or Latino/a, six were white and one Indian. I wanted the population to be as diverse as possible making the opinions pretty diverse. I randomly knocked on doors. Even while going from door to door the person was Black, White, or Asian. If the person wasn’t either of the races then
their roommate was. There was a six question survey for the individuals. The questions contained those such as the race of the individual, the race they felt was most dominant, had they ever been exposed to diversity prior to their experience in the university, if the individual would be staying in their specific dorm next year again, if they ever had negative thoughts of any race besides their own, and how often they actually felt uncomfortable while living in their specific area. The founding results were quite interesting.

Eight out of the ten girls who filled out the survey reported that the dominating race in FAR/PAR was African Americans or Blacks, while the other two reported that there was an even mix with Blacks, Whites, and Asians. This wide gap between the two may have a result of the individuals answering the survey based on the individuals dorm floor rather the whole building. My floor has a pretty diverse make up of females, but the question was dealing with the overall make up of FAR/PAR. Out of the eleven boys, six of them replied that the whites were still dominant within the dorms of PAR/FAR, while the others replied that the population is a mix of Black, Whites, and Asians. Strangely these guys live in the same area as the girls, how can the results be so different? Guys are more of a target when it comes to racism or experiencing feelings of inferiority. Even if they are the majority, the superior one white individual brings them back to that reality that they are indeed the minority. They know that the whites are in complete control. The guys are most likely responding to the racial make up on their floors rather than the dorm as a whole.
With the little minority community that has been created ay PAR/FAR, there lays a community known for the majority make up, the Six Pack. I did a survey of ten individuals at the Six Pack, five girls and five guys. Just observing the Six Pack I immediately felt the difference. It was pretty quiet; even though it was early afternoon, FAR/PAR never sleeps. I notice there were more whites than any other race in the hallways. As I knocked on I got a lot of white participants. I received six white participants and four black individuals. The Six Pack is clearly no home for diversity or multiculturalism.

**Ultimately Content?**

When asked if theses individuals felt uncomfortable while living in their dorm, the responses were different. The whites reported to never feeling uncomfortable while in their predominantly white community. As far as the black individuals living here they replied feeling somewhat uncomfortable while living in this dorm. As the guys circled this answer I immediately begin to think that they are circling somewhat just to maintain a macho, caveman attitude. I can’t help but assume that they often feel more uncomfortable then they will ever admit to others their true feelings unless the individual shares the same struggle. Two of them are choosing to return even while responding to feeling uncomfortable. The only reasoning for this absurd decision would have to be that it is very close to IMPE what is considered prestigious gym; if they are in a prominent sport having access to this gym would be quite important. While these two black individuals are choosing to return to the Six Pack, the other two are choosing not return to the
Six Pack. Their reasons are not mentioned but I can make an educated guess and say that the racial make up bothered them, out them in a situation where their backs were against the wall. They felt smothered by a negative energy. If they are looking for an atmosphere full of air made with their same chemicals, if they are looking for an atmosphere full of individuals who know what it feels like to be against that wall they can find it at FAR/PAR where those same individuals have created a happy community.

Despite their feelings of the racial make up, the Black, Hispanic, or White individuals who answered the question of if they are choosing to return to either PAR/FAR. Many of them replied “I love it here.” They have built their own exotic getaway. They have surrounded themselves with those of their own kind, indirectly created this mini island. The reigning dominant races the Asians and Blacks feel well in control in this area. They are extremely content with the make up of this community, they are finally a majority. Unlike in the real world they do not have to feel the stress of feeling inferior or stationed at the bottom of the status barrel. They feel as if they are the mayors of this community. The place of the whites in this community is unknown; they look at this world of multicultural as a land of diversity. They feel as if it is a great aspect and others should definitely contribute to keep the dorms diverse. They say this but ironically they are choosing not to stay in PAR/FAR. They boast about how the dorms should be more diverse but they are choosing to leave in them creating more segregation, less diversity.
Unfriendly Welcome

While the whites are choosing not to contribute to this rare idea of true diversity, wanted diversity, the blacks are also choosing to leave the Six Pack. They’re exact reasons are unknown but the feelings of a freshman black male aren’t. He currently lives in the Six Pack but you would think he lives at FAR/PAR if you were unaware of his situation. The first semester this black male would constantly tell his friend of his horrid experiences at his dorm. In the beginning of the semester he would see some very disturbing and degrading statements written on the walls of the Six Pack. There many ridiculing statements about Blacks made. At one point he admits to seeing something on the walls saying blacks didn’t belong to in the Six Pack. How could the staff working at this dorm allow these comments to surface and stay written on the walls? How could they allow theses comments to alter the minds of their residences? They allowed these ignorant words to create unwanted, undesired and unnecessary stress to form. They started the quilt to feeling isolated and being pinned to the hard surface of a wall. It definitely altered this young black male’s mind; he never stayed in his room. He spent a many of nights at FAR/PAR.

He found comfort and relaxation within the bosom of FAR/PAR. It welcomed him with wide arms. He embraced its warming welcome. Although this black male embraced FAR/PAR warm welcome, although he felt this connection he doesn’t represent the entire population in these dorms. Some live in fear, live
Questions Asked in Interview:
What were your three choices of living prior to coming to the University?
Who or what influenced this choice? Food, location, or people?
Do you think financial aid influences the priority for individual choosing their dorms?
Do you think the University knows of the racial segregation within the dorms? Do you think they are responsible?
Will you be living here next year? Why?

I conducted an interview with four individuals on their living experiences in FAR/PAR. I asked them why they chose to live in these dorms. After conducting the survey, the results were shocking. Two of the individuals interviewed described just how unhappy they were living in FAR/PAR. October, a White/Asian freshman female, talks about just how uncomfortable she feels while living in this dorm. October feels that she can never get anything done because the noise is unbearable. The girls on her floor do not obey the quiet hours; they have created their own quiet hours beginning at three in the morning on weekdays. When asked why she doesn’t ever just go into the hallway and asked the ladies to quiet down a bit while she studies she replies, “I don’t want to get beat up, they scare me.” By “they” she is referring to black girls. My eyes pop with amazement. The mayors of this community are sending out this message of intimidation. She often feels very uncomfortable and afraid while in this dorm. She is not alone in this overwhelming, heavy blanket of fear.

Another female speaks about living in PAR specifically. Amber, a
Hispanic female of freshman standing discusses how she feels. When asked if she will be staying in PAR next year she boldly and loudly states that she will definitely not be staying in this dorm. Amber elaborates by stating while living here she has felt nothing but fear. “I feel threatened day in and day out, the people are entirely too loud.” She also feels that she can not tell the black girls on her floor to quiet down because she fears her safety as well. “I can’t tell them but you can tell them to be quiet because you’re one of them, they accept you.” (In using “you” she’s referring to me) She continues on to say that it is too hard to make friends in this area because there are too many black people who are creating little clicks. They do not accept here with open arms. Once she surfaced this idea my mind began to race. I immediately began to think about all the times I may have saw little clicks. I agree that there are many clicks at FAR/PAR. These clicks leave others feeling isolated and unwanted, thus forming this unfriendly welcome.

Why FAR/PAR

With the question of ever feeling uncomfortable I began the whole interview with the question of why the individuals chose to stay in their particular dorm, who or what influence the three choices of living. The university gives incoming freshman the opportunity to choose three residence halls they would prefer to live in. The three top choices stated in the interview were FAR/PAR, the Six Pack, and ISR.

I interviewed John, a black male of freshmen standing. I asked what his three preferences of resident living were. He replied with PAR, FAR, and the Six
Pack. He chose these specific areas because of friend influences. His friend who was a freshman at the university told him to choose PAR/FAR because this was the area where “all the black people are.” This was the so called area where all the cute blacks were. He was told that if he wanted soul food at least once a week, he could find at soul night in FAR. This is an even that occurs every Thursday, there is a live DJ. Wherever there is live music, a ton of black people, and food the end result is dancing aka juiking. Juking is some from of highly sexual dancing. PAR was recommended if he was looking for a quiet study area, basement in particular. FAR was recommended for the luxury of air conditioning.

I asked why was the Six Pack was one of his choices. He laughs, replying with, “I was told it was the place to be if you were looking for a party within the dorms.” The Six Pack is party central. Notice that no where in his responses does he say anything about location or better cafeteria food. He says he never thought of location, “Location was not essential; it was my first year here so I didn’t know where anything was anyway.” In the end he obviously chose PAR, what guy wouldn’t choose the area where there are hot girls and soul food. Who doesn’t like cute black girls and a place where dinner and dancing sexually is appropriate? Apparently this young black male does. The three girls I interviewed however didn’t choose PAR/FAR due to the number of hot girls present.

October chose PAR, FAR, and Six Pack. She considered these three dorms due to family friends. FAR/PAR was one of her choices due to the fact that there was supposed to be a lot of freshmen. The Six Pack was one of her choices
because this was the area where all the upper classmen could be found. October ended up chooses PAR because she wanted to meet more freshmen, people she can relate to. While October and John had others influence them, Amber went into the whole preference of living pretty randomly. She made her choices, FAR, PAR, and ISR randomly. Because of her random selection, she suffered the most out of all individuals interviewed. She was unhappy.

**University Awareness**

While interviewing Dana, a black female of freshman standing, she talked about this idea that the university is aware of the self segregation in the dorms especially in the Six Pack, and FAR/PAR, but they are not promoting it. They just allow students to choose where they want to stay in order to decrease any feeling of anxiety. They don’t want individuals to feel depressed or angry that they are stuck with individuals who they dislike very much and can’t relate to as much. The university would rather keep students at ease rather than promote diversity. Which one is more prominent risking a students’ anxiety or depression level increasing or promoting diversity something everyone needs in order to be educated about cultures different from ours? Wade Novak discusses this issue in his essay “Informal Segregation in Campus Housing.” Allowing the university to make the choice of living for all incoming freshmen promotes the idea of diversity, but this would also simultaneously increase the feeling of difference and isolation in some cases. If individuals are not able to diminish the horrible pressure of stereotypes, the idea of diversity, even though forced in the beginning
is not fully achieved. According to Amber and October, the university is risking the safety of individuals. They feel as if the university is aware of the problem yet they choose not to do anything about it unless someone is severely injured.

**The Beginning**

There are many theories in which explain why minorities choose to self-segregate themselves, why they choose to surround themselves with individuals of their own kind. While reading Joshua Meyers and Juan Pablo Urizar’s “Cultural Mapping,” they introduce a theory that this self-segregation the racial make up for PAR/FAR and the Six Pack are due to social and economic differences. It comes down to people want to associate with those who share the same interest. Minorities surround themselves with those who have gone through the same experiences and suffer from the same day to day struggles. They must relate to one another. Minorities want to choose an area where they are not constantly reminded that they are beneath the social ladder. Meyers makes a great point when discussing the role that financial aid plans in the housing selection. “Additionally, financial aid awarded relatively late when compared to standard submission, and students must be accepted before they apply for housing.” (Meyers 15) By the time the financial aid comes through for the individual they are stuck with the least desired dorms to live in FAR/PAR. They are stuck living with other minorities who share the same financial situation. (Meyers 16) Once stuck together, they know they must stay together. They form groups with each other both indirectly and directly. While Meyers introduces the
theory of social and economic differences, Felice Yeskel introduces the theory that social class or difference causes a domino affect in the segregation of residential living. It causes a gap in education. Because there is so much of a gap between the rich and poor, it causes a gap in the education system. The more money an individual has the better their living conditions as well as educational opportunity and vice versa for those who are poorer. Minorities are force to live amongst each other due to financial differences. As they grow up together, living together going to school together, they automatically segregate themselves once they enter the college world. This domino affect continues into adult life, thus creating this vicious cycle.

**Conclusion**

The university influences this vicious cycle, they allow to continue its rapid turns. It allows individuals to form these groups with those similar if not the same. With these groups they continue to add on created a community. With minorities creating theses communities they ultimate block out any chance of knowledge of other cultures. They prohibit themselves from the idea of diversity. This idea of diversity will never officially succeed due to those individuals who refuse to let go stereotypes. Diversity will never occur due to the wide gap between social and economic differences. These differences lead to a path of ultimate differences. Because these individuals can not relate to one another socially or economically they are unable to surround themselves with those who not share the same struggle. No one wants to be reminded of constant pain. No
one wants to be reminded that they have no money and because of this they were unable to receive great opportunities. Although self segregation, the depressing racial split between these dorms creates two separate communities rather than one whole, one healthy community this cycle of segregation is inevitable.

**EUI Links:** Myers, Joshua, Juan Pablo Herrera-Urizar. “Cultural Mapping of Dorms.” 2006 December 15:

http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/1837. 2008 March 27.

In this article the Arthur talked the segregation between PAR/ FAR and the Six Pack. He conducted many interviews just reading over them I noticed many of the minorities interviewed decided to stay in PAR/FAR because they knew someone of their race would be there. In this essay or report many of the students felt that the housing staff or officials had a lot to with the segregation in the dorms, on the other hand others felt that minorities need to stick together. It is safe to say that PAR/FAR= minorities and international students. Meyers suggested that PAR/FAR is the center of multiculturalism. It’s the center of foreign languages and international difference. Not only does race influence the placement of living, this essay argues that social and economic differences also tie into the process of housing. Each point that is made is neatly organized in the
essay. There are plenty of subtopics, over eight. I was able to obtain plenty of
information. It will definitely be used in comparing responses to questions of why
the individual chose their place of living. It will help with whether or not financial
plays an important role in the decision.

Novak, Wade. “Informal Segregation in Campus Housing.” 2008 February 20:
http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/3661. 2008 March 27.

Novak takes the idea of segregation in the dorms to another dimension.
He decides to focus on the lack of wanted diversity. He talks about the affects of
forcing diversity. Interacting with various cultures and races helps diminish the
disgust of stereotypes. He argues if whether or not the university should just do
random assignment, meaning the students would not have a say in where they
want to say. I actually know people who attend school who do this. Some of my
friends liked it, while others feel uncomfortable. He exposes that people feel this
would definitely increase diversity there’s no question, however it would increase
the feeling of difference. It increases depression and thoughts of not fitting in.
forcing diversity decreases the idea of self-segregation, but individuals practice
this for comfort, a feeling of at home in their own surrounding. This information
will help tremendously when I’m discussing the need for diversity and what can
be done to increase while keeping everyone somewhat comfortable. There is a
fine line between theses two ideas. This is also providing plenty of information
organized very well with over 5 subtopics.
Reflect: The whole ethnography process this semester has been an eye opener. It has opened my eyes to issues that affect not only the world but the university as well. I realize the events in our daily life affect the decisions we make while in college. The obstacles we have to overcome, the daily struggles we have to endure each day shape our attitudes toward those outside of our situation. We create this club with very strict guidelines so it allows only a selected hand full of individuals to join. It leaves others not following these guidelines or those not fitting the characteristics for the club outside, isolated. This project help explain many questions I’ve had in mind for a long time. It explained things as to why there were certain groups in high school. It explained why when someone decided to hang out with someone outside of their club, someone outside their race they were called a sell out. The people of their same race lost a bit of respect for this person. It explains why others decided not to branch out to form new groups with those who are different from them.

This project has opened my eyes to how much each university lacks the idea of diversity. I didn’t realize that diversity was such a sensitive topic. An easy word to say but an extremely hard concept to grasp, an extremely hard goal to achieve. There are universities in which practice a random placement in the dorms for the freshmen students. This promotes and forces the idea of diversity. It increases each person’s awareness of other cultures, it breaks down the stereotypes. Each individual is not tempted to surround themselves with only those who are similar to them.
The hardest thing about this project was getting the consent forms for the surveys and interviews. I had to get these forms off of the moodle website and print them off. I had to estimate how many people I would interview and survey. The second hardest thing to do was looking for individuals to survey. I needed to figure out which group of individuals would benefit my paper the most. Finding individuals to interview was hard as well. I had to write the questions, thinking what would be the right questions to ask. I needed questions that would give me in depth answers. I didn’t want yes or no answers. In the end I got pretty good interviews.

Aside from my interviews, I am most proud of my final product. I didn’t think I could find something, a topic so interesting and just express myself for many pages. I felt as if I could keep writing and writing. The topics we all have chosen can continue for a long time because of the passion that is present. I would definitely consider another project like this one. I have conquered my fear of research papers.

Recommendations:

As far as recommendations I would recommend that the University of Illinois should start a system where each individual is randomly placed in a dorm for living. I don’t think that the students should have the choice of choosing where they want to stay, just for the first year only. This is forced diversity and could cause a great increase in anxiety and depression because people will not relate to one another, but there are some prominent positives to this act as well. With the new forced diversity system of individuals being randomly placed, this helps to lower the ignorance level. People would be forced to understand someone
of different background, they would get a chance to explore different cultures, listen and learn from the struggles of others. This system would eliminate stereotypes that the media has harbored. Who knows this system could surprisingly work; individuals may end up sharing more than they thought.