

DISSERTATION

SHH... THERE'S SOME RACISM IN THESE POLICIES: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL
STUDY OF BLACK STUDENT EXPERIENCES WITH ON-CAMPUS HOUSING POLICIES

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Spring 2025

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ABSTRACT

SHH... THERE'S SOME RACISM IN THESE POLICIES: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF BLACK STUDENT EXPERIENCES WITH ON-CAMPUS HOUSING POLICIES

Black students are called to live on campus and promised a better college experience by doing so. However, when Black students move on campus, they continue to experience hostile environments and microaggressions from those around them. Black students not only experience these microaggressions, but they also experience difficulties when navigating on-campus housing policies and those who enforce them. Black students express concerns about interacting with their peers, staff, faculty, and campus police departments. This study used phenomenological methodology to examine the relationship between anti-Blackness and on-campus housing policies. I center Black ways of knowing and being by using BlackCrit to analyze the data and situating the study in an Afro-pessimistic frame. I frame this study through a lens that recognizes the historical positioning of Black people as less than present in the afterlife of slavery. The study dives into the experiences of Black students who live on campus and how to best support them in navigating the negative impacts of on-campus housing policies. The study calls for housing and residence life professionals to interrogate whether their policies and practices create a welcoming environment for Black students to live authentically.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First I would like to thank my mama who worked tirelessly and gave up so much so it could be possible for me to be called doctor. Thank you for being the best example of what a Black woman should be. I wouldn't be half the person I am today without your love and guidance. Thank you for being my biggest cheerleader and reminding me I'm great even in my hardest moments. Thank you to my dad who would've told me, "Lil mama keep your head up, you got this." While you weren't here physically, your spirit is in me every day as I pushed through to complete this journey. Thank you to my grandma who checked in constantly and told her friends way too early that I would be a doctor. Thank you for checking in with mom weekly to see if I'd finish. Your check-ins were a final motivation. Thank you, Deion, for showing me what true love feels like amidst some of my toughest days. Thank you for listening to me scream and holding me while I cried all while hyping me up every step of the way.

I would like to thank my committee for their support and guidance throughout this journey. Dr. Vincent Basile, thank you for seeing me and reminding me to be authentic throughout this process. Thank you for helping me become confident in my writing for the first time in my academic career. Your reminders that this process is full of white supremacy while letting me center my Blackness allowed this process to be far less harmful than I anticipated. I am grateful for your guidance and authenticity. Dr. Kyle Oldham, thank you for being my cheerleader and for all the compliments on my outfits during defenses. You instilled a sense of calm and lightheartedness that helped me face each hurdle. Dr. Ray Black, thank you for pushing me and asking the tough questions to help me think deeply about my topic. I am grateful for your vast knowledge and suggestions for further development. Dr. Alvin Sturdivant, thank you for

being there for me since day 1, class 1 of my master's program. You have been a continual source of support throughout my academic and professional journey. Having you on my committee felt like having a family member present in every step of this journey. Thank you all for helping me find my voice as a scholar in this field. I would be remiss not to thank Dr. D-L Stewart, my initial advisor. You started this journey with me when I had absolutely no faith in my ability to finish. Thank you for always letting me know I belonged, deserved my spot in the program, and had knowledge to offer to the field.

I would like to thank my friends who have supported me on this 6-year journey. Thank you to those of you who sat with me while I applied and celebrated me when I got in. Your constant celebration of me and reminders that I would finish propelled me to this moment. Thank you for the texts, calls, FaceTime calls, and mini celebrations at every step. Special thank you to BB and Jordan for the extra love as I navigated a myriad of emotions and for always reminding me that as Black women, we can do anything. BB, thank you for the weekly phone calls for the first 4 years of my program. Those check-ins helped keep me grounded and made it a little more fun. Jordan, thank you for taking my call when I was ready to give up on the entire program. Your phone call literally pushed me to get back to work and to eventually finish the program. Thank you to Chyna, Kayla, E'Quain, Blanca, Yuan, Renee, Kahanu, Arielle, Sam, Malibu, Erin, Alyssa, and Brandon. All of your love got me to the finish line.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my doctoral cohort, who provided so much wisdom and love throughout this journey. You deeply understand the experience and the emotions I had while completing my dissertation. I am grateful for the writing sessions, the venting sessions, and the continuous check-ins throughout. I am honored to call you my colleagues and accomplices in

this journey to improve the system of higher education. Thank you all for your authenticity and care. I look forward to seeing the ways we shape this field and change this world.

To my participants, thank you doesn't even begin to cover what I want to say to you. This study is a testament to your experiences, reflections, and raw emotions. Thank you for sharing time and space with me as I asked you to relive hard experiences and dream of a better future. I hope I captured your experiences well and that with them we change this field. I am forever indebted to you. To my editor, Caitlin, thank you so much! All of your time spent reading and making suggestions led me to this final product. Thank you for catching all my missing commas!

I would like to thank my community of colleagues throughout the field of Housing and Residence Life. It is our collective journeys supporting students who live on campus that pushed me to study this topic. Thank you for being a community dedicated to the success of our students. Thank you for being flexible and willing to create residential experiences that center all of your students. Thank you for those who checked in on my process and reminded me that my research is needed to help us do even better work.

And again, thank you to my mama because nothing in my life would have been possible without her. De Anne Crosby, this is your victory too!

DEDICATION

For every Black person who ever dreams to thrive on a college campus.

For little Black girls who dream of changing the world.

For De Anne because she is my everything.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Shortly after my 18th birthday, I packed my belongings and made the 10-hour drive from Las Vegas to San Francisco, excited to start a new life in college and be more independent. I had been told living in on-campus housing would enhance my college experience.¹ I had heard that students who live in on-campus housing are said to experience many benefits: higher likelihood of persistence, higher GPAs, increased student involvement, and better connection to the campus (Astin, 1984; Lopez Turley & Wodtke, 2010). I wanted to experience all of these things, so I moved into a small room and lived in the same room with another person for the first time in my life. My roommate was white, from a small town about two hours away, and most importantly, she had never spent significant time with a Black person before.² None of that mattered to me at the time, but little did I know experiences with her and other white students on my campus and in our residence halls would lead me to write a dissertation on the experiences of Black students in housing.

In week two of living with my roommate, I was told multiple times that my laugh was too loud, and I should be more mindful of my roommate and her needs. It was in these experiences that I learned Resident Assistants (RAs) could police my actions simply based on the words of other students. They could dictate how I would experience college based on white students feeling uncomfortable with my presence. Fast forward a few weeks, I found the community of friends promised to me when I moved on campus. Like many Black students across the nation, I had found a group of other Black students who I could be authentic around. We had many

¹ On-campus housing refers to any housing for college students that is sponsored by a 2 or 4-year institution whether located directly on main campus or not. This includes building funded through public-private partnerships.

² The term Black is used to capture all students racialized as such in the United States given that this term is inherent to the United States system of oppression.

experiences that continuously taught us how we were expected to act. One experience in particular sticks out in my mind as deeply impactful. We were four Black women in a room studying together and listening to music when an RA knocked on the door and said we were being too loud. We were told to be mindful of how our voices could carry when talking and laughing. Again, someone had told me that Black laughs were too loud, but we complied because we could not afford to get in trouble. Fast forward a year, I am in my first year as a RA and I am learning what to do on rounds (walks around the community to ensure *safety*) when we encounter a loud area of the hallway. It was then that an older RA taught me that some students received warnings for being too loud while others were written up on the first encounter. After seeing this scenario happen over and over for the next year, I realized Black students were typically not given warnings and were being written up multiple times. Black students' rooms were often labeled "problem rooms" and "rooms to watch." Quickly forgetting my own experiences, their laughs had become too loud for me too, and I had told them to be mindful of others on the floor.

While no one ever explicitly said to write up Black students more, the message was clear: Black students are too loud for the residence halls. In college, I did not have the words to describe this phenomenon like I do now. I learned quickly that being my authentic self did not fit into the residence halls and that my Blackness posed a threat to the residence hall norms. Black students across the country deserve to experience the espoused benefits of living on campus without extra policing. This study looked at the experiences of Black students and why they may be documented for housing policies more than non-Black students of color and white students. The logical explanation would be that there are more Black students on campuses when, in fact, of the 16.6 million students enrolled in college, only 2.1 million of them were Black (NCES,

2021). The numbers reveal the need to dive deeper into this issue to understand what leads to this disproportionate impact on Black students. In addition, there is a need to study the impact interacting with on-campus housing policies has on Black students.

The long history of racism and anti-Blackness in the United States (U.S.) is mirrored in the treatment of Black students on college campuses. In this study, I sought to understand the root cause of this issue rather than its outcomes. Many studies on the experiences of Black students living in on-campus housing (Cook & McCoy, 2017; Harwood et al., 2012; Hotchkins, 2014; Kniess et al., 2015; Boettcher et al., 2019) provide solutions that focus on changing the individual actions of faculty, staff, and other students through diversity training. However, I suggest we take things further and focus on addressing systemic issues rather than individual people. I aimed to understand the connection between anti-Blackness in on-campus housing policies and the experiences Black students have when they choose to or are required to live in on-campus housing.

No Longer Separate, But Still Not Equal

While universities work very hard to convince students to live on campus, in 2018, only 22 percent of U.S. college students actually lived on campus (Anderson, 2018). The small number of students who do choose to live on campus expect to have a positive experience, however, this is not the case for all students. In particular, Black students are experiencing things that lead them to be unhappy with their on-campus experience, similar to the experience of many Black people in this country. Being Black in the U.S. is to be under constant surveillance and treated as if they are always guilty or guilty-adjacent. Living on campus is supposed to provide an environment where students are able to be authentic without concern that they will be profiled. Given the climate of our country, there is even more of a need for Black students to feel

comfortable in their on-campus homes. This inequitable policing in the residence halls leads to Black students who do not want to live on campus in the future (Hoover, 2008; Jenkins et al., 2021). Despite institutions touting values of being inclusive, Black students on campus experience similar acts of racism as the typical Black person living in this country. In today's society, policing of the Black community is tumultuous and has led to a lack of trust and even death for some Black people. This relationship is mimicked on college campuses leading Black students to be skeptical of their interactions with campus police. Like our greater society, Black students face issues with police on their campus, such as being asked to prove they belong on campus and harsher interactions than their white and non-Black counterparts (Hoover, 2008; Jenkins et al., 2021).

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of Black students who live in on-campus housing and how they are impacted by the prevalence of anti-Blackness in on-campus housing policies and practices. This study moved beyond a focus on individual people to addressing the systemic issues within on-campus housing that connect to the inequities present in systems in this country. The results of this study should lead to an acknowledgement of anti-Blackness within on-campus housing policies. The results of this study should lead to a reimagining of on-campus housing policies which should aid in improving the experiences of Black students. To achieve this, I asked the following research questions:

1. What are Black students' experiences with on-campus housing policies?
2. How does anti-Blackness impact Black students' experiences with on-campus housing policies?

3. How do Black students navigate anti-Blackness within on-campus housing and on-campus housing policies?

As a housing professional for the past 9 years, I've seen Black students struggle with their experiences living on campus across multiple institutions. Black students come into institutions of higher education expecting progressive policies and equitable experiences because that is what colleges sell them (Hypolite & Stewart, 2021). However, like Black people outside of institutions of higher education, Black students face racism from those around them and in the policies that govern their actions (Smith et al., 2007; Harper et al, 2011; Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017). As a Black woman who has attended historically white institutions (HWIs), I understand these emotions and have a duty to use my educational privilege to share the truth about the experiences of Black students living in on-campus housing. While Black students may be the focus of this study, I believe uncovering the prevalence of anti-Blackness in on-campus housing policies opens the door to exposing other systemic issues. The liberation of all minoritized people is bound together in dismantling the system, and this research can be a move toward liberation for all of us. College campuses can utilize the information in this study to examine their policies within on-campus housing departments and other departments that serve students in order to improve the experiences of Black students.

A Racialized System

On-campus housing departments espouse to provide residence halls where all students can live authentically (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017). These espoused values often lure students in and make them excited about the prospect of living on campus and meeting new people. However, once Black students arrive, little is done to make the halls a place of comfort. The students are met with a slew of policies that must be followed, staff that do not look like them,

and peers who are uncomfortable in their presence (Harwood et al., 2012). While housing and residence life professionals are aware of these unique experiences, little is done to create a counter experience. During a time when the country continues to find itself divided, it is necessary that housing and residence life professionals stop relying on historical practices to create the best student experience. As society is witnessing a resurgence of overt white supremacy and racism, college campuses inevitably are experiencing similar patterns (Dumas, 2016a). Traditional on-campus housing policies and practices no longer adequately address the needs of the diverse student population, and students are aware of covert racism embedded in the system.

This study aimed to illuminate the deep-seated racism, specifically anti-Blackness, prevalent in on-campus housing departments. As institutions of higher education are microcosms of the greater U.S. society, some issues in on-campus housing mirror issues in housing in our cities (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017). To perpetuate racism and anti-Blackness, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) created maps that classified areas from high to low risk in a process called redlining (Percy, 2020). Redlining allowed realtors, bankers, and urban planners to segregate minoritized groups based on characteristics that were deemed unfavorable to whites (Percy, 2020). While Black students are not segregated into particular buildings today, their actions historically deemed unfavorable by white people are policed and may result in removal from on-campus housing.

To understand the nature of this study, I situated the entire system of higher education in a racialized society. A racialized society was created after society accepted a racial hierarchy by giving meaning to race (Bonilla-Silva, 1997). Omi and Winant (1994, 2016) define race as a dynamic social construct that is reinforced by both systemic and social relations. The simple

presence of race does not lead to our many societal issues, however the meaning ascribed to each race and the internalization of those meanings led us to racism. “Everybody learns some combination, some version, of the rules of racial classification, and of their own racial identity, often without obvious teaching or conscious inculcation. Race becomes 'common sense' – a way of comprehending, explaining, and acting in the world” (Omi and Winant, 1994, p. 106). Racism is “any prejudice against someone because of their race, when those views are reinforced by systems of power” (Oluo, 2019). Understanding the racialized society in the U.S. is important to understanding how anti-Blackness is embedded in policies in on-campus housing.

Research on the experiences of Black students who live in on-campus housing continues to be limited. While this specific context may have little research, there is ample research on the campus culture and its impact on Black students. This research is important as it illuminates the environment in which Black students are situated as they live in on-campus housing. The literature review begins with situating the literature within the theoretical framework for this study and then provides information about Black students on campus and the history of on-campus housing. Literature is provided to describe Black students’ experiences outside of the residence halls from understanding campus climate to experiences with faculty. Contrarily there is literature presented to showcase how Black students feel living in on-campus housing. The literature review concludes with the various ways anti-Blackness is embedded in higher education. Understanding what the literature says about these various aspects of Black students’ experiences is imperative to understanding the plan for this study.

Chapter Summary

Chapter One outlined the study’s intention to understand the impact of on-campus housing policies on Black students. Black students deserve to have just as positive of an

experience as all other students, particularly their white counterparts. Black students navigate a myriad of obstacles while in college (Smith et al., 2007; Harper et al., 2011; Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017) and the policies that govern their on-campus homes are just another barrier to their positive experience. This work is intended to uncover the biases that exist in the on-campus housing policies that are meant to protect *all* students. By working with Black students, I amplified their voices on this topic of which my voice was once silenced.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Like the rest of college campuses, residence halls were not always welcoming to Black students. The history of residence halls mimics the greater society and their fight against inclusion. Early residence halls were created to separate college students (white men) from city centers in hopes of increasing focus on their academics (Martin, 2019; Yanni, 2019). Residence halls were built to ensure white men were having the best experience possible and so they could interact with others like them. Thus, when colleges began to admit students of color, college administrators shifted their focus to segregating residence halls to keep white men in their own bubble. Despite reading many books and articles, I could not find information on when on-campus housing was integrated. Many colleges have published admitting their first student of color, but there is no information on whether or not these students went on to live on campus (Slater, 1994). Colleges seemingly went from segregated residence halls one day to integrated residence halls the next and little attention was paid to this vast change.

History of Student Housing

While today we have come to accept the idea of a residence hall meant to provide students with education and extracurricular activities, that was not always the case. Even the terminology used to describe where students live has changed drastically from dormitory to residence hall. Bliming (2015) explains that “the word dormitory comes from dormant, which means ‘to sleep’; a dormitory is literally a place of sleeping” (p. 1). On the contrary, the term residence hall is meant to encompass all of the activities and learning that can take place in addition to a place to sleep. Understanding the history of student housing is important to understanding the types of policies that govern students’ actions today. Bliming (2015) outlines

five historical periods that set out the foundations for residence halls of which I will outline four. Each period represents a different philosophy for interacting with and educating students which in turn impacted the approach to housing students as well. The collegiate period represents the implementation of philosophies brought over by the English when they colonized North America focused on the Oxford and Cambridge models (Bliming, 2015). In these models, colleges focused on smaller communities that fostered close knit relationships between faculty and the young men who attended their institutions. Faculty were deeply connected to the student experience beyond the learning in the classroom. Although faculty attempted to maintain relationships with students, they were also responsible for the punishment of students which included corporal punishment at times (Thelin, 2004).

The impersonal period shifted from a focus on integrating faculty into life outside of the classroom to a focus on creation of knowledge (Bliming, 2015). Faculty who completed their studies in Germany became aware of the institutions who had stopped providing student housing in the early 1800s (Bliming, 2015). As the shift to focus on knowledge creation became more popular, Harvard University shifted to an elective system of courses allowing students to specialize in particular disciplines in 1872. The Harvard model was expanded to other institutions and faculty shifted their interest from students to their specialization. Students filled their time away from faculty with personal interests and institutions began offering sports and literary societies (Bliming, 2015). During this time, college presidents questioned the value of student housing and faulted the system for creating bad habits for the men who lived on campus.

In the 20th century, parents and faculty led the charge to have colleges focus on the needs of students which began the holism period. This philosophical approach is rooted in a thought that people are complex, and we cannot develop only one part of who we are (Bliming, 2015).

Bliming (2015) also explained that providing student housing became required due to the establishment of land-grant colleges under the 1862 and 1890 Morrill Acts. Given that many land-grant colleges were located in remote areas, it was necessary for institutions to provide students with some housing as off-campus housing often proved inadequate. There was particular attention paid to solving issues women who lived off-campus as there were concerns that women would need to permit callers into their rooms which was morally unacceptable (Bliming, 2015). Given the moral focus of protecting women, colleges began to provide student housing to where women could live in supervised spaces. The supervision of both men and women, at the time, was imperative to preparing students for their futures.

Once created, residence halls were intended to help college students acclimate to college and, ultimately, adulthood. In women's dorms in the 1920s and 30s, there were large tables for gathering and large kitchens so women could focus on homemaking skills rather than studying (Martin, 2019; Yanni, 2019). Colleges sought to provide their students with skills they deemed necessary to help them in their adulthood. As college students were viewed as young adults, institutions at the time had a responsibility to care for their students in place of their parents, *in loco parentis* (Martin, 2019; Yanni, 2019). Beyond providing special skills, colleges attempted to address all concerns pertaining to their students, from implementing curfews to creating policies governing their behavior such as proper dress (Bliming, 2015). Over time, college students did not agree that they needed to be cared for while at college, but rather treated as adults when they arrived. Students went so far as to protest against the many strict policies put in place by campus professionals.

In the late 1960s, colleges began to move away from an *in loco parentis* approach to treating college students more like adults (Martin, 2019; Yanni, 2019). Residence halls

mimicked this shift as there were more apartment like residence halls built and small communities built around them (Yanni, 2019). With this paradigm shift began the student development period which was born out of the 1968 American College Personnel Association project, Tomorrow's Higher Education (Bliming, 2015). In it, Robert Brown outlined five concepts defining student development and the work done by student affairs professionals. In residence halls there was a focus on providing more educational programming and the presence of housing and residence life professionals increased (Bliming, 2015). Despite this shift in the 60s, many colleges today have residence halls that mimic the set-up of the 20s and 30s (Yanni, 2019). Not only has the architecture of residence halls returned to its early days, but the work staff in the residence halls focuses on providing students with the tools necessary to become successful adults and the resources necessary to support students through crises.

While colleges today focus heavily on providing college students with skills to live independently, many decisions are made through a business model. Housing and residence life professionals have to prioritize a business model given that residence halls are revenue generating capital that need attention to debt service in order to operate (Bliming, 2015). Across the U.S., college enrollment continues to decline, dropping “9.4% during the pandemic” (Camera, 2022). Pertinent to this study, enrollment of Black freshmen has declined by 18.7% since 2020 and looks to be continuing on this trend (Camera, 2022). This decline pushes administrators to do whatever necessary to keep the students who do choose to attend college. Bliming (2015) describes the student services approach which focuses on providing high-quality services to increase student satisfaction. In terms of on-campus housing, there has been more attention paid to the amenities offered in a residence hall (Wotapka, 2012; Li et al, 2005). Students rank the environment of on-campus housing as one of the most important aspects in

their decision-making about whether or not to live on campus (Sickler & Roskos, 2013). As such, on-campus housing has started to provide vacation level amenities like pools, bocce ball courts, televisions, and walk-in closets. Many have started to liken on-campus housing amenities to those of resorts (Wotapka, 2012). Administrators claim students can use these amenities to bond and form positive relationships, thus positively impacting their on-campus experience (Li et al., 2005).

Conceptualizing Black Student Experiences in On-Campus Housing

This study is conceptually framed by plantation politics which illuminates the “parallel organization and cultural norms between contemporary higher education institutions and slave plantations” (Squire et al., 2018, p.2). This framework acknowledges the continual impact of slavery on the experiences of Black people today. Utilizing this framework allows me to dive deeper into the prevalence of anti-Blackness on college campuses today, including on-campus housing departments. The foundation of anti-Blackness upon which higher education was built gives other elements of higher education something to ground into and uphold the system.

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) illustrates that components from theories and frameworks informed this study. The theories that informed this study were BlackCrit and the WEUSI model. BlackCrit guided this study in how I analyzed data and centered Black participants’ ways of being. BlackCrit allowed me to bring my authentic self to the study and engage with participants in a way that allowed me to relate with them and discuss shared experiences. The WEUSI model further helped me understand Black ways of being and knowing. This model allowed me to conceptualize the connectedness of Black people which informs my epistemological stance that knowledge is created in community. This model allowed me to engage in conversations that positively recognized the historical linkage to ancestral

experiences present in participants’ meaning making. Plantation politics was used as a framework for situating this study and understanding the connection to systems that inform interactions in this country. Through understanding plantation politics, anti-Blackness framed the understanding of the positioning of Black people as less than their counterparts in the United States. Understanding this positioning guided how I interacted with and uplifted Black participants of the study. Upholding anti-Blackness and plantation politics is vital to allowing the system of higher education to continue to function as it has since its inception. As functions of higher education, on-campus housing departments operate in a similar manner, thus negatively impacting the experiences of Black students.

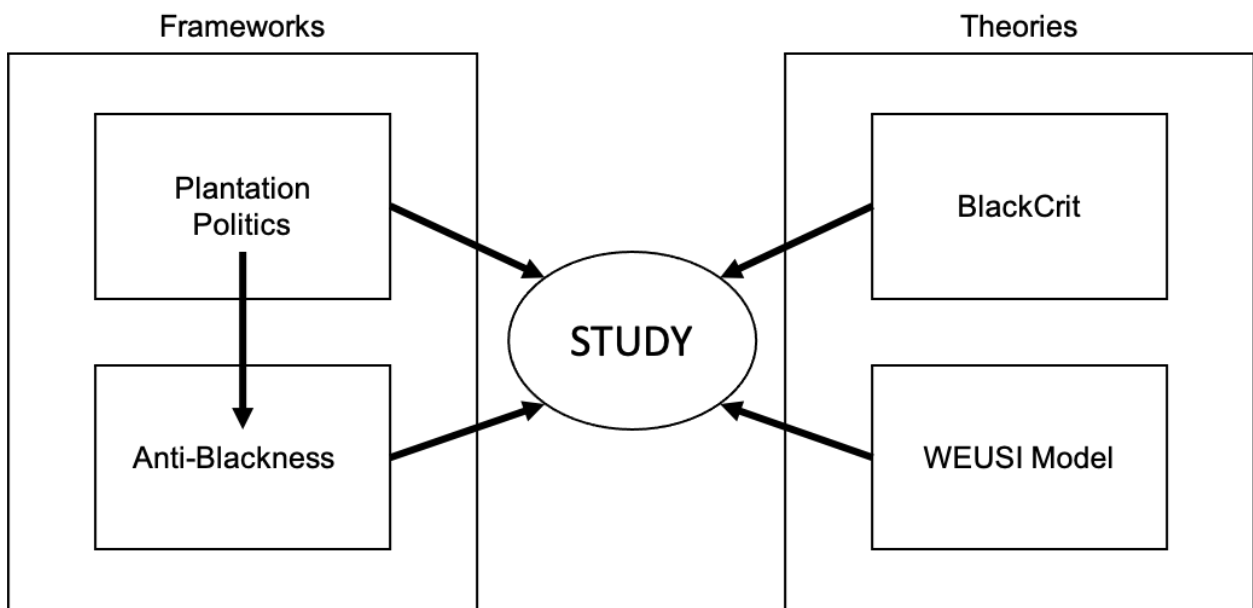


Figure 1

Conceptual Framework

Anti-Blackness as a Framework

Anti-Blackness has taken on many definitions and teachings. In this study, I use an Afro-pessimist understanding of anti-Blackness, simply put as “the human race’s necessity for violence against Black people” (Wilderson, 2016). An Afro-pessimistic view posited

that slavery is the ontological position of Black people. Slavery is how Black existence is imagined and enacted upon, and how non-Black people—and particularly whites—assert their own right to freedom, and right to the consumption, destruction, and/or simple dismissal of the Black (Dumas, 2016a, p. 16).

Anti-Blackness stems from the historical positioning of Black people during slavery, which gave non-Black people, particularly white people, power and a reason to hate Black people. Sadiya Hartmann (2007) explained that the current experiences of Black people are deeply shaped by the consequences left over from Black people having been enslaved. Hartmann (2007) stated that the afterlife of slavery is the existence of an “established a measure of man and a ranking of life and worth that has yet to be undone.” White supremacy and anti-Blackness operate hand-in-hand to guide the policies and procedures that come out of many of our systems in the U.S., such as education, housing, healthcare, and our government.

White people have not only held on to this positioning of Black people but have held onto their ancestors’ emotions exhibited as Black people achieve more. Anderson (2016) explained the presence of white rage when Black people try to achieve and elevate their status. White rage explains why Black progress has been extremely slow or nonexistent in this country due to white people acting out of fear, hate, and a need to protect their economic interests. Anderson (2016) illuminated multiple times in history when white people were angry at the progress Black people were making and instituted barriers to their success. For example, Anderson (2016) told of the white rage prevalent throughout the election and presidency of Barack Obama. Having a Black president was seen as the ultimate sign that racism does not exist, which incited a lot of white rage. As a result, the country has seen a reinvigoration of efforts to suppress votes from minoritized people and low-income people while also attempting to completely unravel the Voting Rights Act (Anderson, 2016; Holder, 2020).

In higher education, we have seen white people enact barriers to keep Black folks from becoming students, let alone succeeding once they have arrived. It is important to remember that was only 60/59 years ago that Black students were granted full rights of admission to institutions of higher education after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 1965 were passed (Lang, 1992). Fear of white students being admitted less than students of color results in white rage, which is enacted through outlawing affirmative action and enforcing barriers in states that still uphold affirmative action (Vue et al., 2017). The inclusion of standardized test scores for admissions creates a barrier to entry into college. White students are about “two times as successful [on the SAT] as their African American counterparts” (Anderson, 2019). Despite knowing this disparity, the SAT has continued to be factored into admissions decisions. Furthermore, including SAT scores in admissions processes eases white rage about affirmative action as white students continue to be admitted at higher rates than Black students. While these are a few examples, anti-Blackness manifests in many aspects of higher education, ultimately impacting every Black student’s experience.

Plantation Politics

When looking at the current lives of Black people in the U.S. context, many systems use tactics of control similar to that of a plantation (Squire et al., 2018). Squire et al. (2018) describes plantation politics, which speaks to how decisions made at institutions of higher education are rooted in establishing control. I initially struggled to make comparisons of higher education to such grueling times and circumstances, but the parallels exist when examining the oppression and inequities that are present for today’s Black people. While I have still chosen to use this as part of my conceptual framework, it is necessary to note that the experiences of Black students today are not as physically violent or painful as the experiences of enslaved Black people on

plantations. While the perpetual physical violence known to exist on plantations is not present on college campuses, this research also does not ignore the few instances in which physical violence has been enacted on Black students and, in some instances, has led to their death. The ongoing physical violence may no longer be present, but the perception of Black people by white people remains the same. Thus, I am borrowing from the framework of plantation politics to situate the level of Anti-Blackness that exists on college campuses today. Anti-Blackness is engrained in all aspects of the U.S. context and, thus, in its institutions of higher education (Dumas, 2016a; Squire et al., 2018). The policies, structures, and hierarchies present in the U.S. today are rooted in upholding anti-Blackness and white supremacy (Dancy et al., 2018; Dumas, 2016a; Squire et al., 2018; Wun, 2016).

Plantation politics takes many of the aspects explained above to showcase how higher education is bound in a racist and colonial system. This framework consists of nine structural elements and six processual elements that help reinforce the belief in the system (Squire et al., 2018; Wun, 2016). The authors argue that higher education administrators use many traditional plantation logics in the operation of institutions today (Squire et al., 2018; Wun, 2016). This framing incorporates the anti-Blackness framework explained above. Plantation politics similarly involves situating Black people as less than and situating white people as superior (Squire et al., 2018). Duncan (2017) tells of allochronism, which uses past understanding and positioning to frame the ways we perceive a group today. Allochronism explains how white and non-Black people view Black people from the framing (less than and nonhuman) given to them during slavery (Duncan, 2017; Hartmann, 2007). Continuing to frame Black people in this position from the past allows actions from the past to take on new ways of operating while maintaining the same result (Duncan, 2017; Hartmann, 2007).

When comparing colleges to slave plantations, there is the obvious rebuttal that Black college students are not forced to attend or even to stay in college once they get there like enslaved folks were forced to be on the plantation. While Black people are not physically forced to participate in higher education like plantations, they are forced to do so based on the social placements of Black people in society today (Squire et al., 2018). It is imperative to understand the narrative of the need to attend college for social mobility and its ability to force Black students to attend college. It is often touted that attending college is the way to achieve upward mobility through troupes such as “the college degree is the new high school diploma” (Squire et al., 2018). This narrative pushes many Black people to participate in higher education and serves as the gates for keeping them from leaving (Squire et al., 2018). There is a sense that attending college is the way to live more freely and be respected by others. Again, plantation politics calls us to acknowledge the similarities of elements of control rather than finding the two to be exactly the same in operation.

Plantation Politics as a Framework

The structural and processual elements of plantation politics offer many parallels with that of the structure and practices of on-campus housing departments. Through the examination of each element, plantation politics further reveals the ways higher education is built on a foundation of anti-Blackness (Squire et al., 2018). The elements of plantation politics directly look at the ways enslaved Black people were treated and the ways members of a plantation operated and compare them with the ways things are operationalized on college campuses today. I use this conceptual framework to showcase how the actions and operations of on-campus housing staff members are similar and uphold anti-Blackness in all aspects of on-campus housing departments.

Below, I have adapted two tables from Squire et al. (2018) that parallel on-campus housing elements to the structural and processual elements of plantation politics. These parallels make the ways in which on-campus housing departments are upholding anti-Blackness abundantly clear. While these parallels were easy for me to make, I am aware of the ways on-campus housing departments can make each element look like a simple business function rather than a function of anti-Blackness. My career in on-campus housing makes it easy to see these parallels, but students and those who do not work in institutions of higher education may not recognize the parallels as easily.

Table 1

Structural Elements of Plantations and List of Parallels in On-Campus Housing

“Structural Elements” (Squire et al., 2018)	On-Campus Housing Parallels
<p>“Knowledge: Owners believed that slave labor was practical and profitable, that slaves were property and that slaves should be subordinate” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on “heads in beds” - Views students as profit - We own the property the students are using, thus they should follow our rules.
<p>“Sentiment: Masters expressed paternalism and superiority; slaves expressed victimization, resistance, and powerlessness” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belief that housing staff are always right and to be believed. - Regulation of all housing spaces: individual rooms, lounges, lobbies, and outside spaces owned by housing - Students crave independence in halls - Positions other students (RAs) as more powerful than residents.
<p>“Goal: Profit through use of slave labor” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attract as many students as possible to live in housing - Putting more students in a room than capacity calls for increased profits. - Students needed to pay the bills. Made abundantly clear during the COVID-19 year with less students.
<p>“Norms: Slaves not allowed to leave and expected to be obedient” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students expected to be obedient and follow all housing rules - Students given minimal options to get out of housing contract

<p>“Status: Owner, manager, overseer, driver, house slave, and field slave as titles” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Director of Housing - Residence Life Staff - Resident Assistants - Desk Staff - Students
<p>“Rank: Titles of slaves were given differential power through hierarchical order and wealth, power, and prestige” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student leaders vs residents - Hall council members vs other residents: students who participate in our system are given more power than others.
<p>“Power: Owner vs. slave as a continuum” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Control of placement in rooms and apartments - Control of ability to switch rooms - Convince students that staff are trustworthy and can solve issues
<p>“Sanctions: Slaves punished for disobedience and rewarded for good behavior” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obedient students rewarded with leadership positions and power over other students - Rules are bent for those who follow more rules and collude with system - Students punished for violating housing policies - Threatened removal from home for policy violations
<p>“Facility: Slaves’ work tools, and owners’ land, labor, capital, and production strategies and techniques” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residence halls and apartments - Programming plan used to direct what students should be doing - Websites used for communication

Note. Adapted from “Plantation Politics and Neoliberal Racism in Higher Education: A Framework for Reconstructing Anti-Racist Institutions” by D. D. Squire, B. C. Williams & F. A. Tuitt, 2018, *Teachers College Record*, 120(14), 1-20.

Table 1 focuses on the structural elements of plantation politics and presents parallels in on-campus housing departments, policies, and procedures. Structural elements showcase the ways anti-Blackness is woven into the foundation of on-campus housing departments. The very philosophy of operation for on-campus housing departments upholds anti-Blackness and harkens back to plantation operations. On-campus housing departments espouse a focus on education while enacting a focus on filling up their halls and making money. A focus on profits rather than education drives staff members in on-campus housing to continue implementing anti-Black

behaviors and policies. On-campus housing departments operate in a capitalistic mindset much like that of intercollegiate athletics and corporations outside of higher education. The students who live on campus represent dollars to be made despite the non-profit designation of many colleges and universities. As the U.S. has transitioned out of quarantine for COVID-19, many on-campus housing departments have turned their focus to rebuilding revenue after choosing to close during quarantine (Graham, 2020). Some institutions closed their halls ranging from a semester to a year or more. Given that most institutions rely on their housing departments for revenue, this time without students living on campus left a deficit in many budgets that campuses are fighting to get out of (Graham, 2020). There has been a focus to recruit more students to live on campus and do whatever necessary to keep students interested in living on campus.

Departments have introduced many new residential policies to keep students safe and updated housing contracts with stricter policies for termination which guarantees students continue to live within the residence halls (Graham, 2020). Despite on-campus housing departments continuously selling the benefits of living on campus and the helpful nature of their staff, they continue to make shifts in operations to align with landlord practices that make it difficult for students to live elsewhere.

Beyond the shared profit focus, on-campus housing departments and plantations share other structural elements that can be easily paralleled. The hierarchy created between on-campus housing departments and their students allows many of the structural elements to manifest. On-campus housing departments make clear to their students who has power (departments) and who does not (students) from the initial signing of a housing contract and assignment of their room. Students are given specific residence halls to choose (if any choice is given) from each year but are also told the staff can ultimately decide room placement. While assigning students to their

rooms may not seem consequential, research has shown that random roommate pairings may be harmful to Black students (Solorzano et al., 2002). Black students experience more microaggressions when rooming with a randomly assigned roommate of a different race. This concern would not be as dire if on-campus housing departments did not also heavily regulate the process to change rooms. The structure is detrimental as it allows the department to choose a student’s roommate and then have control over whether or not a student is allowed to move once issues arise in their living space. The amount of control present in on-campus housing departments mimics the control enacted on plantations, creating hostile environments for Black students.

Table 2

Processual Elements of Plantations and List of Parallels in On-Campus Housing

“Processual Elements” (Squire et al., 2018)	On-Campus Housing Parallels
<p>“Communication: Orders and commands communicated from owner or overseer to slaves” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails - Posters - Living Guide (housing code of conduct) - Conduct meetings with students - Department meetings
<p>“Boundary maintenance: Attempts to preserve and protect the solidarity of the system; stopping runaways” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strict guidelines for terminating housing contract - No support for finding off-campus housing - Scholarships for living on campus - Fines for breaking contract - Rules for talking to the press: Director only
<p>“Systematic linkages: Mutually supportive linkages between systems; exchange of slave labor; police control” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police involvement in addressing issues in housing - Police rounds in buildings on weekends - Police presence in housing parking lots - Sanctioning students to work in other offices when they violate policies

<p>“Socialization: Teaching and learning of rules, skills, roles, status and culture of plantations” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RA Floor Meetings - University Code of Conduct - Housing Policies
<p>“Social control: How deviancy was eliminated, reduced, or rendered harmless; slave codes” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal of students who fail to adjust to campus living - Students taught to report students who cannot follow our ways of living
<p>“Institutionalization: Process by which organizations are made stable, persistent, and predictable” (Squire et al., 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Admissions referral of students to live on campus - Scholarships offered to students who live on campus - Residency requirements

Note. Adapted from “Plantation Politics and Neoliberal Racism in Higher Education: A Framework for Reconstructing Anti-Racist Institutions” by D. D. Squire, B. C. Williams & F. A. Tuitt, 2018, *Teachers College Record*, 120(14), 1-20.

Table 2 outlines the processual elements of plantation politics which represents the ways in which on-campus housing departments govern the day-to-day actions of the students who live in the residence halls. Residential policies and the university code of conduct mimic the socialization enslaved Black people were taught while on plantations. Students are held to the standards of the code and policies regardless of whether or not they have read the information. Resident assistants and on-campus housing staff are supposed to enforce the policies equally across all students, often ignoring individual circumstances; however, preconceived notions and anti-Blackness skew this enforcement for Black students. Hotchkins and Dancy (2017) explained that “Black students, males in particular, are considered out of place when attending PWIs and under continual hyper-surveillance due to potential source of criminality assumptions.” Therefore, Black students have longer conduct records and are often labeled as problems in the halls (Squire et al., 2018). Much of this stems from violating policies that were written to enhance the white normativity of the residence halls. Often white staff members are then the people to address the violation without much regard to why a Black student has violated said policy. Few Black students also find themselves in roles as policy enforcers and struggle to find

community as a result (Harper et al., 2011; Harwood, 2012). Black students are expected to assimilate to the norms of the residence hall with little regard for their cultural experience before moving into the halls.

Black Student Experiences Outside of the Halls

This section overviews literature found that focuses on the overall experience of Black students on college campuses. As noted earlier, Black students experience a myriad of things that differ from their non-Black counterparts. This section focuses on campus racial climate.

Racial Climate

Black students report many experiences on their college campus that impact their sense of belonging at HWIs. The racial climate of a college campus has a large impact on Black students and whether or not they will have a positive experience on campus (Lewis & Shah, 2019; Solórzano et al., 2000). Racial climate refers to the racial environment of a college campus and whether or not a campus embraces or rejects racial diversity (Hurtado et al., 1999; Solórzano et al., 2000, Lewis & Shah, 2019). While Black students attempt to navigate their college careers, they are also met with navigating oppression that undergirds their college experience (Lewis & Shah, 2019; Rankin & Reason, 2005; Solórzano et al., 2000). For example, the way Black students gather has been scrutinized and under the gaze of their peers for many years. So much so that Beverly Tatum (1997) studied this experience and wrote the book *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations About Race*. Given that non-Black students do not understand that Black students choose to sit together as a means of finding community and taking care of themselves, they often question this behavior and make judgments against Black students. The judgment creates an environment where Black students are not as comfortable being themselves and creating community on their campus.

Colleges often focus on their institution's numbers as indicators of a positive racial climate despite the incongruence with their behaviors and students' perceptions (Hurtado et al., 1999). The many methods used do not show that Black students' experiences are improved; rather, white students are learning to tolerate the other students around them (Aguirre & Messineo, 1997; Denson & Chang, 2009). Campuses have claimed their racial climates have improved despite having no data to show the experience on campuses has improved in addition to the number of students on campus.

Faculty Influence

Faculty have a significant amount of power on a college campus which is often exerted in their classrooms. They are often seen as the most important part of socializing students on a college campus (Rankin & Reason, 2005). Interactions with faculty can be viewed as a form of social exchange in which both parties view the interaction in terms of what benefit it may have to them (Griffin, 2013; Molm, 2006). As such, Black students' interactions with white faculty are soon to be known as more harmful than helpful, thus nonbeneficial to enhancing their experiences. Black students have experienced derogatory comments from professors and have been graded more poorly than their white counterparts. These interactions with faculty teach Black students to act a certain way in order to fit into the culture (Rankin & Reason, 2005). Maintaining positive interactions with faculty members may lead to additional opportunities as well as support in the form of letters of recommendation. As Black students strive to receive those positive benefits, they often ignore negative experiences and try to assimilate to the culture around them.

On the contrary Black students have positive socialization experiences through their interactions with Black faculty. Interactions with Black faculty have become a form of resistance

to the socialization and control Black students experience. Griffin (2013) says that Black faculty have described taking a particular interest in helping Black students navigate a college campus and their negative experiences. Black faculty can relate to their Black students as they often have shared experiences of navigating social control and gatekeeping on college campuses (Griffin & Reddick, 2011; Patton & Catching, 2009). Black faculty show up as mentors and confidants for Black students helping them create counter spaces and spaces where they can be authentic without judgement (Griffin, 2013; Griffin & Reddick, 2011). Black students learn to rely on these interactions as a respite to the multitude of negative experiences across campus. Black students look to Black faculty not only for mentorship but as people they can be authentic around without a need to code-switch.

Campus Police

The presence of campus police began in 1894 at Yale University to keep unhoused people off campus and expanded as institutions responded to a myriad of issues on campus (AAUP, 2021). Universities across the nation joined in having a police presence on their campus to combat the slums which existed around institutions and made white faculty and students afraid to be on campus (Cole, 2021). Cole (2021) explains that campuses felt a need to take action to remove people from those areas so campuses would attract more white people, however pushing people out of the neighborhood disproportionately impacted Black people. The racism that undergirds housing in the United States can be directly tied to the experiences of Black students on college campuses.

Today, institutions rely on campus police to maintain some order, respond to emergencies, and on some campuses to form relationships with students. Police presence on college campuses comes in many forms, from public safety officers to full-blown university

police departments. Each comes with their own set of challenges, but in general, Black students take some issue with the presence and power of campus police (Hoover, 2008; Jenkins et al., 2020). Anti-Blackness and white supremacy undergird the system of police in the United States often resulting in over surveillance of Black people (Jenkins et al., 2020). Black students have negative experiences with campus police that often result in them needing to show their affiliation with the institution. Given their many negative experiences, Black students continue to be weary of campus police and do what they can to avoid interactions if not completely necessary.

The relationships formed between an institution and their campus police ignore the needs of Black students as it allows for racialized encounters that often alienate Black students (Jenkins et al., 2020; Hoover, 2008). Campuses have prioritized viewing their police departments as partners rather than reacting to negative experiences reported by their students. Specifically, in on-campus housing, police have been used to respond to many incidents, from mental health issues to excessive noise (Margolis & Shtull, 2012). Margolis and Shtull (2012) further explain that campus police are called to respond even in incidents where they would benefit from more training. Calling campus police in a mental health crisis does not result in a student getting the best care possible, but rather the easiest response for the campus. Black students quickly learn that campus police can be called to resolve a number of issues and that their response may be harmful to the student in order to uphold the policies in place. Institutions rely so heavily on their connection to campus police that many students have called for completely abolishing campus police to protect other students, namely Black males.

Black Student Experiences in the Halls

Although the residence halls carry over many experiences from the larger institutional culture, there are unique experiences in the residence halls that impact the Black student experience. Black students experience many of their negative experiences at a heightened state when happening in their “homes.”

Experiences with Roommates

Having a roommate is an experience that allows students to grow and potentially be pushed out of their comfort zones. While this is the intended experience for all students, Black students have faced many obstacles with their roommates due to their racial and cultural differences. As a result of feeling uncomfortable in their living spaces, many Black students end up regretting living in the halls, and some even decide to find living off campus instead (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017; Van Laar et al. 2005). While not all students live on campus, there is concern about the number of Black students who do not want to live on campus and experience the benefits of living there.

The prevalence of anti-Blackness in this country shapes the way white and non-Black students perceive their Black roommates. Although studies show students experience a reduction in prejudice when living with someone of another identity (Gaither & Sommers, 2013; Van Laar et al., 2005), this does not take into consideration the day-to-day negative experiences felt by Black students in these situations. Having non-Black roommates made Black students feel as if their rooms were not places of solace or comfort (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017; Roland & Agosto, 2017). New Black students who room with their white counterparts often find themselves trying to live up to the stereotypes to fly under the radar (Gaither & Sommers, 2013; Van Laar et al., 2005). White and non-Black students bring opinions of Black roommates rooted in stereotypes, which ultimately harms Black students (Cook & McCoy, 2017; Hotchkins & Dancy; Roland &

Agosto, 2017; Van Laar et al., 2005). Being met with continual stereotypes either leads to conflict amongst the roommates or causes Black students to codeswitch, hiding their authentic selves in their homes. Cultural differences even exist in addressing conflict, as Black students tend to address conflict more head-on than their peers (Bresnahan et al., 2009; Hotchkins, 2014). Solving this issue is not merely about getting more education to the students (Boettcher et al., 2019; Cook & McCoy, 2017) or having good conflict management approaches (Bresnahan et al., 2009; Molina et al., 2015), rather these issues are more examples of the pervasiveness of anti-Blackness.

Feelings of Hyper-Surveillance

There are many policies for students to adhere to within the residence halls. Students are often given a code of conduct that is specific to the residence halls. While the enforcement of policies is necessary, the way in which it is done can have a profound impact on Black students. Black students living in the residence halls experience hyper-surveillance from peers, staff, and police in the form of police reports, in-hall documentation, and constant questioning of their presence on campus (Smith et al., 2007; Harper et al., 2011; Harwood et al., 2012; Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017; Koehler & Skvoretz, 2010). Black students have found others to be paying extra attention to their actions or being hyper-aware of them in the halls (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017; Koehler & Skvoretz, 2010). Black student leaders in the residence halls have their authority questioned by other students (Harper et al., 2011; Harwood et al., 2012; Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017). In order to avoid the constant surveillance, Black students seek out spaces without white students (Dancy & Hotchkins, 2015; Feagin & Sikes, 1995).

Black Students and Housing Staff

The hall staff can positively or negatively impact the experiences of Black students, and both have been shown to happen. Some Black students describe experiences with the hall staff being their mentors or the only people to look beyond the color of their skin (Harwood et al., 2012; Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017; Kniess et al., 2015; Koehler & Skvoretz, 2010). Interactions with members of the staff can lead to Black students opening up and feeling safer in the residence halls. Black students particularly seek out staff who look like them, but many do not have that option, particularly at HWIs (Harper et al., 2011; Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017). Relationship building with staff stems from trust, seeing staff at “Black events,” and seeing staff value Black students. Hall staff are the gatekeepers to a positive experience. They are in charge of the number of Black students who serve as student leaders which continues to trend as very low (Kniess et al., 2015; Roland & Agosto, 2017). Having such few Black students serve in leadership roles further perpetuates the notion that Black students are not allowed to help develop the community and pushes Black students to find community elsewhere (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017).

As part of their role, on-campus housing staff are required to uphold and enforce campus policies. Staff, including student leaders, are thought to enforce policies equally amongst all students, but studies have shown that bias often informs policy enforcement (Kniess et al., 2015). In experiences with the student conduct process, staff often use blanket sanctions and grids to address policy violations across all students (Starcke & Porter, 2019). While this approach is seen as equal treatment, it helps staff perpetuate harmful policy enforcement while not paying attention to the impact on Black students. In addition, the number of Black students hired or assigned leadership positions continues to uphold the notion that these roles are held for white students (Kniess et al., 2015; Roland & Agosto, 2017). As stated above, students are often put in

leadership roles where they are trusted to enforce policies, which inevitably results in students' biases playing a role in the enforcement. Knies et al. (2015) and Harwood et al. (2012) argue for housing staff to have more training about the needs of Black students to mitigate some of these issues. However, a focus on training often removes a focus on the needs of Black students, which allows institutions to continue upholding anti-Black policies and procedures. In order to truly enhance the experience of Black students, educators should dissect the policies that exist and expose any anti-Blackness sentiments in the policies (Dumas, 2016a).

Anti-Blackness in Higher Education

Black people are still defined by a ranking that no longer exists formally, but rather, it informally shapes many of their experiences (Hartmann, 2007). As a result of slavery and the position of Black people in the years after it, today's Black people experience higher rates of premature death, incarceration, and living in poverty (Dumas, 2016a). While slavery as an institution may no longer exist, there are many vestiges that guide our society today. Anti-Blackness continues to permeate through institutions of higher education today, driving the focus on fixing inequalities and lack of diversity (by the numbers) impossible to fix. Dancy et al. (2018) outlined three dimensions of anti-Blackness within higher education: "(a) interpretations of Black labor through colonial arrangements; (b) relationship between labor, ownership, and education; and (c) institutionalization of Black suffering" (p. 178). Understanding these dimensions provides a deeper understanding of the current ways institutions of higher education perpetuate anti-Blackness.

Higher Education and Settler Colonialism

Higher education was physically built upon a system that positioned Black people as non-human. Settler colonialists who first arrived in the U.S. questioned who was to be considered of

the same human species (Omi & Winant, 1994). While white people were positioned as humans, Black people were not and thus were seen as property (Hartmann, 2007; Omi & Winant, 1994). The positioning of Black people as property gave way for institutions to use said property how they saw fit without question or pushback. Furthermore, this positioning as property allowed white people to use Black bodies for labor without remorse and as a means of control (Dancy et al., 2018). White people were able to decide what is and is not acceptable for Black people to be doing. While this system may have been created outside of higher education, it has been reinforced within this system as well. Institutions of higher education used this system to their benefit in a myriad of ways.

Wilder (2013) reminded us that rather than an absence of Black people, there was an important impact that was ignored. As property, Black people were used to physically build the buildings and till the land on which many institutions stand today (Wilder, 2013). While Black people were used to build said colleges and universities, they were simultaneously denied access to these spaces outside of their presence as property (Wilder, 2013). Further, Wilder (2013) says that Black people were still enslaved to many of the members of colleges, they were used as a source of entertainment. Black bodies were present in institutions of higher education despite today's claims. Higher education does not want to acknowledge the dark history and connection to slavery, thus there is a continual expression that Black people have not been present on campuses (Towns, 2021). Understanding this connection is imperative to understanding the ways higher education excludes Black people from living authentically within this system.

There is a focus on creating inclusive spaces for people of color on campuses predicated on the idea that Black people have been left out of institutions (Dumas, 2016a; Towns, 2021). Many institutions were built on the lands of indigenous peoples using enslaved people, yet argue

that neither group has been included in the institution. Dumas (2016b) argued that there is a focus on multiculturalism as an answer to racism because it can showcase the inclusion of non-Black people of color to combat racism. This allows institutions to uphold their anti-Black ideals while also receiving funds and prestige for being an inclusive institution. Towns (2021) called for an acknowledgment that racial violence is central to the existence of higher education institutions. Acknowledging this history changes the focus when addressing the experiences of people of color on college campuses.

Higher Education and Black Labor

While institutions of higher education do not revere Black people as property in the same way today, there is still an unfair labor contract in which Black people must participate. Black student-athletes serve as a perfect example of how Black people continue to be viewed as property, thus upholding anti-Blackness. Harper (2016) explained that 56.3% of National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) Division I football teams and 60.8% of basketball teams were made up of Black men. Black bodies have dominated the population of revenue-generating collegiate sports while there are much fewer Black students attending colleges. Black athletes are exploited for their labor to bring in funding and visibility to their college, while until recently the NCAA ruled that collegiate athletes could not receive compensation for their labor. Black male athletes are seen as less than in the classroom but accepted on campuses in order to perform athletically (Harper, 2015; Palmer et al., 2014). White people continue to operate from a mindset that Black people are less than and are property. Intercollegiate athletics determines every aspect of Black athletes' lives. Black athletes must practice when told to, eat when told to, travel where told to, and receive little in return for their labor. Colleges have been significantly elevated in status as a result of Black labor, and until recently, the institution has completely

owned the athletes' name, image, and likeness. While college athletes have received little in return, NCAA stakeholders have benefitted greatly from the revenue generated by predominantly Black athletes (Branch, 2011).

Institutions of higher education have been able to continue in this way due to the acceptance and implementation of slavery and capitalism in this country. The continual belief in the importance of capitalism allows this system to continue. Black athletes are seen as profitable to the institution, and allowing these athletes to be compensated would redirect funds from the institution and their stakeholders. For decades, courts upheld the NCAA's rules on amateurism, likening college athletes' labor to that of prison labor (King, 2018). An understanding of anti-Blackness allows me to recognize how the history of accepting the enslavement of Black people allows modern forms of slavery to exist today. While there is not a specific example of the enslavement of Black people in on-campus housing departments, there are parallels in the treatment of Black people. Black students who serve as resident assistants are forced to monitor and enforce the norms created for existing in the current system. Harper et al. (2011) explained that Black students in leadership roles often felt hyper-surveilled by their peers. They have felt as if peers in similar roles pay closer attention to their actions and correct them more often than others. Black students have felt as if they are perceived as people who do not belong in their leadership roles due to preconceived notions people hold about Black people and their ability to lead. This perception not only impacts their emotions about the role, but how other students respond to them in these leadership positions.

Higher Education and Black Suffering

Dumas (2016a) explained, "Black people exist in a structurally antagonistic relationship with [white frames of] humanity." *WEUSI* depicts that Black people come from an Afrocentric

frame that is often in opposition of the white framing of society (Williams, 1981). Black suffering in higher education is not inflicted through physical pain today, but rather through other psychological means (Dumas, 2016a). Microaggressions and racial battle fatigue are examples of ways that Black students continue to suffer while interacting with institutions. Black students experience microaggressions both in and out of the halls but often talk about the many places outside of the hall where they experience microaggressions. Solorzano et al. (2000) define microaggressions as verbal or nonverbal, conscious or unconscious insults directed at people of color. Black students experience microaggressions from their peers in the dining halls, in the classroom, and while walking through campus (Aguirre & Messineo, 1997, Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017). While the term microaggression gives off the sentiment that these acts may have a small impact, the cumulative effect of many microaggressions often greatly impacts the experiences of Black students (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017; Solorzano et al., 2000). Black students express feeling boxed in and silenced due to microaggressions (Aguirre & Messineo, 1997). Many white and non-Black students of color expect Black students to act a certain way and be interested in certain activities. Microaggressions from peers are only one area of concern for Black students at HWIs.

Microaggressions are only one example of Black suffering that continues to uphold anti-Blackness. Higher education institutions acknowledge these events as small and insignificant in hopes of minimizing the idea that a large-scale problem exists on campus. On-campus housing departments tend to brush these issues under the rug rather than diving deep into ensuring all spaces are inclusive (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017). Towns (2021) says institutions focus on what they are doing to be inclusive in hopes of ignoring the racial violence present on campuses. Black students are often left to create their own spaces of healing rather than lean on staff and

faculty to remedy the issues taking place (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017; Feagin & Sikes, 1995). Further, this focus on inclusion of all students rather than the particular suffering of Black people can be connected to the U.S. focus on capitalism (Towns, 2021). It is profitable to have an institution focused on inclusion and creating a diverse student body as it is what the system of higher education currently values and often awards (Towns, 2021; Squire, 2018). Institutions are often rewarded with grants and extra funding for creating a diverse environment with little to no accountability for the experiences of the diverse students on campus. While institutions recruit a diverse population, policies and procedures have not changed, thus there has been little remedy to the presence of anti-Blackness on campuses.

Theoretical Approach to Analysis

This study utilized two theories rooted in Blackness to guide my development of the study: interactions with participants and analysis of data. I am intentional in centering Black experiences and ways of knowing to guide the study. Centering Black people and Black ways of knowing allows me to remain authentic to my life's framing as well as the ways the participants may make meaning of their experiences. I used BlackCrit and *WEUSI* to situate a study focused on Black students in a way that incorporates their collective lived experiences as well as attends to the presence of anti-Blackness in all U.S. systems.

BlackCrit

This study used BlackCrit to guide its analysis to draw particular attention to the experiences of Black students. BlackCrit developed out of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in an attempt to center Black people and experiences in its critiques. BlackCrit has a focus on addressing anti-Blackness rather than white supremacy, as typically deemed the focus of CRT (Dumas, 2016b). BlackCrit posits that “Antiblackness is endemic to, and is central to how all of

us make sense of the social, economic, historical, and cultural dimensions of human life” (Dumas, 2016b, p. 429). It is imperative when being critical of Black experiences that we acknowledge anti-Blackness and its impacts through centering Black voices in order to make progress toward ending anti-Blackness in the U.S. (Dumas, 2016b; Coles & Powell, 2019). Dumas (2016a) also mentions without attention to anti-Blackness, there is room for multiculturalism to be used as a solution which ultimately allows anti-Blackness to persist. Utilizing BlackCrit removes the focus on “people of color” which often is used to erase Black suffering (Humphrey & Davis, 2021). A BlackCrit focus allows scholars to address how Black bodies came to be marginalized. BlackCrit should focus on “Black liberatory fantasy” that allows us to dream up a space that isn’t retaliatory and rooted in flipping the current white supremacist system (Dumas, 2016b; Humphrey & Davis, 2021). BlackCrit allows me to center the experiences and needs of Black students throughout my analysis.

WEUSI Model

In an attempt to better consider the ways Black students conceptualize their experiences while in college, I utilized the *WEUSI* model. *WEUSI* is a Kiswahili term comprised of the English terms “we, us, and I” which describes “The Collective Black Mind” as the core of the Black personality (Williams, 1981). At the individual level, *WEUSI* means the shared Black mind, while at the group and institutional level, it means collective Black networks. There is a collective focus that allows Black people to bring attention to more than each individual (Williams, 1981). Williams (1981) emphasizes the Black self-concept as the core of Black personality, which focuses on an idea that Black people are connected and the group as a whole is more important than the individual. *WEUSI*’s three qualities are Blackness, collectiveness, and naturalness.

Blackness is the most distinctive feature and has four major aspects: genetic Blackness, cultural Blackness, psychological Blackness, and spiritual Blackness (Williams, 1981). Genetic Blackness describes the shared biological makeup of higher levels of melanin. Cultural Blackness accounts for the socialization of Black people through participating in traditional Black institutions. Some institutions include the Black family, the Black church, barber shops, beauty salons, and the Black community. Psychological Blackness refers to Black awareness and consciousness, which is developed through Black culture-specific socializing. Through this socializing, Black people strengthen their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors in developing one's Black identity. Spiritual Blackness is the feeling of unity with other Black people.

The second quality, collectiveness, describes the shared quality of being African and/or having African roots. Collectiveness speaks to the ability of Black people to work together towards a common purpose for all Black people. The third quality, naturalness, refers to inherent Black behaviors that are shared, such as unity and rhythm. Rhythm refers to the African practices of allowing music to communicate to the soul through energy. *WEUSI* allows me to understand the interconnectedness of Black people to better understand how students make meaning of their institution's racial climate and its impact. While the *WEUSI* model allows for understanding the collectiveness amongst Black people, it is not used to suggest there is a monolithic experience for all Black students. Understanding the collectiveness provides the opportunity to nuance how Black students are impacted by things they did not directly experience but have happened to other Black students. Black students bring with them a myriad of experiences and backgrounds that make them unique in their navigation of institutions of higher education which should be honored in the analysis of this study.

As a researcher, I employ this model as its framework includes all of me in the research and honors my connectedness to the participants of the study. Operationalizing this model is essential to how I interacted with the participants, and in order to do so, I paid special attention to positionality. Positionality theory asserts that people have a position that shapes how they construct the social world around them (Kezar & Lester, 2010). Further, positionality theory recognizes identities as sites of knowledge that can be used to develop a more dynamic understanding of a phenomena (Kezar & Lester, 2010). In this study, I acknowledged and utilized my positionality to allow me to understand the complexity of the experiences of Black students who live in on-campus housing.

Black Feminist Thought

I am an educated, Black woman from a low-income background. In particular, my college experience deeply shaped my need and want to dissect the Black college experience. Attending the University of San Francisco, a HWI, highlighted my race and centered experiences of racism as my memories from college. Many believed that to be Black in San Francisco meant to be poor, living in the Tenderloin (a suburb of San Francisco), and on drugs. I was none of these things. The juxtaposition of the presence of Black bodies on our college campus to the Black bodies laid strung out on the streets we passed on the way downtown made my time in college all the more difficult. My white counterparts had an expectation of who I was to be, which I did not fit. I quickly learned that to be Black at a HWI was to fight back against many microaggressions and pain.

Upon entering college, I realized I would need to learn what it meant to be Black at this institution. Coming from a childhood that was laden with Black students, teachers, doctors, and lawyers, I knew Blackness to be the norm rather than the other. I was quickly taught that to be

Black was to speak from the Black perspective in classes and assimilate to white norms outside the classroom. In order to persist through college, I spent four years code-switching so as to receive the benefits of being a “safe Black woman.” This concept was not self-created, but rather a label taught to me by a mentor during my first semester of college. A “safe Black woman” was not too loud in class, did not bring up race without being prompted, was involved in more than Black organizations, and had relationships with members of other races. I internalized this messaging and have carried it with me to every job and school since. Separating myself from being a “safe Black woman” has not been an easy task, but through much internal work, I have been able to begin to do so. Relationships with successful, authentic, Black women have shown me that this label does not have to be mine. I was not the only Black student receiving messages about how to assimilate to my HWI. Black students across the nation have been taught how they must act in order to make it through their time at an HWI.

My experiences have pushed me to spend much of my time as a higher education professional attempting to change the experiences of Black students. As a doctoral student, it became apparent quickly that my research should work to uncover the root cause of some Black student experiences. This study provided Black students with the opportunity to share their experiences with on-campus housing policies and the staff and students who enforce the policies. I owe it to Black students to use my educational and positional privilege to share their truth with others. The Black community believes, “It takes a village to raise a child.” I am part of that village that can shape the experiences and future of our children. This study is intended to amplify Black students’ voices on topics about which my voice was once silenced. Studying Black college students forces me to dive deeper into unpacking my own trauma around my college experience and how it impacts my work on a college campus today. This work is

personal in that it is wrapped up in the liberation of all Black people, me included. Beginning with our young people is intentional in order to potentially shape the future of our community. My understanding of both being Black at a HWI and the intricacies of housing policies position me to give the level of attention and care necessary to help Black students share their experiences authentically throughout this study.

Acknowledging my identity as not only Black, but also as a woman, my epistemological view stems from Hill Collins' (1986, 1990) Black Feminist Thought, which calls Black women to center self-valuation, self-definition, and knowledge validation. While this study was not solely interested in the experiences of Black women, my experiences as a Black woman guide my understanding and analysis of the participants' experiences. Through Black Feminist Thought, my epistemological view accepts that knowledge created by minoritized people is valid and their experiences are true as they tell them to me. Hill Collins (1990) outlines three themes in Black feminist thought: (1) it is produced by and for Black women, (2) Black women have unique perspectives, some of which will be shared amongst the group, and (3) although Black women share some experiences their lives are diverse. Self-definition is centered in this study as Black women wrestled with their experiences with policies and practices that have shaped how others perceive them, and I hold all these experiences to be true (Hill Collins, 1990). I also extended these themes to all Black people as I employed a qualitative research strategy that seeks to find the essence of Black students' shared experiences interacting with on-campus housing policies.

Chapter Summary

The literature outlines that the experiences of Black students in the residence halls are not unlike those of their experiences in the greater institution and in the U.S. (Hotchkins & Dancy,

2017). Their experiences are often seen as a product of issues with individuals' dislike of Black students. Institutions of higher education have been built on and sustained by a foundation of anti-Blackness (Martin, 2019; Wilder, 2013; Yanni, 2019). Not all members of the campus hold anti-Black views, but they uphold and enforce policies underpinned by anti-Blackness. The policies once used to keep Black students out of the institutions have now been rewritten to sound accepting while still ensuring Black students cannot assimilate fully (Dancy et al., 2018; Towns, 2021). Given such a foundation, my research gave voice to Black students in hopes of illuminating the ways in which on-campus housing policies uphold anti-Blackness, thus negatively impacting Black students' experiences throughout their time living on campus.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to understand the impact on-campus housing policies and anti-Blackness have on Black undergraduate students at various historically white institutions in the United States. Having a career in residential life on multiple college campuses, I have seen Black students struggle with those who enforce policy and the policies themselves. Black students have had negative experiences with staff and police in addition to being alleged of violating policies at higher rates than their peers. This study attempted to give voice to Black students who chose to share their experiences. To better understand this phenomenon, I asked the following questions:

1. What are Black students' experiences with on-campus housing policies?
2. How does anti-Blackness impact Black students' experiences with on-campus housing policies?
3. How do Black students navigate anti-Blackness within on-campus housing and on-campus housing policies?

To answer these questions, I used a hermeneutic phenomenological method, explained further below, to conduct interviews and analyze data.

Qualitative Research

This study used a qualitative approach because of the focus on the lived experiences of Black students in relation to on-campus housing policies (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative research takes on the ontological assumption that multiple truths exist, and reality is subjective (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Researchers who engage in qualitative research are interested in understanding multiple perspectives on a particular phenomenon to develop meaning (Creswell, 2013; Smith et

al., 2009). Qualitative research makes the epistemological assumption that the researcher should be in relationship with the participants without driving the research. It is expected that a researcher creates spaces where participants feel comfortable exchanging ideas rather than solely giving their experience to the researcher. As a higher education professional, I have wrested my work on the epistemological belief that I am working with students to improve their experiences through seeing their experiences as valid knowledge.

In order to understand the experiences of Black students in on-campus housing, I utilized a transformative paradigm to guide this study. This approach focuses on using research to create knowledge and ultimately improve society by including the voices of minoritized groups (Mertens, 2003; Creswell, 2013). Transformative research utilizes social justice as a lens for interpreting data and understanding participants' experiences (Creswell, 2013). While the study may be interpretive in nature, the end goal was to understand the connections between the essence of the phenomenon and the anti-Blackness prevalent in higher education. To employ a transformative paradigm, I used a transactional epistemology which allowed me to interact with the participants throughout their interview (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

Phenomenology

A phenomenological study was appropriate as it seeks to understand lived experiences, specifically the core or "essence" of those experiences before we add meaning to them (Husserl, 1999; Schram, 2003; Van Manen, 2014; Smith, 2016). Barbera and Inciarte (2012) describe a phenomenon to be something that shows itself, and that it can be understood through learning more about it. Phenomenology is said to underpin all qualitative research as it began as a school of philosophy credited to Husserl (1970). Van Manen (1999) notes the focus of phenomenology:

Its objective is to transform the lived experience into a textual expression of its essence, in such a way that the text's effect represents a reviving reflection and a reflexive

appropriation of something significant: in which the reader comes to life with strength in its own lived experience. (p.56).

Phenomenology as a philosophy focuses on how experiences become consciousness (Husserl, 1970). In other words, the focus is how people come to understand their lived experiences. In the context of this study, it is important for the reader to make connections between the historical climate shared by participants and their interpretation of their experiences on campus. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the experiences of Black people in the United States today are heavily shaped by the consciousness of the experiences of enslavement experienced by their ancestors. This consciousness must be understood by the reader as it inevitably shapes the way Black people today make meaning of their experiences.

While all qualitative research can be linked to phenomenology as a philosophy, a phenomenological study presents itself when focused on the essence of a particular experience (Patton, 2015). Moustakas (1994) tells “The empirical phenomenological approach involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experience” (p. 13). While not all Black students are documented, the enforcement of policies is a shared experience that has an impact on all Black students. In a phenomenological study, participants must make meaning of their experiences and their process of doing so should be noted by the researcher (Moustakas, 1994). For this study, I provided space for participants to make meaning of negative experiences with policies and those who enforced them. In Chapter 4, I share how participants made meaning of their experiences and share themes related to their experiences.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology

As this study recognized that Black students have multiple truths that illuminate the essence of a shared phenomenon, a hermeneutic phenomenological method was used as this

study sought not only to understand the experiences of Black students who are documented for violating housing policies, but to identify and interpret the shared root experience of Black students who interact with on-campus housing policies. Hermeneutics is the philosophy of interpretation which focuses on interpreting the experiences of one's being-in-the-world rather than solely focusing on the experience as separate from the world's influence as Husserl did (Reiners, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). Lavery (2003) says, "Hermeneutic research is interpretive and concentrated on historical meanings of experience and their developmental and cumulative effects on individual and social levels" (p. 27). Heidegger uses being-in-the-world to posit that an individual's experiences are shaped by the world around them (Reiners, 2012). Individuals develop consciousness based on their lived experiences and the historical experiences of their culture (Hartmann, 2007; Lopez & Willis, 2004; Reiners, 2012). In addition to the participants' lived experiences, the researcher brings with them preconceived notions and prior interactions with the phenomenon that helps in the interpretation of the phenomenon. Hermeneutic phenomenology assumes that the researcher cannot bracket their *lifeworld* (Husserl, 1999), but rather, it serves as a guide in the research process. For this study, I brought with me all of my knowledge as a Housing and Residence Life professional who has worked in the halls with students for the past 9 years. My research is situated in my experiences working with Black students as they navigate policies and even serving as the person to enforce said policies despite knowing their impact.

Hermeneutic phenomenology allows the researcher to not only describe the phenomenon, but to make interpretations about the phenomenon's connection to the world (Fuster Guillen, 2019; Reiners, 2012). Heidegger did not believe researchers should bracket, setting aside preconceived notions, when interpreting the lived experiences of their participants (Reiners,

2012). Similarly, Gadamer believed bracketing to be impossible when seeking to understand (Laverty, 2003). As an on-campus housing professional, I bring years of interacting with the phenomenon of study that shaped my interpretation of the experiences of Black students.

Hermeneutical Phenomenological Method

Fuster Guillen (2019) outlined four phases of the hermeneutic method to allow room for the researcher's understanding of the world: (1) Previous stage, (2) Collecting the experience lived, (3) Reflecting on the experience lived, and (4) Writing about reflecting on the experience lived. To operationalize the first phase, I have outlined my ontological and epistemological stances in Chapter 2 which illuminate my preconceived world and recognize how I showed up in the study (Fuster Guillen, 2019). I spent time reflecting on what assumptions I bring to this research in order to acknowledge these assumptions as they came up during the interview and analysis processes. For the second phase, I employed interviews to gather a description of the phenomenon from the participants. Quoted in Fuster Guillen (2019), Van Manen says, "before asking others to give us a description of a phenomenon to be explored, we should try to do it ourselves, in order to have a more punctual perception of what we are trying to obtain" (p. 82). Understanding what I know about the phenomenon was important to finding themes amongst the participants as I engaged in data analysis, because I was able to center the lived experiences of participants. Fuster Guillen (2019) called for researchers to collect anecdotes from the participants to understand portions of their experience. I asked participants to provide an anecdote by responding to the prompt, what does it mean to be Black? This allowed participants to be honest in sharing their experiences without inserting any bias from my thoughts. In order to execute phase 3, I spent hours reading and rereading the transcripts in order to create micro-themes which eventually were combined into macro-themes by making meaning of groupings of

micro-themes. In phase 4, I devoted much time to reflecting on what participants have shared with me to help me accurately write about their lived experiences. The hermeneutic method outlines how to think about and execute the study from start to finish which guided how I conducted this study.

Research Design

In order to understand Black students' experiences with on-campus housing policies, I conducted an individual interview with 12 participants where they shared their experiences living in on-campus housing and with on-campus housing policies. The interviews were semi-structured with some prepared questions and other questions formed based on comments from the participants to allow me to dive deeper into concepts shared by the participants. I used an iterative analysis process rooted in reading and rereading transcripts to identify the connections among participants and their experiences with on-campus housing policies.

Participant Selection

The participants for this study are self-identified Black students who have lived in on-campus housing during their time in college. Phenomenology does not suggest a minimum number of participants necessary for the study but rather a focus on data saturation. With data saturation in mind, I used emails, newsletters, social media, and word of mouth to recruit participants for this study securing 12 Black participants. Purposive and network sampling was used for this study as all participants must have experienced the same phenomenon. I used pre-established networks from my professional career in university housing to recruit participants for the study. I used the following as criteria for participant selection:

1. Self-identify as Black. *Black* encompasses all those racialized as such in the U.S. racialized system.

2. Have lived in on-campus housing for at least one semester.
3. Has attended a college or university in the last 10 years.

Demographics

Participant demographics describe aspects of the participant’s identities that are relevant to the study.

Table 3

Demographics of Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Highest Level of Education	Lived on campus
Briana	30s	Master’s	12 semesters
Donald	20s	Master’s	6 semesters
Elizabeth	20s	In College	2 semesters
Sophia	20s	Bachelor’s	6 semesters
Eva	20s	In College	3 semesters
Celly	20s	In College	5 semesters
Ray	20s	Master’s	14 semesters
Isabelle	20s	In College	3 semesters
Ella	20s	In College	3 semesters
John	20s	Bachelor’s	4 semesters
King	20s	In College	5 semesters
Ittai	20s	Master’s	12 semesters

Participant Recruitment

Given my positionality as an involved housing professional, I emailed (see Appendix A) the Western Association of College and University Housing Officers (WACUHO), the Northwest Association of College and University Housing Officers (NWACUHO), the Great Lakes Association of College and University Housing Officers (GLACUHO), and the California College Personnel Association (CCPA) to add my recruitment flyer to their monthly newsletters which go directly to professional staff asking them to send it or a recruitment email directly to students they know may fit the criteria. I have personal involvement and connections in each of these organizations which allowed me to reach professionals at more than 200 institutions. To

deepen my recruitment efforts within my network, I sent my recruitment flyer to Black Student Unions to be advertised on their social media accounts at 30 historically white institutions on the West Coast (in Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington) and 30 historically white institutions in the Midwest region (in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, and Ohio). In order to increase my recruitment yield, I recruited participants through emails (see Appendix B) sent to on-campus housing and student conduct professionals at 30 historically white institutions on the West Coast (in Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington) and 30 historically white institutions in the GLACUHO region (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio). In order to express interest in the study, participants were asked to fill out an interest form (see Appendix C) which collected demographic information and ensured they met the three criteria outlined above. After confirming that participants met the criteria and would participate in the study, I emailed them to schedule an interview date.

Interview Protocol

At the beginning of their interview, participants were given a few minutes to reread the Informed Consent form (see Appendix E). Van Manen states that reflecting on an experience allows participants to showcase a connection between what they think and what they feel (Fuster Guillen, 2019). The prompt for the reflection was: What is it like to be Black on your campus? I conducted a recorded conversational, semi-structured interview with the participants using the video conferencing software, Zoom. This 60-to-90-minute interview had a few prepared questions (see Appendix D), as Van Manen states to ask few questions and allow for silence in order to allow the participant a chance to explain the phenomenon (Fuster Guillen, 2019). The rest of the interview questions came from probing the topics shared about their experience with the phenomenon related to their experiences living in on-campus housing, frequency of

violations, relationship with staff members, and the impact of the experience. I shared about my experience serving as an on-campus housing staff member who also lived on a college campus and grapples with policy enforcement as a function of my role. The conversational approach aimed to allow participants to feel comfortable sharing their experiences and to create a space of support for the participants. Fuster Guillen (2019) explained that the conversational approach is necessary to allow participants to share deeper answers and anecdotes that allows the researcher to make interpretations during the analysis phase. While some questions were prepared for the interviews, the semi-structured nature was extremely important to allow participants the opportunity to recall their experiences authentically. Throughout the interview, participants had the flexibility to tell varying aspects of their experiences as well as to revisit prior topics specifically as they related to their experiences with on-campus housing policies. I provided room for participants to ask clarifying questions and to choose to skip questions they may have been uncomfortable answering. Participants had agency in how the interview progressed.

Data Collection and Analysis

After interviewing participants, I uploaded the audio recordings to Otter.ai to be transcribed. Otter.ai auto transcribed the recordings and I made any edits necessary before saving the transcription under a pseudonym for each participant. I uploaded the transcriptions to Dedoose for analysis. In the process of data analysis, I brought all my lived experiences and interpretations to understanding the experiences of the participants of my study as Heidegger identifies as necessary in this type of study (Reiners, 2012). After each interview, I created micro-themes as phrases that describe the participants' experiences in order to create the phenomenological themes that make up this phenomenon (Bynum & Varpio, 2017). I used the six steps of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis as a tool of the Hermeneutical

Phenomenological method for data analysis as outlined by Smith et al. (2009). I created a description of the phenomenon based on participants' accounts (Larkin et al., 2006). Describing the phenomenon is an important aspect, but it is only the beginning in a hermeneutic phenomenological study as the interpretation of data is a crucial next step in the process. Ultimately, I used the steps prescribed by Smith et al. (2009) and outlined below to place the phenomenon in cultural and societal framing and begin interpretation (Miller & Barrio Minton, 2016).

Using the six steps for interpretation (Smith et al., 2009), I (1) read and reread a transcription and listened to the audio multiple times throughout my analysis to form familiarity with the data. I listened to each audio and read each transcript a minimum of five times to ensure I was versed in the participants' experiences. Throughout the process of reading, I (2) kept written research notes to keep track of my initial thoughts and reactions to the data. These notes helped me in (3) developing emergent themes, which I made note of both in my written notes as well as in creating codes in Dedoose, I read and reread the codes created in a transcription to (4) make connections across the emergent themes and better understand the essence of the phenomenon. After I felt I had sufficiently understood a participant's experience and found themes, I (5) moved on to the next participant and repeated steps one through four. Once I developed themes for each individual participant, I (6) identified patterns across all of the data in order to find the connecting experiences. Using my notes and codes created in Dedoose, I began to write what I have found to be the essence of this phenomenon. I continued to draw connections across participants until I found the common elements that make up their experiences interacting with on-campus housing policies and those who enforce the policies on their campuses.

As I decided to use a phenomenological approach to my study, an important practice I began with was epoche. Epoche is to set aside “the everyday understandings, judgements, and knowings” in order to focus on the phenomenon being studied (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 27). This step allowed me to allow my participants’ experiences to show me the essence of the phenomenon. In order to do so, when reading the transcripts or listening to audio, I tried to suspend any judgments and make no interpretations of their experiences. Throughout the initial analysis phase, I would catch myself should I make a theme based on interpretation rather than the facts of what was presented by the participants. Knowing there would be time for interpretation later made it easier to help me suspend judgements. Before embarking on analysis, I fully accepted the viewpoint that it is impossible to be completely objective as I analyzed the data which provided me room to be flawed in suspending judgment at all times. Fuster Guillen (2019) recognizes that researchers have moments where judgements enter the initial analysis phase and suggests keeping those interpretations in a journal for analysis later in the process. In the process of data analysis, I brought all my lived experiences and interpretations to understanding the experiences of the participants of my study. I used the Van Kaam method of analysis, which uses specific steps for analysis (Moustakas, 1994, p. 120–121).

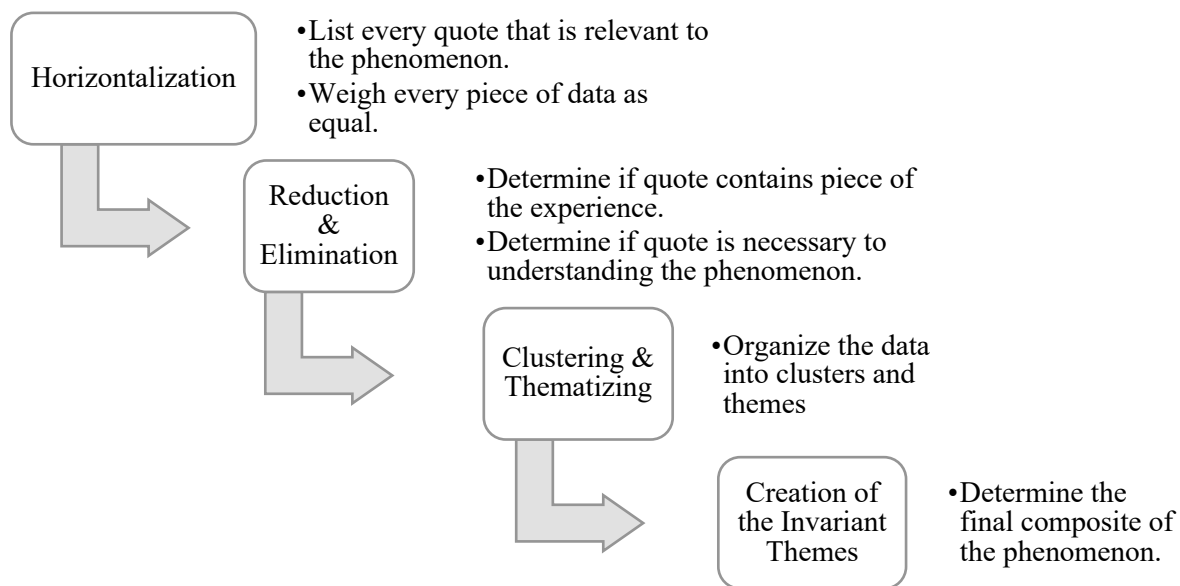


Figure 2

Van Kaam Analysis Process

Limitations and Delimitations

One of the limitations of this study was the sample size. Given that the sample size was small, it is difficult to state what the essence of the phenomenon is on a large scale. While phenomenology does not have a target sample size, other Black students may introduce new factors that alter the interpretation of the phenomenon. In addition, interpretation may be difficult; given the subjective nature of phenomenology, it is difficult to show reliability and validity. It may be difficult to say the experiences are typical across the population.

A delimitation of this study was that participants had to live in university-owned on-campus housing. Given the small number of students who live on campuses and the small number of Black students who attend college, this narrowed the opportunity for participants significantly. In addition, as the participants had to identify as Black, there was a small percentage of males who participated in the study. Given that Black men have the lowest

enrollment numbers compared to other groups, there were significantly less Black men to recruit from for the study.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I explained my methodological approach to the study. I used a hermeneutic phenomenological approach for the study in order to get to the essence of how Black students navigate on-campus housing policies and those who enforce the policies. I used semi-structured interviews to learn about the experiences of 12 participants. These interviews occurred virtually and were rooted in a conversational model that allowed participants to show up authentically and engage in a discussion of their experiences. I took an iterative approach to analysis rooted in the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis method to analyze the data and derive themes. In Chapter 4, I discuss the experiences of the participants and share the 4 themes that arose from the data.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand how Black students respond to and interact with policies in on-campus housing and the enforcement of those policies. The results of this study may provide data that can inform future practices of higher education professionals across the United States. Higher education leaders may use this data to reconsider their current written policies and procedures for on-campus housing as well as to create new policies and procedures. In addition, this study provides recommendations for higher education professionals to reimagine training for professionals and student staff who are responsible for enforcing policies and implementing campus procedures.

Chapter 4 outlines the results of the study which were derived from the transcriptions and coding of participant interviews. The research was guided by an attempt to understand what Black students experienced when interacting with on-campus housing policies. As Black students have described varying experiences living on campus, my research sought to understand the relationship between modern-day plantation politics prevalent on college campuses and the experiences of Black students on these campuses. In understanding this relationship, my research dove into how Black students navigate levels of anti-Blackness prevalent in on-campus housing policies in order to understand their lived reality. As outlined previously, the questions that guided the research study were:

1. What are Black students' experiences with on-campus housing policies?
2. How does anti-Blackness impact Black students' experiences with on-campus housing policies?

3. How do Black students navigate anti-Blackness within on-campus housing and on-campus housing policies?

This chapter provides answers to these research aims by drawing connections between the experiences shared by the participants and interpreting how their experiences are situated in and shaped by the lived experiences of Black people in the United States. The chapter begins with an explanation of experiences shared among the participants that illuminate the need to navigate policies in a particular way. Four themes rose to the top showcasing the prevalence of Anti-Blackness in on-campus policies and how Black students navigate this terrain: (a) bait and switch: an unactualized positive experience for Black students, (b) campus police and their unlimited power, (c) Black collectivism as a tool for survival, and (d) liberatory fantasy as a tool for sustainability.

Before diving into each theme, the chapter shares how microaggressions and policy enforcement have impacted the experiences participants had on their campuses. Microaggressions are a shared experience amongst participants that serves as a foundation of understanding and situating their experiences throughout their college careers. Participants' experiences with policy enforcement can be categorized as both sparse and inequitable, which defined how the participants navigated interacting with on-campus housing policies. Participants' interactions with on-campus housing policies were shaped by the many experiences they had across campus beyond their residence halls and experiences they have had outside of their campuses. Outlining these experiences allows the reader to understand participants' responses to policies and provides a foundational understanding of the climates participants experienced. The foundational experiences depict the racist undertones present at institutions which impact the ways Black students navigate various aspects of their college experience.

Having an experience rooted in racism explains why participants have a pessimistic lens when interacting with police and staff on their campuses. Following this foundation of racism, the chapter outlines the themes which emerged from my conversations with the participants.

A Foundation of Racism

The narratives shared by participants confirmed many of the experiences explained in the literature review. Participants described negative experiences both in and out of the residence halls with faculty, staff and their peers. These experiences provide a foundation to the themes which answer the second and third research questions. Understanding the experiences participants shared allowed the researcher to formulate themes which both encompasses the nuances of Blackness on their campuses and connects to others across institutions.

Microaggressions

Many participants described experiencing various microaggressions throughout their college careers which undergird their experiences with peers, staff, faculty, and policy enforcement. Ignoring the needs of Black students frequently showed up as a microaggression for the participants as they felt alienated by staff and their peers. Participants were often dismissed by staff or told their opinion was not big enough to address or consider. Isabelle shared how some faculty viewed Black students “like we didn’t belong. I had a professor say I was only on campus to meet diversity quotas. He didn’t believe I could handle the courses.” She expressed that the behavior was expected but made it difficult to enjoy their institution. Sophia recounted the following experience with a hall staff member during her sophomore year:

I was in a study room doing my homework and I had my hair braided at the time, in box braids. She came in to look in the study room to make sure that, you know, nothing like uncouth was happening... I had just gotten them done the previous weekend. She hadn't seen them before. She comes up just like grabs a handful of my braids starts like petting my hair, which I like kind of jerked back because you know, “what are you doing?” She

says, “This is so interesting, I could never do this to my hair because I think that it would get dirty” or something like that.

She described this experience as feeling straight out of a sitcom explaining the definition of a microaggression and goes on to explain that when reporting the situation to others, she was told to “talk to the person about it to understand them better.” Sophia was looking for support from her campus professionals, but instead left the situation feeling they were not prepared to help her feel more comfortable on campus. This experience made her skeptical of both the staff and the policies they attempted to enforce and left her feeling a lack of trust in those around her.

Touching a Black person’s hair is a microaggression that spans further than Sophia’s institution. Ray also described navigating hair touching and coming to realize it is a microaggression:

I wanted to play around the idea of growing my hair out. Maybe getting finger coils, braids eventually. Yeah, and so navigating those conversations of the hair touching ... wow... I didn’t even know that was a microaggression for a super long time... Because I grew up wanting people to like me, when they would touch my hair and comment on it that was a form of recognition.

During the study, he came to the realization of how bothered he has been by others asking to touch his hair and how frequent this microaggression occurred. Ray’s reflections depict how normalized this experience became on his campus and how allowing it to occur provided him social capital. He was able to connect this microaggression to his distancing from people who would put him back in that predicament again.

Ray also described a similar experience to Sophia in which campus professionals refused to acknowledge his needs when thinking about policies related to harmful political messaging on campus. Ray shared

What's the harm in just planning for it? I feel like when you don't, especially when it comes to stuff like this, you're not as inclusive as you say you are. Now I'm like, whenever I hear you say something about inclusivity, diversity, equity you're lying

because when I give you the opportunity to be all those things, you're like, you don't have to worry about it. Let's put a pin in it.

Participants often felt their trust in campus officials was quickly diminished after experiencing a microaggression. Participants learned which staff they could trust and which would cause harm so they would ultimately avoid them.

King shared, “we're such a minority or such a small group on campus that we may get overlooked our events get overlooked and it's not really fully considered, or people don't really go to it.” Ittai spoke of staff downplaying the needs of Black students, stating, “There was another lady who just laughed at us after we had shared everything of our concerns and what we wanted to do and how we wanted to see those changes be made.” Ella spoke about a professor who ignored her need for support with coursework:

I went to office hours for support and was dismissed by the most racist professor at my institution. She said people in her class know how to do the work and shouldn't need office hours help. She told me if I needed tutoring maybe college wasn't for me and maybe I should go back to where I'm from and get a job. I knew she meant back to Africa since she always acted like she couldn't understand my accent. I literally almost dropped out because of her.

She continues, “ultimately I chose to show her just how much I deserved to be here” in order to push back against the narrative that Black students were not good enough for college.

While Ella attempted to prove her worth, Briana shared experiences of feeling nonexistent to non-Black people on campus. Briana shared

I wouldn't say I was confident in thinking that white students thought about Black students in my undergraduate experience because they didn't interact with them often. And so they didn't engage with [them] unless again, it was them playing football or basketball or cheering for them in a sporting event.

Briana's experiences show the ways peers only found Black students useful in particular settings like sports, as evidenced in the literature on Black student-athletes.

Eva uses being unseen to her advantage and even tries to make sure she is not noticed by non-Black folks to avoid any microaggressions. Eva shared

Be clean because people always they already have these preconceived notions that you're dirty, you don't clean yourself, blah, blah, blah. Don't give them that reason to think bad because it just kind of fuels the fire for the racism.

Rather than accept being ignored, Donald chose to lean into spaces that may have made him uncomfortable in order to be the voice for other Black students. He shared

I was involved because that was my way of dealing with it. It was like, Well, if this is how it's gonna be, it's not gonna get any better. So I should do something to make it better. And my approach to that was okay, I'll get involved in this club, or I'll sit on this committee because at that point, being able to have a perspective was better than not at being able to be present at all.

Donald chose to face microaggressions head-on in order to ensure the thoughts and needs of Black students were considered in as many spaces as possible. Like Donald, other participants felt the need to put themselves in tough situations if it meant Black voices would be heard and considered in the conversation.

While microaggressions are often thought of as particular words or actions perpetuated against a person, it is often forgotten that microaggressions can come in the form of judgments cast against a group. Participants describe their experiences with how they were perceived or judged by their peers as just as impactful as a direct act against them. Celly tells of her experiences with other students' concerns about Black students sitting together:

Sometimes they do look at us a little funny and wonder why we're being so loud but really you guys are just as loud as us. The whole like sitting together thing, usually people sit by like whatever group they're like. The sorority girls usually sit together, the swimmers usually sit together, the football players sit together. The basketball girls got they own table. So my whole thing is why are we being looked at funny? Yes, we're sitting together. Yes, we're all Black. But y'all are sitting, y'all don't think it's weird that you sit with your teammates.

Celly's experience is congruent with Tatum's (1997) framework mentioned in chapter two.

Multiple participants describe the way their peers looked at them or even ignored them in various scenarios and the impact it had on them.

The preconceived notions peers had about Black students morphed into microaggressions for some participants. Students often brought what they were taught about Black people outside of college to their interactions with the participants. Celly and Sophia tell of experiences with students accusing them of smoking marijuana in the residence halls simply because they were Black. Sophia recounts the following story:

So, one of my friends was in her dorm and someone else was smoking weed in the dorm. And her RA, started purposefully pacing back and forth past her [Sophia's friend] door specifically. Because she was convinced that it was her and that she was the reason that there was weed in the hallway or got smelly in the hallway... All these white girls on her staff were convinced that my friend had all of these drugs in her room and one day she had come back, and they were in her room which is not I think even legal... that's what happens when they when you like delegate the responsibility to 22-year-olds who have who think that a university that is 4% Black people is diverse.

Sophia quickly acknowledges the college's need to train their student staff given their various backgrounds and upbringing. She continues, "People just tend to be more like suspicious of people of color. Because we know inherent biases and all that." Participants understand where these thoughts and judgments are coming from, but they still have negative impacts. Celly describes a similar experience with the following story

I remember one time this girl who I thought like she was cool, like we talked to her, I thought she was cool. And then come to find out, she was telling people that we made the hall smell like weed. Me and my roommate [also a Black woman] were just like, we just got here we literally have moved in that day. And I'm just like, how do we make the hall smell like weed and we just got here? And I was like racism off the bat is kind of fucking crazy.

Celly's reflection on this experience captures the shock many participants had towards their initial experience of a microaggression by a peer or staff member. However, as time went on throughout their college experience, participants became number to the microaggressions,

accepting them as the reality of their experience as a Black person on their campus. The shared experience of microaggressions permeates the themes also illuminated by this study serving as a foundation for Black student experiences and a lens through which they view policies and policy enforcement. Participants have come to expect microaggressions from non-Black people on their campus and have developed tools to cope with these experiences.

Policy Knowledge and Enforcement

Participants describe policies being enforced by a few members of their campus communities including the Resident Assistants (RAs), hall staff, campus police, and their university conduct office. The enforcement of policies took many forms, many of which negatively impacted the participant's experience of their institution.

Lack of Information Sharing as a Means of Control

Participants shared various ways on-campus housing policies were communicated to them. All participants described policies being located in a handbook that students are expected to read before moving on campus. 67% of participants said that policies are located on the housing department's website, 83% of participants said RAs mentioned some policies during introductory floor meetings, and 75% of participants said that it was ultimately the responsibility of the student to find and keep up with the on-campus housing policies. While policies did exist for the participants to find, this did not equate to a great understanding of on-campus housing policies and their enforcement.

A lack of understanding of the policies led many participants not to trust their institution and to have ill feelings toward the institution's enforcement of policies. Ittai reflected on being given some policies but not all:

Basically, the most common policies I feel like are the ones that were communicated like the noise or the drinking or the smoking or those kinds of things. But I don't feel like some of the more like intricate policies were defined or explained.

Without understanding or knowing all of the policies, participants are unable to be full members of their community leaving them to find their own micro-communities in order to persist throughout their time in college. Ray explained that it was on the students to locate policies and understand what is expected of them. Ray stated, "They had to go seek it out if they wanted to, like actually study it." Students were expected to know the policies despite the policies not being fully explained.

Four participants have experience working with college students and each of them shared an understanding that policies are not adequately communicated. Even though the participants recognized this downfall, these participants are forced to perpetuate a system which blames students for their lack of understanding. Briana shared her thoughts on having policies on the website by saying

I think it's a cop out to say read the contract or go look at our policies on our website. Yes, they're listed there and also we know that we say they're listed there just to cover our butts and not really to lean in and focus on them.

Briana shared this sentiment due to her experience as not only a Black student, but also an employee at an institution of higher education. Briana recognized the need to do more to share policies with students and ensure their understanding of policies before living on campus.

Donald furthered this sentiment, sharing

They're [policies] communicated when they need to be communicated, not before or after, right. So it's like, oh, you signed your housing contract, but you didn't read that policy, but now you're being written up for alcohol. You might then want to go look at the policy related to alcohol in that context.

Policies are expected to be followed despite an acknowledgment that students likely do not read the policies fully.

Ittai shared a similar sentiment when asked how students were expected to find policies:

I guess you weren't, because I definitely wasn't looking online, to be honest, like to read the policy handbook and all of that, like I don't think I ever really read that... So I think it was something like if it if you violated [policy] was probably when you found out and then if you just happen to look for all of those things online, but I didn't.

Despite having little knowledge about the policies, participants did fear the consequences of violating any on-campus housing policies. When asked about the purpose of on-campus housing policies, Ittai reflected policies were

A fear tactic personally because I know for myself, I never wanted to violate certain policies because of fear, per se. I knew like I said before, I wanted to be an RA so I knew that technically violating particular policies could have impacted my chances of becoming an RA... Some of it is safety, but I think a lot of it is fear and control.

They also shared, "there's also this hyper awareness of I know I don't want to go through the conduct process and then how can I make sure that I'm not violating these different things or being able to have these conversations." Black students face both a perceived and actualized fear of the consequences of on-campus housing policies. Ella shared feeling like rules were explained in a way to scare students:

Everybody just had to obey their policies or else they said you will be suspended. The RA said if we violate any rules that we will be punished, or we will be sent home. I don't know if it was a tactic to scare us or whatever, but it definitely worked.

Participants felt the fear instilled dictated how they acted to avoid violating policies on campus.

Ella shared, "I wasn't actually someone who would go against the rules, because I was the quiet type, and I didn't want issue. I did everything to avoid violating the rules so I wouldn't be homeless." The participants weighed many of their actions as a means to stay out of trouble on campus. Donald also questioned the connection between policies and control:

Is this more about student control? Like we're controlling student behavior by way of policy? Or is this more rooted in student development? Telling students that they can't drink, but not telling them about the negative effects of drinking and why that is the policy is written the way that it is... I think a lot more of them are about student control, and less about student growth and student development... We have these policies because we want to construct this thing this way, in sort of, not giving people a whole lot of

spread or depth to be anything outside of what those policies say they can be or can or can't do.

Participants looked beyond on-campus housing policies providing a foundation for safety and connected to the ways these policies enact pieces of plantation politics. Similar to rules for plantations, these on-campus housing policies evoke a sense of fear that forces students to abide without question.

Participants understand the policies to be creating a particular experience that is not always positive for Black students. When reflecting on the quiet hours policy Ray shared

The purpose of the quiet hour policy is comfortability low key. It's like it's really put in place so people like are not annoying each other and being obnoxious to each other with whatever's going on in their space or in the residence hall in general.

At first reflection, he saw the purpose and enforcement of the policies as beneficial to all students who live in on-campus housing. However, when asked to reflect on these policies specifically through the lens of Black students Ray shared

[Quiet hours policies] definitely were not created with black students in mind and I don't think that they're enforced with black students in mind. If we're talking about quiet hours I think that in my experience, there has to be a level of nuance [to the policy] not a nuance of discernment of the RD or the RA that is responding to the incident [but] with who they're dealing with.

Isabelle also shared concerns about the quiet hours policy in particular:

This is the most biased policy. Black people keep getting in trouble for being too loud even when we are just hanging out. And it's not just at my school. I went to visit my sister and we were getting ready to go out, listening to music when the RA knocked on the door. He said he could hear us down the hallway, and he was tired of my sister and her friends being loud every time they were over here. I was shocked how intense he was, but I know Black people are just seen as too loud all the time... Having a policy that lets people live out stereotyping is wild!

Participants were able to look at different policies and point out the harmful nature of policies for Black students despite the intention to be implemented for all students. Ella shared, "each policy has a background, but we don't want to discuss that. They were made a long time ago usually to

keep us out and we are still using them today. Clearly nobody has thought about Black people.” Participants called for the professionals to take the experiences of Black students into account both when enforcing and creating policies.

RA Involvement

All participants credit Resident Assistants (RAs) with the primary responsibility for enforcing policies. Participants shared the RAs would disseminate policy information in floor meetings and follow up in person when a policy is potentially being violated. Ittai shared, “I definitely feel like my RA was probably my biggest source of really learning about all of the... well, not even all the policies but the major ones that showed up the most.” The RAs were often first on the scene and responsible for getting their peers to follow policies. Donald believed using RAs to enforce policies is an intentional decision stating

I think that is by design. I think a lot of the administrators at [institution] wanted students to be the people to talk to students because, I guess in theory, students listen to students because we're on the same level... But in practice, that doesn't mean anything. Because as far as that student knows, I'm the person that's writing them up. I'm the person that's getting them in trouble. They don't give a shit that I'm 17 or 18 or 19, or whatever. They're like, you're the person that wrote me up. I'm now in trouble because you wrote me up.

While the administration may see peer-to-peer accountability as a positive, the participants experienced otherwise, as students often had negative feelings towards RAs. John also agreed that using RAs was intentional as he shared, “they use the RAs to try to make enforcement not seem as bad, but the other students were just as harsh as staff.” He continued,

Students are probably even more biased because they aren't going to get in trouble the same as a professional staff... Honestly RAs can get away with all kinds of things because they are the only ones at the room when an incident goes down. It's not like another RA is gonna tell on their friend for being biased. They can do whatever they want and the staff want to act like they doing us a favor having a student knock on the door. I'm like nah, send me a staff member.

Ella agreed, “I think they hope we won’t get too mad because it’s a student but honestly that’s even more annoying. Why would I want to deal with a student on a power trip?”

The experiences participants had with RAs varied based on prior connections to the students or due to serving in the role. Having been an RA, King shared

A lot of residents feel like RAs out to get them which we're generally not we want you to have fun. We want you to make mistakes, of course because you are going to make those mistakes. But it's mostly that learning aspect about what policy you are violating and how we're gonna move forward to address that situation too.

Like the students King described, Elizabeth spoke to her experience with a previous RA, “I mean I had a bad experience with my RA last year. That just sort of rubbed me the wrong way with them, so I stopped interacting with RAs.” She shared she ended up “not speaking to my RA for anything even when I need help. I just figure it out on my own.” Ella’s experience with her RA was shaped by her prior experience with the student:

My RA and I had a class together the year before and we got into an argument in class. We never agreed on anything. Mostly because she was just talking without any knowledge to back it up. Imagine how annoyed I was to move in sophomore year and there she is the RA on my floor. She was out to get me on night one writing us up for being too loud. I ended up switching floor cause there’s no way that was gonna work.

While King, Elizabeth and Ella shared experiences with students feeling annoyed with RAs enforcing policies, Sophia shared

Since all the RAs are seniors, like you can't be a junior or sophomore be an RA, but because it's other students who are enforcing the rules. They're not allowed to, like they can't grab you and make you... or take your ID or anything so if they say hey stop, you can just like keep going and they're not going to jump on you, or something cause they're 22 and don't care that much.

Sophia experienced RAs being ignored because students on her campus recognized they did not have much power. Isabelle agreed that RAs were ignored, stating “We didn’t pay much attention to them. They are just students with no real power.” Ray shared

The nuanced enforcement by RDs and RAs must change. There's nothing built into the policy itself, to make sure that like POCs, or specifically black people are protected, and

you're not just kind of like kind of like, what's the word? They are the only ones that are being negatively affected by the policy and if that makes sense.

His reflection called for policies to be enforced fairly or run the risk of continuing to harm Black students.

Unequitable Consequences

As shared above, many of the participants felt on-campus policies instilled a sense of fear in them and the consequences for violating the policies simply reinforced that fear. Isabelle shared, “policies were meant to control us. Knowing the policies had big consequences scared most of us into following them all the time without questioning them.” Participants pointed to different levels of consequences for Black students who violated policies than their counterparts.

John stated

If you break a policy, you're ready to face it if you're Black, you should be ready to face the consequences. And you know the consequences can be very stiff because you are Black. So you'd rather obey than break any.

Isabelle felt “consequences were made up and unfair. It was about how they felt about you and what they wanted the punishment to be.” She shared a story to convey her sentiment:

I was at a party with friends and the house director came to break it up. She had us all line up in the living room so she could collect ids. There were these white girls who were in the sorority she advises, and she skipped over them when collecting ids... So basically they didn't get in trouble at all cause they were written into the situation. Multiple people noticed but what could we do she was in charge.

Ella shared feelings of being afraid of violating policies:

I was terrified to violate a policy. My parents are spending all this money for me to go here. And I saw one of my friends get suspended in a he said she said situation. There were multiple white students in that situation who got warnings. I know I don't know all the details, but Black students always seem to be suspended and I just don't want to take a chance.

The fears participants had were often rooted in their observations of what consequences others received for violating policies. King shared while he had not experienced negative consequences

he, “had heard about others experiencing negative things... and have public safety get involved in their issues.” The presence of polices and consequences acted as a means of control similar to that outlined in the structural elements of plantation politics.

The consequences of on-campus policies may show up in a repercussion for violating a policy or in the ways Black students must navigate daily life on their campus. Ittai shared that Black students come in with pressure and fear given

The messages we've been told our whole lives about how we have to be twice as good as other people work twice as hard as other people to get where we want to go and knowing that just one thing, even though it could be insignificant, could then tarnish how you're seen perceived... And I think there is that concern that kind of creates that pressure where you don't even want to fall into that category.

John felt similarly as he shared, “before coming here my parents reminded me I wouldn't get away with the same things as the white kids. They told me I better act right and stay out of trouble cause it would be worse for me.” Ella's parents shared similar messaging,

They told me they weren't paying all this money for me to just get in trouble. I needed to follow these people's rules and keep my head down. They reminded me Black people do not get second chances and we are already viewed as doing something wrong. My dad told me not to give them a reason to want to interact with me.

The warnings participants received also serve as a foundation to how they interact with policies as they did all they could to avoid any infractions. John said it best, “you come to school knowing Black people are treated worse than everyone else... so even if they tell you it'll be different, you know better and should just avoid any situation that lets them see you negatively.”

Even without specific consequences, Black students face mental consequences where they must be concerned about any policy infraction. Ittai shared this exists because, “there's a little bit more heightened attention, if you will, maybe drawn to black students in just regular ways of navigating and living life. I've been able to notice that in the different communities I've worked in.” Isabelle further this by sharing, “I stay thinking about how to avoid getting in

trouble. It takes up way more of my mental than my white friends. It just sucks thinking there's always an opp watching." Black students do not have to violate policies to experience consequences, as there are adverse interactions purely based on their skin color. Briana shared an experience of being alleged of violating a policy and the consequences were minimal which she attributed to, "our graduate hall director and our area coordinator tied to our community were black as well". Having Black staff was perceived to be a buffer to having harsher consequences for violating policies. Understanding the experiences Black students are having across campuses is imperative to understanding how they navigate on-campus housing policies.

Black students situate their college experience within the culture of their campus and use it to guide how they make meaning of their experiences. Participants' descriptions of feeling othered and openly discriminated against, coupled with experiences of harsher punishments mirrors many experiences described by Black people outside of the academy. Their shared experiences not only explain their day-to-day emotions, but also reveal how systemic issues are present on their campuses. The participants described environments steeped in racism, anti-Blackness, and white supremacy through which they filtered interactions with peers, faculty, staff, and policies. Making the connection between what they are experiencing campus wide with how they view policy enforcement allows for a fuller picture of the current concerns with on-campus housing policies. Answering my first research question about the experiences Black students have with anti-Blackness on campus allowed me to further analyze the participants' interviews to develop the four themes explored in the following sections.

Bait and Switch: An Unactualized Positive Experience for Black Students

In 8 of the 12 interviews, participants described being promised a positive college experience during their recruitment experiences, however the participants faced significant

hardships once they arrived at campus. As shared by Sophia and Celly, Black students are sold a positive experience when being told to come to college and it is furthered when they are told to live on campus. The benefits of living on campus are often touted and expressed as imperative to the college experience and impactful to college success. However, when Black students get to their college, things are not always as they were told. The experiences of Black students often include more difficulties that were never explained during their recruitment conversations. Black students face racism from faculty, staff, and other students, as well as microaggressions, and experiences of being the only Black person in classes or in their residence hall. These experiences are counter to the narratives they were told when deciding which institution to attend.

College is often sold as a space where college students can explore and experience a much more utopian-like environment. College students do not expect to deal with the realities of society due to the shared values held amongst those at a college. Donald shares the perception Black students hold when enrolling in college:

Black people go to college thinking that it's going to be very different from the broader [society] that they're dealing with. And I'm like, It's not right. In fact, it's a microcosm and the microcosm might be worse than the macro structure.

The similarities between the greater society and colleges are made clear as students become more accustomed to their new environment. Ella shared, “colleges are just the society but smaller. It’s all the same shit but in a smaller space. We think we are escaping everything but truthfully we just facing it with different people.” Their thoughts of what college will be like are informed by the tactics used for recruitment. Institutions use various methods to get students to commit to their institutions. Briana, a former college staff member, shares, “they're coming in and we're selling the dream, but the day to day is still not made for them to be successful”. Briana recognizes the ways colleges sell this dream to students knowing it may not be actualized.

Black students experience something very different that is never described in the recruitment phase. Sophia also spoke to recognizing that colleges do not always live up to these initial expectations:

It became very clear to me over the course of my college career that most institutions especially like the one that I went to are first and foremost going to be trying to make money and like getting money from their donors, and the health and well-being of their students is not as important as the ability to keep doing that. You can see that in the way that like certain policies work.

Black students experience this duality of what they wished their college career to be like and what actually happens. This situates them in a space where they are already unhappy, but have few choices to get out of the situation. This often leads them to stick it out and deal with the microaggressions and overt racism throughout their time in college. John shared his feelings:

You just know they are lying to you about the experience, so you just deal with it. Once I realized college wouldn't be what they told me, I put my head down and got to work. I'm here to get this education to make money for my family. If I gotta do it with only five Black kids around then that's what I gotta do.

John's statement illuminates how Black students choose to navigate the discrepancies between what they were told would be their experience on campus and their lived reality.

Non-Black Perspectives

Black students are expecting an inclusive college experience, but are often met with unique negative experiences. Donald reminds us that these experiences aren't congruent with the typical experiences of Black students:

It was the bait and switch like you told me one thing about what it would be like here and then it was something totally different because what you were telling me wasn't from the perspective or from the lived experience of someone like me, right? You were telling me what these white people are... what these, you know, wealthy white students will experience and that's not to say that they don't have challenges I'm sure they do. But I bet their challenges don't involve dealing with racism every day, literally every day, every moment of every day.

Having the experiences told from a non-Black perspective leads Black students to believe they can experience safe, happy, and fulfilling college years rather than experiences of microaggressions and racism. Ella illuminated this sentiment, “what we learn about colleges is really the white experience. Nobody puts on a brochure this place is great unless you aren’t white. The college experience is the white experience, but nobody talks about that.” Colleges are not advertising the negative aspects that Black students may not experience, but rather use predatory practices to highlight the positives of their communities. Isabelle felt “we were lied to. I was tricked to come here for a better experience, but they were not ready for me to be me on campus.” These practices are not unlike the practices of housing entities in society that do not highlight crime or issues with the facilities. It is up to the tenant, the student in this case, to find out what the issues are once they arrive and decide if these issues are things they must endure or if they have the capacity to move elsewhere. John shared, “we have no choice but to deal with it. Where else will we go? They know we can’t afford another way.”

Celly shares the experience of Black students coming to college only to find themselves unable to stay and deal with the many stressors. Celly expands on students being forced to leave:

It's truly irritating to watch them year after year, bring these students and like tell them what they're signed up for but didn't really tell them what they signed up for. And then this November, and they're dropping like flies because they can't pay their bills [and] they're not being supported.

Black students are not only dealing with the stress to pay for college, but also struggling with the day-to-day interactions with others. The compounding impact can become overwhelming for some while others do not have the ability to leave. Isabelle shared

If I was white, my experience could be exactly what they sold me. My white friends never seem to be having the same issues as me. When I tell them about my experience they are shocked because they think we all live the fairy tale life we were sold.

Participants shared that their experiences were different from their white peers despite their institutions sharing that things would be similar for all students. Facing these differences upon arrival left many no choice but to stick it out and endure whatever came to them. John shared,

I wonder who gets to decide how to market schools. I'm a marketing major so I think a lot about how to sell something to people. I'm guessing the school has a marketing team who sits around thinking about how to sell all the good aspects of the school...The hard part is some of us would rather hear about what would be hard here. I wish I'd known how few Black students went here so I could have gone somewhere else. But I guess they wouldn't be good marketers if they told me that huh?

While participants understood that much of college is marketed through a white lens, they struggled to accept the erasure of their struggles on campus. Many participants grappled with how they would have preferred to learn about the experiences of Black students before arriving. Ella shared, "I kinda wish I got to meet with some Black students before I came here. Maybe they could have told me the truth." Participants wished for more transparency from their institutions, stating it would have made them feel more included in the institution.

Unlimited Power of Campus Police

When asked who enforces on-campus housing policies, 9 of 12 participants stated campus police had some involvement in enforcement. Participants pointed to the police enforcement as being used as either a last result or as extra force when staff deemed it necessary. Ella pointed to seeing campus police, "enforce rules related to the Israel-Palestine protests and then in the halls some nights walking around. They show up to either help or make sure you know the rules." Participants also shared varying interactions and concerns about campus police involvement in enforcing policies.

Campus police are often seen as partners for housing and residence life professionals in getting their work done. Ray shared his thoughts on this structure:

It's cool to find the good police officers in the group. And if you genuinely got a whole team police officers that are great, love that, our campus is going to thrive because of

that. But that's not realistic. There's always at least one whether we're talking about police officers or whether we're talking about [Residence Directors] there's always at least one that is providing a negative experience with somebody, and that one person could be the difference between a student being retained or leaving.

He furthered his thoughts by sharing his discomfort about having police respond:

I as a pro staff member get uncomfortable, which is weird, because like they are talking with my coworkers, and I should feel comfort there... So like if I'm a prostaff member and I get uncomfortable when they show up or I just start to act weird or differently. What is that doing to the student right? Regardless of whatever the background is, like if they're black, and you have the university police department responding to a situation when the in-hall team could really handle that. That to me, I feel like needs to change ASAP.

While many campuses speak to campus police as partners, participants explained that partners often meant enforcers. Donald shared that campus police were often called to back up or enforce hall staff's stance:

And so if you say, Hey, I'm going to call the police if you don't cooperate, if they don't cooperate you then call the police right, you escalate it as much as you need to, to kind of enforce the policy, regardless of what that might do for the student.

Ittai shared there were no parameters on when to call campus police as "I think it depends on the escalation of the situation. Hall staff would determine necessity based on situation and their comfort." Donald shared there were certain instances where the police were called automatically, like "if you were caught with drugs, you were kind of at the mercy of the police department of what they wanted to do with you. You call the police and let them deal with it." Police decided what the outcome would be for students and as Ray shared, "they might have like their own policy and procedures" that others on campus did not know.

Participants shared that campus police officers often carry preconceived notions about Black students that impact how they interact with them. Isabelle shared, "I believe there was a reputation amongst campus police that Black students were troublemakers. They used their prejudice to guide how Black students are treated." Isabelle shared that campus police viewed

Black students “like we were criminals. They always asked for our IDs at night and acted like it was impossible for a Black student to be at this school.” King made the connection between previous experiences with police in society and Black students’ experiences with campus police:

I know there's a lot of times where just the interactions of people in the past with police in general spills over into the college experience. Seeing police will probably just scare black students of like Oh, I did something wrong. Now you're out to get me or I didn't do nothing wrong and you're out to get me.

John shared a similar thought, “as a Black man, interacting with campus police is terrifying. I’ve seen how police treat Black people and I don’t want it to happen to me. I do everything I can to avoid them.” Participants point to the lack of oversight for campus police. John shared

I don’t think anybody tells them what to do. I could never find who holds them accountable. It’s weird to think they can do whatever they want without consequences. It feels like they’re the only office that doesn’t have a boss. Do I have to go to the president for them to get in trouble? You’d think on a college campus it would be understood that police need some checkpoints in place.

John’s thoughts and concerns about campus police’s seemingly unlimited power were shared by other participants.

Participants express feeling this unlimited power among campus police in various ways. Isabelle shared, “Black students should really avoid campus police. Ours are just retired officers so I know they are racist. Campus admin pretends they are resources, but people only call them to enforce policy.” Celly also shared similar thoughts, “I feel like securities are very much seen as enforcers rather than like, resources on campus.” Ella shared

They show up to everything. Any time there’s a problem in the halls, the police are showing up. And they are rude to students. They act like they are dealing with criminals instead of college students... Nobody stops them or holds them accountable. They can really just do whatever they want, and we suffer the consequences.

John shared an experience with campus police:

I went to a kickback my freshman year and it taught me the police will just make shit up. They were saying we were violating the law about how many people could be in the

house but there was literally 10 of us so that couldn't be true... They had us line up and face the wall just to get our IDs. It was dehumanizing.

John's experience stemmed from the partnership with their on-campus housing department as he shared, "I found out my Resident Director was the one to call them. Why couldn't he just come tell us to be quiet? Instead you put Black students at risk of the police." Isabelle shared an experience with campus police in her residence hall:

I was playing music while doing my hair when someone knocked on the door. I opened it to find campus police there. They told me someone had reported that I wouldn't turn my music down. I said nobody came and the officer insisted that someone did. So I started to say okay I'll turn it down, when he asked what I was burning in the room. Before I could answer, they told me to step out of the room while they searched it. They searched my room, found nothing, and just left me with the mess.

She shared that experience "changed my mind about living on campus. I moved off before the end of the semester. Police could do whatever they wanted so I wasn't safe there."

Some participants questioned the role of campus police and their oversight. Ella stated, "I want to know who controls the campus police. Who's their boss? Cause it seems like they can do whatever they want. If an officer is reported for being racist literally nothing happens. It's crazy." John wanted to know who allowed police into the halls, stating

Whose idea is it to have them walking our residence halls? I lived on a Black floor, and they were always there every night. For what? It felt like the ghetto. Or at least like they thought it was the ghetto... Anybody who allows that doesn't care about Black students.

Isabelle agreed and questioned

What is the point of the people who work in the halls if they are just going to call the police? Also Black students should be told you're gonna have more interactions with police on campus than out in the real world. I never interacted personally with the police before I got to college. That shouldn't be the case.

As a current on-campus housing professional, Ray called for staff to rethink police involvement:

If your policy includes the police responding, you need to make sure that it was vital for the police to respond. I think having it be in your policy that the police respond to a situation you look at the situation and be like, that wasn't necessary. I think that's really damaging to black people specifically.

While not all participants work for colleges now, many were able to agree with Ray in hoping for future policies that do not rely on police enforcement. John shared, “it would be nice to just have staff come address the issues. Police don’t really need to show up to everything. If they write the policies, they should be able to enforce them without calling the police.” While campus police are seen as an important partner for on-campus housing departments, participants describe experiencing many issues as Black students. There is a perception amongst the participants that campus police operate with little to no oversight from others on campus. The negative experiences and lack of oversight led participants to feel unsafe on campus. Participants did not experience the protection from campus police that they were promised, as they were often met with racism and acts of police brutality. With no clearly outlined oversight, participants were left to simply deal with these issues and live in fear of campus police.

Black Collectivism: A Tool for Survival

Navigating on-campus policies requires Black students to be creative to avoid racism when interacting with these policies. Ella shared, “you have to find other Africans or Black students to survive this place. You won’t make it the whole four years if you don’t find your people. You’ll feel very lost and alone without people who get your experience.” Black students rely on a myriad of tactics that allow them to navigate negative experiences with on-campus housing policies from avoiding breaking rules to finding camaraderie with non-Black students. John shared, “I’ll do whatever to get finished. I gotta graduate so I keep my head down and stick to my people if it means getting done. I know who I can count on in and out of the Black community.” Finding community with other Black students, staff, and faculty has risen to the top in importance for navigating experiences. Black students have found that leaning on each other can make navigating negative experiences much easier.

King shared, “we all kind of look out for each other when we can, and it makes sure that we are valued and feel seen on campus.” Celly also shared, about the closeness of the Black community, “the community of minorities that is here, it's a very strong community. We always stand 10 toes down for each other.” Community amongst one another allows Black students to support each other through their experiences with ease. Celly described visiting her campus and realizing she needed a Black roommate to navigate the space comfortably. Celly shared

I kept looking around I was like, there are no black people here. What is going on? So then I was like, okay, if I'm gonna be at a PWI I'm gonna be at a PWI with a black friend. So I found her I found out she was coming... I was like, please be my roommate. She was like yes, thank you.

Ray explained the necessity to find some Black support system on campus:

So when something happens that affects the collective black experience, you need to know where your support systems are, whether that is your friends, whether that be in a black mentor, a black supervisor or whatever.

Participants shared that it was imperative for Black students to find people on campus and beyond who can support them in their experience as they navigate the many interactions with others on campus as well as the policies. Sophia explained the process of finding community as “going to find all the other minorities and then you guys have your own little friend group and you're like, wow, things aren't that bad.”

Many participants shared the power of having Black staff across campus and forming connections with them to sustain themselves on campus. John shared

I was down bad my sophomore year. And you know people usually transfer after sophomore year. I was thinking about it but one of my friends in a Black men's group I was part of was like don't let them run you out of here. He checked on me and got me connected to the Black therapist on campus. It's the only reason I stayed.

John shared that this experience impacted how he chose to give back to other Black students in his junior and senior years. He shared, “I participate in mentoring group for other Black men on campus so I can help them get through things. I have to lift them up when I can. I try to introduce

them to all the Black staff.” Isabelle also shared connecting with a Black therapist on campus “was the best thing that happened to me. She would listen and help me navigate the PWI and I’m thankful for her cause I was about to drop out.” While Black therapists helped, Ella shared about the power of Black staff:

There’s this staff member in our Black Resource Center who is like a mom to all us African and Black students. If you have an issue on campus you know she’s gonna address it. She will go right to the office and be like your staff member is being racist fix it. She did that for me with that professor I told you about. She’s got all our backs, and we’ve honored her for it a couple years now.

Celly also shared about support from Black staff:

I would say we're supported to the best of our ability by like the three black people that work here... I know the one woman that I can think of on the top of my head is our Interim Director of the CDI. She’s over the Black House and is there for us but she's only one person. She cannot support every single person.

Ittai shared that staff created pockets of Black people:

In our recreation center we had someone who was in charge of basically hiring all the referees and staff for intramurals. So that ended up being very, like he literally hired most Black people I would say, so that ended up being like a really big support for people.

Participants recognized the need to form connections with both students and staff to aid them in feeling connected to their campuses.

Even though some participants did not have negative experiences when navigating on-campus housing policies, they decided it was important to stick with other Black students and to support them. Briana shared

Recognizing that wasn't my individual experience so, how do I support people and be in these spaces with [other] students and say, like, that's, I'm here for you, but not in that experience and kind of understanding what that means.

There was a sense of needing to take care of one another due to a feeling of connectedness amongst Black students which is congruent with the WEUSI model framework. King shared caring for Black students in terms of jobs:

When I get asked for job opportunities and I can't do it, also try to pass it on to another black student first before I reach out to my broader community. And that's just because I always want to look out for black students, because sometimes it's a little bit harder for us to find these positions.

Participants shared that Black students take care of one another holistically because others may not think about or understand their needs. Ella shared, “my org had an event for Black students to share what they had been through on campus and to talk about supporting each other in tough times. We even had counselors. People could talk about whatever they needed to.” Isabelle shared

We just care for each other. We are our support. When a big party got busted and lots of Black people got in trouble the Black RAs on campus had a meeting to help people understand the campus judicial process. It was cool to see them put their job aside and just be a Black student.

Participants shared how Black students would come together no matter the situation or their status on campus given their shared understanding of navigating their institutions.

When asked to give advice to Black students who planned to live on campus in the future, all participants gave advice rooted in finding community amongst other Black students on campus. The participants explained how this was important for them and further stressed that all Black students would need it in the future. Ray shared that “finding your people, that's definitely going to make or break your experience” for Black students. He went on to say

You have to find us first, the group of black people because typically they're all hanging out together. It can be really difficult to find your people once you do and if you stick with those people then your experience overall becomes a lot better.

Isabelle agreed with the need to find other Black students to make living on campus easier:

If you're going to live on campus, just get prepared. You're staying with at least three other people, but you don't really know each other. So I feel like if you can find Black people to live with it will be better. They know you and understand your cultural practices. It's just easier.

Ella also shared similar advice, “the Black community is it. A new student has to find Black professors, staff, and students. Go to all the Black events and find your community as soon as you get here. That’s the way to make it here.” John spoke to the reason finding Black community is so necessary:

As Black people we are facing particular issues and only other Black people get it. Even if we don’t like it, people look at us as one so we might as well stand as one. If we support each other, they can’t tear us all down. And we can ultimately change the system. It’s going to take all of us to change what is accepted and force them to make us just as important on campus.

There was a shared vision amongst the participants to make sure Black students felt comfortable on campus and are able to navigate policies easily. Finding community with other Black people was shared by the participants as a means of surviving the hardships that come with living in on-campus housing. Participants recognized the small percentage of Black students on their campus and used this as a reason to form community amongst one another. They connected their experiences on campus to the racism and lower positioning experienced by Black people throughout society as a reason creating community was highly necessary. The participants’ experiences were deeply connected to and mirrored the experiences of Black people throughout the United States.

Liberatory Fantasy as a Tool for Sustainability

Each participant was asked the following question, “what would inclusive policies look like that would allow Black students to live authentically while living on campus?” in order to deepen my recommendations and to further implement elements of the BlackCrit throughout the study. Isabelle shared

It’s interesting that you ask this question and I have answers. It makes me think the people who get paid to do this should easily come up with the same answers. They should think about all the students who make up a university. What do they all need to feel comfortable here? What policies can be written to eliminate some of the hate they face outside of college? Write policies with those questions in mind and Black students will be

just fine. I just hope for better policies that mean a less shitty experience for Black students.

When talking to participants it was clear that dreaming of a better future was something many did to push through current experiences they were having. Ella shared, “I just imagine that one day colleges won’t be so terrible for Black students. They won’t have to learn a whole new way of being just to get a degree.” Now an on-campus housing professional, Ittai shared the following when asked how they reconcile their experiences with on-campus policies and enforcing them, “I think a lot of it is thinking about how I may conduct my own conduct meetings and what conversations may go into that and how I can change the experience for my students.” Isabelle shared

I say get rid of campus police. Having a specific police force for that small section of a community is dumb. It sets people up to believe there will be big problems that need a police presence. There has to be other ways. I know that sounds radical, but we know the harm their presence does for Black students... If I am supposed to believe colleges will be better one day then I will imagine the best possible situation for my people. So for us that’s no police on campus.

Dreaming of and even creating better experiences with on-campus housing policies allowed the participants to see the value of living on campus for future generations of Black students.

Donald said that professionals who make policies should incorporate the questions, “What is the effect of this policy? What does this policy do for Black students? What did this policy make you (students) feel?” into decisions about policies. Celly asked that professionals

Just being more aware of context... taking the time to think about would this policy make... I won't even say just black students like yes, we're talking about black students, but underrepresented populations, how will this make them feel? My institution was opened in 1834. They were not thinking I was going to attend my institution in 1834. Like they did not think I was going to be living on campus in 1834. So I just feel like there's just a very blatant disregard for students of color in our policies and that needs to change.

Ella agreed with the need to understand when policies were created:

There has to be recognition that these policies are old. Who were they created for? Not the Black students who are on campus today. Somebody should take the time to read all the policies and determine if they still are good. The answer is no they aren't. So now admin needs to come together and rewrite them to protect students yes, but not to control everything we do.

Isabelle shared that “colleges are old, so policies are old. If we are still using the same policies from even 10 years ago, that’s a problem.” Participants could not dream of new policies without acknowledging where policies are today.

Given these thoughts from Celly and Isabelle, it is only natural to understand what to do after recognizing the age of institutions and their policies. Ray and Briana agree that on-campus housing policies should be reviewed more often. Ray explained

I don't feel like there is a person or a group of people like a taskforce, a committee, whatever you wanna call it, that is actively looking at those policies. I feel like we should have that, everybody should have that actually... If we're not constantly thinking about that. And I'm talking like on an annual basis, like that policy that we talked about last year, let's bring it up again, because this incoming class is different from last year. If we're not constantly doing that, then to me it's a problem.

Briana furthered this sentiment:

We will review the policies right and make updates to them, but I think we never incorporated the student voice in those revisions. And the process of reviewing them often it was in house staff or a focus group that leaned into like, we hear rumblings that this policy needs to change but it was never directly a student voices. And so, while it's time consuming and can be challenging to figure out how to incorporate the student voice, I think those policies are created to protect and keep them safe. So why not have them speak into them when they're being created initially or when they're being reevaluated?

Beyond reviewing policies, Ittai went further to suggest

I think that there are some policies that can probably be further left out or discussed to figure out how they're actually adding or taking away from the student experience as they live in on campus... I think there are some policies that are in place, and I think it escalates things versus students can just have the conversation and I think that can be a very different place as well.

Participants agree for the need to review the origin of policies as well as how policies are impacting today’s Black students.

The development of campus policies was mentioned by multiple participants as they imagined better for Black students who live on campus. Donald shared

When new policies are developed, really thinking about whose experiences are being centered as those policies are being drafted and as those policies are being written and implemented. I think policies can serve a lot of different reasons or a lot of different purposes. But policies need to be contextual to the identities, the lived experiences, the nuanced understandings that manifest... And so I think starting from that perspective, and on a policy front like okay great we've alienated black people in our policy development process. Let's call them in and really work with them, collaborate with them, make them partners in this endeavor, and really listen to how they're experiencing the college campus and invite them to sort of propose with us these new ideas and new approaches to thinking about different things.

Sophia agreed campuses should recognize differences but urged that housing and residence life professionals include students in the conversation to avoid harming groups. She shared an instance of her institution making a decision that ultimately alienated Black students:

Instead of selling black hair care products in the little students store they put them in a vending machine because the thought process was like oh, this way it's accessible 24 hours, but then you look at the vending machine and it's just bonnets and do rags and things. It just doesn't sit well with me... It just made it seem like this caricature like stereotype... The store is for the *regular* students. And then this is the black vending machine.

She showcases how well-meaning decisions can still negatively impact Black students and a need to include students in any policy-making conversation.

Participants explained their thoughts on what Black students need to live more authentically on college campuses. King shared, "I think overall in general, black students just want to feel a little bit more supported in the spaces that they have and that could be simply more room for just dedicated black students to live on campus." Sophia shared

The students of color are going to need more resources and different things for the way that they live... the way we live is going to be different than the way that the average or the typical white college student is going to be acting.

Recognizing the differences Sophia mentions, Eva hoped to bridge the gap between students:

I wish that there were more ways for non-Black people to be involved and educated on Black people and stuff we do. Because it feels like we're here and we have our safe space, but nobody knows about it or us.

While Eva hoped to educate other students about Black students, John explained, “inclusive policies require a diverse team. Our college doesn’t have that so they shouldn’t write the policies. They should get consultants or something. Actually try to find people who understand others.” Participants maintained these thoughts of a better experience for Black students in order to feel comfortable encouraging future generations to live on campus.

Chapter Summary

This chapter shared the voices of the participants in order to understand the experiences of Black students as they navigate living on-campus and on-campus housing policies. The participants’ responses were categorized into four main themes, (a) bait and switch: an unactualized positive experience for Black students, (b) unlimited power of campus police, (c) Black collectivism as a tool for survival, and (d) liberatory fantasy as a tool for sustainability. Throughout the bait and switch: an unactualized positive experience for Black students theme, it was shared that participants felt they were sold a positive experience that was not always the true experience when they reached campus. Many participants felt as if the experience was from the point of view of those with dominant identities. In the unlimited power of campus police theme, participants shared their experiences with campus police and felt as if they were given the power to act without oversight. The Black collectivism as a tool for survival theme shifts to how the participants leaned on other Black people at their institution for support in order to navigate tough situations. The liberatory fantasy as a tool for sustainability theme shares participants’ dreams for a better experience for Black students. Participants shared these dreams as both a means to share potentially better experiences for future Black students and as a tool to cope with their experiences in college.

The participants shared their experiences navigating on-campus housing policies and enforcement. Their experiences showcase varying degrees of plantation politics being enacted by housing and residence life professionals negatively impacting the experiences of Black students. While participants did not use the language of plantation politics, it was easy to make similar parallels between their experiences and the plantation politics framework as those outlined in chapter two. Knowing the link between Black people and plantations, this chapter illuminates the concerns present with how on-campus policies are enacted and enforced on campuses today. This chapter provides the participants' accounts of their experiences to understand how they navigate policies before the next chapter gives recommendations for addressing these issues.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of Black students as they interact with and navigate on-campus housing policies. I sought to understand how Black students perceive their interactions with on-campus housing policies and those who enforce the policies. Using BlackCrit, Black Feminist Theory, and the WEUSI model, I attempted to understand how Black students are educated about which policies exist on their campus, how they navigate policy enforcers, and how they support one another through interacting with policies. I aimed to learn more about how Black students interact with campus police through the enforcement of on-campus housing policies. In this study, I sought to understand how these interactions with both the written policies and those enforcing them impacted Black students' experiences and their ability to persist throughout college. The research questions that guided this study were:

1. What are Black students' experiences with on-campus housing policies?
2. How does anti-Blackness impact Black students' experiences with on-campus housing policies?
3. How do Black students navigate anti-Blackness within on-campus housing and on-campus housing policies?

I interviewed 12 people across 11 different institutions who self-identified as Black, had lived on campus for at least 1 semester, and had attended a college or university in the last 10 years.

Through a series of semi-structured interviews, I was able to get a glimpse into the experiences Black students have when navigating on-campus housing policies. This chapter summarizes and

shares the implications of the findings, offer recommendations to address the issues, and provide areas for future research.

Summary and Implications of Findings

College students are often sold the promise of a better experience when they choose to live on campus rather than off campus such as a better campus connection and better retention rates (Astin, 1984). According to Astin (1984), living on-campus “is positively associated with several other forms of involvement: interaction with faculty, involvement in student government, and participation in social fraternities or sororities” (pp. 524-525). This study gave voice to 12 participants who identified as Black as they shared their experiences navigating their institution and on-campus housing policies. Though many experiences were shared, the conversations could be categorized into four themes: (a) bait and switch: an unactualized positive experience for Black students, (b) campus police and their unlimited power, (c) Black collectivism as a tool for survival, and (d) liberatory fantasy as a tool for sustainability. These themes manifest in particular ways due to a long-standing presence of anti-Blackness on college campuses. Afro-pessimism explains the prevalence of anti-Blackness as deeply connected to the fabric of the United States suggesting that Black people are not seen as human, and thus, there is license to treat them poorly (Wilderson, 2016).

While participants do not claim to hold Afro-pessimistic views, the experiences they shared fit into a narrative that lays a foundation of anti-Blackness in all historically white college campuses. Many participants spoke of the ways they felt alienated from their campuses. The participants recounted experiencing microaggressions and being treated differently than those around them. Ella shared, “college has been a good place overall, but the constant racism I could do without.” Participants shared experiencing racism in the classroom, around campus, and in the

halls they lived which aligns with the accounts of many Black students in the literature. The experiences of the participants relate heavily to the historical experiences of Black folks even beyond the confines of college campuses. These experiences root the participants in the afterlife of slavery experience, as explained by Sadiya Hartmann (2007). Black people are still treated as less than, no matter their education level or proximity to whiteness, given the placement as slave many years ago. The participants confirmed their experiences were similar to others across states and campuses, driving them to struggle with not only their campus interactions, but the policies that govern them in the halls they live in.

Knowing that Black students are experiencing similar issues as those outside of the academy informs the need to look at the climate created on campus. As campuses tout their ability to create inclusive environments and spaces where all students are welcome, the participants of this study are proving the opposite to be true. Participants clarified that campuses are in fact creating a positive environment for their white students while suggesting that everyone else assimilate to white culture or face consequences. Those who do not assimilate do not only face formal consequences but also mental and social consequences which lead them to feel ostracized from their campus culture. This leaves campuses with Black students who are not integrated into the campus culture and often looking to create counter communities where they feel safe.

When talking with the participants, it became very clear that on-campus housing policies are not explained in a way that centers the student's understanding. Participants expressed deep distrust of their institution because providing information about the policies on campus seemed like an afterthought. Many participants spoke to hearing very little about the policies and only learning of them when they were alleged to have violated a policy. As a professional in

residential life, I know the importance of students understanding policies as they will be held accountable for what is written. However, I also am aware that most often, policies are placed on websites without proper attention paid to educating students on the policies in place. This model leans heavily on the thought that all students know how to find the policies and understand them and potential outcomes without intervention from campus professionals. This is an inherently white supremacist notion that current college students have some prior relationship with understanding college culture and norms. While individual campus professionals may recognize and even plan for the presence of first-generation college students, the practices do not align with including these students.

Participants describe the disparity between the experiences they were promised when applying for college and the reality they experienced daily captured by the bait and switch: an unactualized positive experience for Black students theme. Many participants felt betrayed by the dreams they were sold that did not align with their experiences. Participants desired more transparency from their institutions into the experiences of Black students so they could make informed decisions about living on campus. The feeling of institutions pulling a “bait and switch” permeated the participants’ description of living in on-campus housing. Black students did not see themselves represented in the experiences sold to them as perspective students. As shared above, there was heavy attention paid to showcasing the experiences of their predominantly white and affluent peers. Few narratives actively depicted that Black students at HWIs would experience hardships and need to find community to navigate the institution. As some participants were required to live on campus, many longed for the days when they could move off campus to avoid the issues of racism. Hotchkins & Dancy (2017) say that Black students would rather face hardships off campus than deal with the racial dynamics present in the

residence halls. Given the benefits of living on campus, institutions must be concerned that Black students would rather live off-campus and be less connected to the institution than living on-campus and have access to resources at their fingertips.

The participants in this study shared this range of emotions towards interactions with their campus police. Many shared concerns about the level of power and lack of oversight of campus police which led to the campus police and their unlimited power theme. Campus police continue to be a point of disagreement across college campuses due to the state of police relations in the United States today. Black students across campuses have called for many solutions from hiring more mental health professionals to complete removal from campus (Hoover, 2008; Jenkins et al., 2021). They shared experiences of aggression, racism, and unwarranted and unauthorized searches of students and their belongings. Participants called for institutions to look into the behavior of their campus police in hopes of protecting Black students from experiencing racial profiling or worse when interacting with the police. Campus professionals cannot separate their on-campus police from the oversaturation of police brutality against and instances of police killing Black people outside of colleges. Given that many campus police officers are retired city police officers, it can be assumed that they bring with them many of the same concerning behaviors that have led Black people to distrust the police. As campuses share values of being centers of social justice, it is concerning that campuses continue to rely on campus police as a fear tactic when enforcing policies. Beyond having campus police enforce policies, there is often a desire to have students view campus police as a positive resource and people that students can confide in despite the historical actions of police across the United States. These behaviors shows that campuses are not being attentive to the needs of Black students on their campuses.

Beyond hearing the ways on-campus housing policies were harmful to Black students, it was important to understand how they responded to these policies. Participants described relying on community to deal with the various instances of racism. There were descriptions of relying on Black mentors, staff, therapists, and peers to support one another through a myriad of situations on their campus. Finding a Black community to lean on was the overwhelming message for survival of historically white institutions. All participants leaned into the WEUSI model's notion of the collective Black mind as they described understanding experiences they had not personally gone through (Williams, 1981). Very few participants experienced their school's judicial process, but all could describe the issues with the process as it relates to Black students' experiences. There was an ability to understand the collective plight of Black students and a commitment to taking care of one another to survive the difficulties. Black friendships and relationships served as a tool for survival for all of the participants.

Lastly, the participants indulged me in an exercise of liberatory fantasy as deemed necessary by BlackCrit. The participants shared their hopes for a future for Black students on historically white campuses. Participants shared dreams of institutions that paid attention to Black students when creating policies and included Black staff in the creation. Isabelle shared, "how amazing would it be if policies were culturally relevant to us. What if they referenced things we knew rather than had us assimilate to their ways of being?" Dreaming of a better experience for future generations allowed participants to continue enduring today's issues. Honoring this exercise in dreaming, I put forth recommendations in the next section that both honors the participants and allows me to dream a bit as well.

Recommendations

Understanding the policies that are in place for students who live on-campus is imperative to students' success. In this section, I put forth recommendations for campuses to better serve students in relation to their on-campus housing policies. I share recommendations about educating staff, educating students, reviewing policies on a more regular basis, involving students in policy review opportunities, and governing their campus police. These recommendations allow campuses to begin to create environments that are more inclusive of Black students and address some of their concerns.

Recommendations for Deepening Staff Understanding of History

In order to truly understand the ways policies can impact Black students, I suggest the housing and residence life professionals spend some time understanding their department's history. They should begin training for all new professionals with an overview of when the department was created, who created it, and historical demographics of staff in the department. In this training, there should be a conversation about how the department has grown and changed since their creation. I recommend asking, (1) what identities have leaders of the department held historically, (2) what identities have staff members of the department held historically, (3) have those staff members' identities been representative of the students on campus, and (4) how does this history of staff impact those who are working in our department today? In the context of this research, I recommend on-campus professionals pay attention to the racial makeup of their departments. Looking into who is leading the department and, historically, who has led it helps lay a foundation for where a department needs to go.

This study rests on the impact of the historical positioning of Black people as less than which is linked to the historical positioning of white people as superior. It is important for college campuses today to understand how that positioning has informed the policies and

procedures that remain in place today. I recommend that campuses dive into their history and acknowledge what practices still uphold and reinforce an anti-Black framework. This work is time-consuming and painful, but it allows a starting point for change and understanding. Housing and residence life professionals should ask critical questions about the history of their departments. Simply looking at the makeup of the department is not enough but rather questioning if this staff makeup has been a purposeful choice. Professionals should question what barriers exist to having a diverse department. Further, professionals should question what aspects of their department lead some identities to feel excluded from the norms of the department. After asking these questions, it is important for senior leaders to have conversations about what changes can be implemented to prevent these issues in the future. There should be honest and critical conversations about making changes in the department that does not allow the department to rest on its current practices. It is also worthwhile to bring in an outside consultant to talk about their departments concerns and concrete solutions for moving forward. While college campuses espouse to be places where everyone is welcome, the reality is Black students face similar racism on campus as outside of it. The history of anti-Blackness in the United States has permeated everything including the creation of colleges and the writing of policies, many of which were created to safeguard the white collegiate experience. It is only after understanding the history of a department and its policies that housing and residence life professionals can begin the work of reviewing their current practices.

Policy Review and Reimagining

There is a need to review policies more regularly to ensure they are serving the current students on campus. I suggest housing and residence life professionals come together with their student conduct offices to look at their policies. It is important to involve staff in these offices at

various levels, senior leadership of the division, and students. Given that many policies have been in place for several years, I urge campuses to think about the students they are serving rather than the incidents they are attempting to prevent. When reviewing policies, Ray shared that staff should keep in mind, “Three major questions should always be at the top of our mindset: Who wrote it and when? Who's benefiting from it? And who's being negatively impacted by it?” housing and residence life professionals should revisit their policies on an annual basis to include different voices and ensure they remain up to date with current best practices and literature. A policy review would include not only the language of the policies but also data about the enforcement of the policies. I suggest that departments look at who is being documented the most, who is being found responsible for violating said policies, and the outcomes a student receives as punishment. Taking a critical approach to understanding this data situated in this study, professional should question how this data breaks down by race. Understanding which races is disproportionately impacted provides departments with a starting place for making change within their department. In addition, a thorough policy review should include professionals questioning if the policies are imperative to protecting students and facilities. I suggest looking at each policy to determine its effectiveness and whether it serves as a means of student control. Particularly in on-campus housing departments, I suggest professionals look at policies on decorations and personalization of space for students. There are often many policies that exist to save institutions from work refreshing rooms rather than to protect students.

While many participants focused on behavioral policies, I urge housing and residence life professionals to review their structural policies as well. There is a need to question how policies around housing selection, contract dates, and room assignments impact the experiences of Black

students. These policies may not be thought about on a day-to-day basis, they are also impactful in terms of costs and ability to live authentically while living on campus. I suggest campuses invite students to review their policies in these areas as well it can show how the policy better serves the department instead of students. Sophia shared concerns with an inability to move rooms due to the policies about room changes on her campus. This illuminates the need to review all policies that exist beyond those that govern students' behaviors as these policies may be even more impactful to the student experience at times. Any policy that governs part of the student experience should be reviewed across campus and involve students in the process to ensure changes positively impact the student experience.

Lastly, I recommend that housing and residence life professionals enter a phase of dreaming when it comes to their policies. As much of the field is currently questioning many aspects of the work, from professional to student staff position descriptions, now is the perfect time to add policies into that state of reimagining. I suggest that departments engage in an exercise of imagining ideal policies on their campus if there were not parameters or political stakeholders to consider. After engaging in this exercise internally, I suggest for departments to invite stakeholders from across campus to weigh in on policies and make suggestions for moving forward. I recommend departments not only look at their own policies and engage within their campus, but to come together with others to understand what policies exist across the field and how effective those policies have been. I suggest campuses with similar structures to engage in policy review together I recommend that institutions engage in roundtable discussions at conferences such as the NASPA Annual Conference, the ACPA Annual Convention, and ACUHO-I's Campus Home Live. This discussion helps campuses develop new ideas and think outside the box of policies their campus has always implemented. This discussion is not meant to

simply replicate policies from other institutions, but to have deep conversations about the implementation of policies. It should be an opportunity for institutions to discuss how their policies impact their students and offer suggestions for change. The field has come together to discuss many aspects of operations, but I have yet to see policies be a discussion and I believe we are well beyond the point of starting the conversation.

Black Student Involvement in Policy Review

Leaning on the WEUSI model, I found that participants desired to be part of the community and take care of their people. The WEUSI model stresses the importance of caring for the collective in Black culture which emphasizes coming together and working towards similar aims. One participant, John, described feeling “constantly left out of the focus. We aren’t really part of how the community is formed.” Understanding the collective focus of Black people, I propose institutions create opportunities for Black students to provide input on both policies and their enforcement. To ensure Black voices are included, professionals should do targeted outreach to organizations that serve Black students and reach out to their Black students who are already involved in the department for feedback. Depending on the campus environment, Black students may be reluctant to participate, thus professionals should be prepared to do research to understand how policies may impact Black students. There is a delicate balance between including Black students and shifting the work to them which institutions need to hold at the forefront of their focus. To maintain this balance, it is important for professionals to focus on asking Black students for their reactions and emotions to current and/or proposed policies rather than having the students write new policies on their behalf. Considering that many institutions are still predominantly white serving and led, including Black students in the conversations provides an opportunity to understand the impact of policies from a

lens that is often left out of the conversation. Donald reminds us to question “how much of anything on a college campus centers Black people,” given that on the majority of college campuses, Black people are and always have been the minority.

Educating Students on Policies

Many of the participants shared their deep concern for the lack of education on their on-campus housing policies. Keeping people ignorant of policies and procedures is a tool of oppression. Allowing students to operate in an environment where they could violate policies and face consequences they are unaware of is both oppressive and unethical. Institutions need to further the education of their on-campus residents to ensure they understand campus policies. I suggest institutions move beyond placing policies on their websites to educating students directly on the policies. Educating students directly requires professionals to get creative and energy into policy education similar to other campus programs and events. There should be an opportunity for a professional staff member to explain not only the policies, but the potential consequences students may face as a result of violating the policies. There is a need for campus professionals to take ownership of the education of students rather than leaving students to figure things out on their own.

As most campuses hold orientation, I suggest on-campus housing policies be included in an orientation session or in a mandatory module. Many orientation programs include small group discussion to disseminate and check for knowledge and I suggest that campuses add campus policies to these discussions. It is important that students have the opportunity to ask questions and check for clarity. Specific to housing and residence life professional, I suggest departments include reminders about policies during floor meetings, so students are given the information multiple times. It is also important to post frequently violated policies within the residence halls

to help students avoid violations. Rather than relying on one method to educate students, professionals should find multiple avenues to share this information with students. I suggest campuses work with student organizations to create plain language documents that explains the policies. Explaining policies to students in terms that they understand aids in students feeling as if they can understand what is expected of them rather than sifting through legalese. This also ensures students across identities are able to understand polices despite their previous knowledge of college systems.

Limiting Campus Police Presence

In speaking with participants about the use of campus police as enforcers of on-campus housing policies, it became clear there is a need to rethink the power afforded to campus police. Participants described experiencing similar concerns with campus police as those described by Black people outside of higher education. Participants described being over-policed and racially profiled by campus police without any consequences for their actions. Recognizing that the police force is inherently anti-Black, I propose that institutions eliminate on-campus police. Institutions should stop allowing police to do rounds in the residence halls, stop calling police to respond to noise complaints, and stop calling police to force students to comply with staff requests to open doors or enter rooms when safety is not a concern. Having an on-campus police department in addition to the local police is not necessary for campuses to maintain the safety of their students. Participants in this study asked that their campuses stop having them interact with campus police, and I can't help but honor and share this request. To be attentive to Black students is to understand the history of and continual presence of police brutality against Black bodies in the United States. To live in a country where Black people are killed by the police and then ask Black people to invite police into their lives and homes is simply unethical. Campuses

have tried to convince Black people in their communities for years that their campus police are not like the outside police force. This is simply a lie as many of them were members of the outside force and we have seen examples of police brutality on college campuses. As campuses espouse to keep all students safe, there must be recognition that inviting police into Black students' lives and, in particular their homes, does not create a welcoming environment but rather one of distrust and fear.

I recognize many campuses will not take such radical action, thus, in alignment with BlackCrit, I propose that institutions of higher education take the lead in using alternative options for responding to their students. There are small procedural changes that can have a large impact on the experiences students have with campus police. It is important to review what impact these procedures have on Black students. Having worked at institutions that are not planning to eliminate their campus police presence, I have had conversations with campus police to identify easy changes that can positively impact the experiences of Black students. For example, I have worked to stop campus police from doing rounds in the residence halls. This simple change addressed the hyper0surveillance felt by Black students and move the institution away from a practice modeled from prison culture. I recommend that all campuses stop allowing police to do rounds in the halls. Instead, I recommend implementing protocols in which campus police only enter the residence halls for emergency response. As not all campuses have the same protocols, I suggest that campuses spend time looking at the agreed upon protocols and procedures that exist between on-campus housing departments and campus police.

Many campuses currently use their residential life professional and student staff to address concerns with their students, I suggest relying on this approach rather than campus police. Rather than using campus police as a threat to comply with staff, professionals should

document their interactions with students and hold them accountable through their judicial process if necessary. I suggest having on-call counselors who can respond to students with heightened mental health concerns after hours instead of relying on campus police to interact with these students. This approach exemplifies an institution's commitment to being student-centered and provides students with care rather than putting them in spaces of fear and anxiety.

I suggest institutions interrogate the power held by their campus police departments and create systems of oversight for these departments. Participants described not knowing who to contact with complaints about the campus police department which leaves them to be all-powerful. I suggest more campuses create an advisory board for their campus police departments comprised of faculty, staff, and students who can review police practices regularly and hear community member grievances and suggestions. Grievances and suggestions should have the option of being submitted anonymously to increase comfort and reduce anxiety of retaliation. This board should report to a member of the institution who has the power to compel the campus police department to make changes when necessary. This model requires buy-in from campus leadership to address their campus police from a community perspective. It is important to ensure that this advisory board has a diverse membership that can adequately provide feedback and hold the campus police department accountable when necessary. Using a model of accountability for campus police departments eases the emotions of various members of the campus by providing an avenue to share concerns.

Future Research Recommendations

This study allowed me to learn a lot about the ways on-campus housing policies and their enforcers can largely impact Black students. Given that all of the participants shared the impact of the lack of education about policies, I would be interested to learn more about institutions that

use different methods of educating their students. Participants leaned on their little knowledge of policies to explain how they felt misled on campus. I wonder if being fully educated on the policies would lessen the feeling of being tricked by the administration. It could be worth understanding if a correlation exists between the two in order to help institutions think more critically about how they educate their students. As policies dictate what students are allowed to do, it is imperative that they are aware of these policies. This shift positions students to make conscious decisions about their actions while knowing the potential consequences. Keeping people ignorant of policies and consequences is a tool of oppression that can be eradicated through ample education.

I was particularly fascinated by the experiences participants shared about interacting with campus police. Most participants were hesitant in their interactions with campus police. Given that the relationship between on-campus housing departments and campus police departments are often intertwined, I am interested in learning more about how these relationships play out across various campuses. Paying attention to the recent calls to defund the police, there is room to conduct research on these campus partnerships. It would be interesting to understand how institutions maintain their relationship with the police while upholding their mission to create an inclusive environment for all students. In addition, it would be worth diving deeper into the participants' thoughts about campus police and their unlimited power. The hierarchy on many campuses situates campus police on their own; thus, it would be interesting to see how this power is applied across campuses in relation to other departments with strict checks and balances governing their actions.

Researcher Takeaways

All students who live on campus should be able to do so while living authentically without judgment from those around them. This is the goal that guides my work as an on-campus housing professional, and I share it with as many people as possible when they ask why I do the work I do. It is an espoused goal much like the goals that all students will experience the benefits Astin (1984) shares when describing why to live on campus. Black students are not always afforded the luxury to live authentically within their residence halls. Black students are surrounded by students from all over the country and beyond who each come with a preconceived notion about Black people. There is an understanding and acceptance to treat Black people as less than despite their education status; thus, college students are relegated to the lesser than status and treated as such.

Black students deserve to experience college without being concerned about what policies have harsher consequences for them and which staff members may say something racist to them. The right to be a whole person without harm should be afforded to all of our students. Policies and practices need to be written and enacted to serve everyone equitably. Today's policies are yesterday's policies and yesterday's policies are dangerous to today's students. I leave you with a thought rooted in BlackCrit's liberatory fantasy: I dream of a day where Black students can move through college campuses without fear of a racist roommate, a racist professor, a racist staff member, or a racist policy. A day where they can just be.

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APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT EMAIL TO ORGANIZATIONS

Dear Colleagues,

I am currently writing my dissertations as I complete my doctoral studies at Colorado State University. I am recruiting research participants for my study on the experiences of Black students who have lived in on-campus housing. I would welcome your support in passing this outreach along by including it in your monthly newsletter. Please include the blurb and flyer below. I appreciate your support in getting the word out about my study. Thank you!

My name is Domonique Crosby, Associate Director for Residential Life at the University of San Francisco, and I am currently writing my dissertation as I complete my doctoral studies at Colorado State University. I am recruiting research participants for my study on the experiences of Black students who have lived in on-campus housing. I would welcome your support in passing this outreach along to students who may qualify. Please send them the letter and/or flyer below. If it is more convenient, you may send me their name and email and I will email them directly. I appreciate your support in getting the word out about my study. Thank you!

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Hello,

My name is Domonique Crosby. I am a graduate at Colorado State University working with my faculty advisor, Professor Vincent Basile in the School of Education. I would like to invite you to take part in my research study, which looks at the experiences Black students have with on-campus housing policies. The purpose of this study is to understand the impact these policies have on Black students' experiences on campus. This study will aide in making changes to on-campus housing policies in order to improve the experiences of Black students.

We would like you to participate in an individual interview. Participants of the study should be current students or have attended college in the last 10 years, identify as Black, and have lived in on-campus housing for at least one semester. For most participants the interview will take approximately 60-90 minutes to complete. After completing the first interview, you will be invited to participate in a focus group with other participants. If you are uncomfortable participating in a focus group, you can engage in a second individual interview. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty.

When we report and share the data to others, we will combine the data from all participants. While there are no direct benefits to you, it is hoped that the research will inform policy changes within colleges/universities and their on-campus housing departments. It is hoped that this research will help housing and residence life professionals consider how Black students are treated within their department. All participants who complete the first individual interview

process will receive a \$25 VISA gift cards. Those who complete a second individual interview or participate in the focus group will receive an additional \$25 VISA gift card.

There are no known risks associated with this study. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the we have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential (but unknown) risks. The data collected in this study could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without additional informed consent from the subject.

To indicate your consent and interest to participate in this research and to continue to the study, please access the survey via the following link:

https://colostate.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_81UDpbhwzjFpYSq

If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact me at

domonique.crosby@colostate.edu or my adviser Dr. Vincent Basile at

vincent.basile@colostate.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the CSU IRB at: CSU_IRB@colostate.edu; 970-491-1553.

Domonique Crosby

Doctoral Candidate

Colorado State University

APPENDIX C: INTEREST FORM

Q1 Dear Prospective Participant,

Thank you for your interest in participating in my dissertation study. I am a Black woman with 8 years of experience working in university housing and I'm interested in learning more about the experiences of Black students. I'm particularly interested in your experiences with on-campus housing policies, Resident Assistants, and if you were written up I'd like to learn about that too.

To participate in this study, it is important that you identify as Black and have lived in on-campus housing in the last ten years. I look forward to hearing about your experiences.

Page Break

Q1 Please note your participation is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or refuse to answer a question at any time without penalty. The data you provide will be kept secure and password protected once in the researcher's possession. However, the researcher cannot guarantee security during transmission due to key-logging and spyware that you may have on your device.

Do you affirm that you have read the consent statement above, that your participation is voluntary, and that you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty?

- Yes, I affirm that I have read the consent statement above, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
- Yes, I affirm that I have read the consent statement above and I choose not to participate.

Page Break

Branch If: If Dear Prospective Participant, Thank you for your interest in participating in this research study... Yes, I affirm that I have read the consent statement above and I choose not to participate. Is Selected

Then:

End Survey – Thank you for considering participating in this study. I appreciate the time and energy you put into the interest form.

Domonique Crosby
Doctoral Candidate
Colorado State University

Page Break

Please provide your name and email so I can reach out to you to schedule your individual interview.

Q9 Name:

Q11 Email:

End Survey:

I appreciate the time and energy you have put into the Interest Form. I will reach out to you via email to find a mutually agreed upon time for our one-on-one conversation to happen via Zoom. I look forward to hearing more about your experiences.

Domonique Crosby
Doctoral Candidate
Colorado State University

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. This interview will focus on your experiences living in on-campus housing. During the interview we will talk about aspects of your identity as a Black person on a college campus and your experiences with on-campus housing policies.

Informed Consent

Before we begin, I'd like to go over portions of the study to be sure you are still comfortable participating.

Instructions

We have about an hour to an hour and fifteen minutes to answer about 10 questions. Feel free to skip questions you do not feel comfortable answering. I will be recording the conversation so I can accurately reflect your thoughts and experiences when I analyze the data. Throughout the transcript and in data analysis you will be referred to by an alias of your choosing. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Introduction

1. Tell me a little about yourself?
 - a. Major, year in school
2. Why did you choose this institution?

Campus Experiences

3. What's it like being at Black student on your campus?
 - a. [Optional Probe] How are Black students supported on your campus?
 - b. [Optional Probe] How do non-Black students perceive Black students on your campus?
 - c. [Optional Probe] How are Black students treated in the classroom?
4. How long have you/did you live in on-campus housing?

On-Campus Housing Experiences

5. What was your experience like living in on-campus housing?
 - a. [Optional Probe] What was it like to live with your first roommate?
 - b. [Optional Probe] What was your relationship to your roommate before living with them?
6. How were housing policies communicated to you?
 - a. [Optional Probe] Who enforced these policies on your campus?
 - b. [Optional Probe] What were the consequences for violating policies on your campus?
7. [Optional Question] Tell me a bit about a situation(s) where you were documented (written up) for violating an on-campus housing policy?
 - a. [Optional Probe] What were your emotions like while being documented (written up)?

- b. [Optional Probe] How often were you written up for allegedly violating policies?
 - c. [Optional Probe] What was your relationship like with the RA/staff member/police officer before this interaction?
8. [Optional Question] Tell me a bit about the meeting you had to discuss the policy you were documented (written up) for?
- a. [Optional Probe] What emotions did you experience during the meeting?
 - b. [Optional Probe] What's your thoughts on how you were treated during the meeting?
9. [Optional Question] How were you treated after being documented?
10. What are your thoughts about living on campus?
- a. [Optional Probe] Would you recommend it to other Black students?
 - b. [Optional Probe] What advice would you give Black students who choose to live on campus?
11. Is there anything else you would like to share? What else do I need to know about the experiences of Black students who live in on-campus housing?

Wrap Up

We've reached the end of our interview. Thank you so much for sharing your experiences with me. I know it can be difficult to talk about how Black folks are treated. I appreciated learning more about you and sharing this space with you.

Have you thought about an alias you'd like me to use when referring to you throughout the study?

Thank you. I will use that name. I will be uploading our recording to be transcribe in the next few days. Once it is done, I will send you a copy via email to read over and make any corrections you notice. As soon as we log off, I will email your \$25 VISA gift card.

Lastly, after I've interviewed all of the other participants I will reach out to you to schedule the focus group. Again, thank you so much for taking the time to talk with me today.

APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT

Introduction and Purpose

My name is Domonique Crosby. I am a graduate student at Colorado State University working with my faculty advisor, Professor Vincent Basile in the School of Education. I would like to invite you to take part in my dissertation research study, which looks at the experiences Black students have with on-campus housing policies. This study seeks to understand the impact these policies have on Black students' experiences on campus. This study will aide in making changes to on-campus housing policies in order to improve the experiences of Black students.

Procedures

If you agree to participate in my research study, I will conduct an individual interview with you using a video conferencing software. The interview will involve questions about your experience with on-campus housing policies. Each session should last about 60 to 90 minutes. After the interview, I will request permission to recontact you regarding participating in a focus group with other participants at a later date. With your permission, I will record audio and take notes during the interview. The recording is to accurately record the information you provide and will be used for transcription purposes only.

Benefits

There is no direct benefit to you from taking part in this study. It is hoped that the research will inform policy changes within college/university housing departments. It is hoped that this research will help college/university housing professionals consider how Black students are treated within their department and update policies that negatively impact them.

Risks/Discomforts

Some of the research questions may make you uncomfortable or upset. You are free to decline to answer any questions you do not wish to, or to stop the interview at any time.

As with all research, there is a chance that confidentiality could be compromised; however, we are taking precautions to minimize this risk.

Confidentiality

Your study data will be handled as confidentially as possible. If results of this study are published or presented, individual names and other personally identifiable information will not be used. Your name and the name of your university will be assigned a pseudonym of your choice.

To minimize the risks to confidentiality, no audio recordings will be publicly disseminated.

We will transcribe the audio recordings as soon as possible after the interview, and then destroy the audio recordings. When the research is completed, I will save the transcriptions without identifiable information and other study data for possible use in future research done by myself or others. I will retain these records for up to 3 years after the study is over. The same measures

described above will be taken to protect confidentiality of this study data. We may be asked to share the research files with the sponsor or the CSU Institutional Review Board ethics committee for auditing purposes. Your identity/record of receiving compensation (NOT your data) may be made available to CSU officials for financial audits.

Identifiers will be removed from the identifiable private information and, after such removal, the information could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without additional informed consent from the subject or the legally authorized representative.

Compensation

To thank you for participating in the initial individual interview, you will receive a \$25 Visa gift card immediately after you participate in the individual interview.

Rights

Participation in research is completely voluntary. You are free to decline to take part in the project. You can decline to answer any questions and are free to stop taking part in the project at any time. Whether or not you choose to participate in the research and whether or not you choose to answer any questions or continue participating in the project, there will be no penalty to you or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact me at 702-403-5839 or Domonique.crosby@colostate.edu You may also contact Dr. Vincent Basile, Vincent.basile@colostate.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights or treatment as a research participant in this study, please contact the Colorado State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) at: 970-491-1553, or e-mail CSU_IRB@colostate.edu.